



Imagine a fuzzy, tiny creature crawling on a leaf, that's our friend, the puss caterpillar! Covered in a coat of long, silky hair, these little guys are often mistaken for cotton balls or tufts of fur. But don't be fooled, underneath that fluffy exterior, they have a dark brown body with a bright red face. A fun fact is, they're also known as 'asp' which means 'aspis' in Latin, referring to a small shield, thanks to their unique shape.



Speaking of shape, it's fun to know where these fascinating creatures call home. Puss caterpillars are found in many parts of the United States, particularly in the southern states. They love hanging out on shade trees and garden plants, so you might spot them while playing outside. Next time you're in the garden, keep an eye out for these fluffy critters!

Now that we know where to find them, let's discover what these shield-shaped bugs munch on. As caterpillars, they feed on the leaves of many different types of trees and plants. Once they've eaten enough, they form a cocoon, emerging later as a beautiful Southern Flannel Moth. Isn't it amazing how such a furry creature can transform into a graceful moth?



We've learned a lot about our fluffy friends, but there's one more surprising thing about puss caterpillars. While they look soft and cuddly, they have a secret weapon for defense – venomous spines hidden in their fur! If touched, they can cause a painful sting, so it's best to admire them from a distance. So, remember, while these cute caterpillars are fun to learn about, they're also a reminder that looks can be deceiving!



Solve each problem.

Use the article to answer the question.

- 1) What are puss caterpillars covered with?
A. scales B. hair C. feathers D. spikes
- 2) What is the defense mechanism of puss caterpillars?
A. poisonous saliva in the mouth B. venomous spines in their fur
C. sharp claws on each foot D. toxic ooze from their abdomen
- 3) What do puss caterpillars transform into?
A. a southern flannel moth B. a monarch butterfly
C. a fur coat moth D. a puss butterfly
- 4) What do puss caterpillars feed on?
A. small insects B. leaves from plants
C. honey from hives D. small mammals
- 5) What does the Latin word 'aspis' mean?
A. a big rock B. a furry creature C. a tall tree D. a small shield
- 6) Where would you most likely find a puss caterpillar?
A. In rivers and swamps B. in the desert in burrows
C. in shade trees and garden plants D. Under rocks and in leaf piles
- 7) What happens if you touch a puss caterpillar?
A. the caterpillar will see you as their owner B. the caterpillar will die
C. the caterpillar will spit venom D. It can cause a painful sting
- 8) What color is the body under the fluffy exterior of puss caterpillars?
A. bright white B. dark brown C. bright red D. dark green
- 9) What is another name for the puss caterpillar?
A. long fur caterpillar B. fluffy worm
C. bright face caterpillar D. Asp
- 10) What is the appearance of a puss caterpillar's face?
A. a dark green face B. a bright yellow face
C. a bright red face D. a dark brown face

Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 11) "I may look soft and cuddly, but don't be fooled, for my fluff hides venomous spines."
- 12) "When I emerge from my cocoon, instead of a butterfly, you'll see a moth."
- 13) "I hate the taste of leaves, fruits are my favorite!"
- 14) "You might mistake me for a cotton ball, my coat is so fluffy and silky."
- 15) "The southern states of the United States are where I feel most at home."
- 16) "We change from a caterpillar to a beautiful Southern Flannel Moth."
- 17) "I turn into a butterfly after leaving my cocoon."
- 18) "My shape is similar to a small shield, which is why some folks call me an 'asp.'"



Puss Caterpillar

Name: _____

1. _____ 26. _____ 51. _____
2. _____ 27. _____ 52. _____
3. _____ 28. _____ 53. _____
4. _____ 29. _____ 54. _____
5. _____ 30. _____ 55. _____
6. _____ 31. _____ 56. _____
7. _____ 32. _____ 57. _____
8. _____ 33. _____ 58. _____
9. _____ 34. _____ 59. _____
10. _____ 35. _____ 60. _____
11. _____ 36. _____ 61. _____
12. _____ 37. _____ 62. _____
13. _____ 38. _____ 63. _____
14. _____ 39. _____
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16. _____ 41. _____
17. _____ 42. _____
18. _____ 43. _____
19. _____ 44. _____
20. _____ 45. _____
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23. _____ 48. _____
24. _____ 49. _____
25. _____ 50. _____



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|-----|--------------|-----|----------------|-----|----------------------|
| 1. | B | 26. | Would | 51. | C |
| 2. | B | 27. | fact | 52. | exclamatory |
| 3. | A | 28. | opinion | 53. | imperative |
| 4. | B | 29. | fact | 54. | interrogative |
| 5. | D | 30. | opinion | 55. | exclamatory |
| 6. | C | 31. | fact | 56. | declarative |
| 7. | D | 32. | opinion | 57. | interrogative |
| 8. | B | 33. | fact | 58. | declarative |
| 9. | D | 34. | fact | 59. | interrogative |
| 10. | C | 35. | opinion | 60. | declarative |
| 11. | Would | 36. | opinion | 61. | imperative |
| 12. | Would | 37. | true | 62. | exclamatory |
| 13. | Not | 38. | false | 63. | imperative |
| 14. | Would | 39. | true | | |
| 15. | Would | 40. | false | | |
| 16. | Would | 41. | true | | |
| 17. | Not | 42. | false | | |
| 18. | Would | 43. | false | | |
| 19. | Would | 44. | false | | |
| 20. | Not | 45. | true | | |
| 21. | Not | 46. | true | | |
| 22. | Would | 47. | B | | |
| 23. | Would | 48. | A | | |
| 24. | Not | 49. | D | | |
| 25. | Not | 50. | A | | |

**Solve each problem.****Use the article to answer the question.**

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A. scales B. hair C. feathers D. spikes
- 2) What is the defense mechanism of puss caterpillars? (paragraph 4)
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