

Value of insects in U.S. is \$57 billion

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The services that insects provide the United States are worth \$57 billion, Cornell University entomologists calculated.

"Most insects tirelessly perform functions that improve our environment and lives in ways that scientists are only beginning to understand," said study co-author John Losey. "Don't let the insects' small stature fool you -- these minute marvels provide valuable services."

The study, published in the journal *BioScience*, found that native insects are food for wildlife -- supporting a \$50 billion recreation industry. Insects also generate more than \$4.5 billion in pest control, pollinate \$3 billion in crops and clean up grazing lands -- saving ranchers some \$380 million a year.

These are "very conservative" estimates that probably represent only a fraction of the true value of insects, said Losey, an associate professor of entomology at Cornell.

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