



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. spikes
 - D. feathers

- 2) What is the defense mechanism of puss caterpillars?
 - A. venomous spines in their fur
 - B. sharp claws on each foot
 - C. poisonous saliva in the mouth
 - D. toxic ooze from their abdomen

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 - A. a southern flannel moth
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- 5) What does the Latin word 'aspis' mean?
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- 6) Where would you most likely find a puss caterpillar?
 - A. In rivers and swamps
 - B. in the desert in burrows
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 - D. Under rocks and in leaf piles

- 7) What happens if you touch a puss caterpillar?
 - A. It can cause a painful sting
 - B. the caterpillar will spit venom
 - C. the caterpillar will die
 - D. the caterpillar will see you as their owner

- 8) What color is the body under the fluffy exterior of puss caterpillars?
 - A. bright red
 - B. dark brown
 - C. bright white
 - D. dark green

- 9) What is another name for the puss caterpillar?
 - A. bright face caterpillar
 - B. Asp
 - C. fluffy worm
 - D. long fur caterpillar

- 10) What is the appearance of a puss caterpillar's face?
 - A. a bright red face
 - B. a bright yellow face
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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."
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- 18) "My shape is similar to a small shield, which is why some folks call me an 'asp.'"
- 19) "Unlike you, I do not eat fancy food. I love the simple greens- mostly leaves of different trees and plants."
- 20) "I have a pink body with a dark face."
- 21) "You can only find me in the northern United states of America."
- 22) "On hot summer days, you'll find me on shade trees, chilling out."
- 23) "Getting stung by me is no fun and can be painful. So, it's best to keep your distance."
- 24) "I eat meat, not leaves."
- 25) "If you see me in the garden, please come and pet me."
- 26) "We come in different shades of brown and have a bright red face."

Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.

- 27) As caterpillars, they primarily feed on leaves of many types of trees and plants.
- 28) Puss caterpillars are better looking before they transform into moths.
- 29) These creatures are mostly found in the United States, particularly in the southern parts.
- 30) There is nothing more surprising than finding out puss caterpillars are venomous.
- 31) Their body is dark brown and their face is bright red.
- 32) The red face of the puss caterpillar is cuter than that of any other caterpillar.
- 33) Puss caterpillars have venomous spines in their fur.
- 34) Puss caterpillars are also called asp.
- 35) Puss caterpillars have the best defense mechanism among all bugs.
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Determine if the statement is true or false.

- 37) Puss caterpillars can found on shade trees.
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Determine which choice is the expanded form of the underlined contraction.

- 47) Puss caterpillars shouldn't be touched, as their fuzz may cause a painful sting.
 - A. shall not
 - B. should not
 - C. will not
 - D. is not

- 48) Puss caterpillars won't be found in cold and snowy environments—they prefer warmer climates.
 - A. will not
 - B. can't
 - C. doesn't
 - D. isn't

- 49) They're often found in southern states like Florida and Texas.
 - A. They were
 - B. They am
 - C. They is
 - D. They are

- 50) When it's time to change, they spin a cocoon and become a beautiful moth.
 - A. it is
 - B. it has
 - C. it am
 - D. it was

- 51) Be careful not to touch them, or you'll get a painful sting.
 - A. you would
 - B. you can
 - C. you will
 - D. you have

Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).

- 52) It's unbelievable that underneath all that fur, the puss caterpillar carries a dangerous weapon - venomous spines!
- 53) Avoid handling puss caterpillars unless you are wearing protective gloves.
- 54) What do puss caterpillars eat?
- 55) It's incredible that puss caterpillars can eat so many types of leaves!
- 56) The puss caterpillar has soft, hair-like spines that cover its body.
- 57) How can you identify puss caterpillars?
- 58) Puss caterpillars enjoy munching on leaves from trees like oaks, elms, and citrus plants.
- 59) Where can we find puss caterpillars?
- 60) Puss caterpillars can be found in the southern United States.
- 61) Never touch a puss caterpillar.
- 62) How amazing, the puss caterpillar transforms into a beautiful flannel moth!
- 63) Keep an eye out for different colored puss caterpillars.



- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. <u> B </u> | 26. <u> true </u> | 51. <u> C </u> |
| 2. <u> A </u> | 27. <u> fact </u> | 52. <u> exclamatory </u> |
| 3. <u> A </u> | 28. <u> opinion </u> | 53. <u> imperative </u> |
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| 25. <u> false </u> | 50. <u> A </u> | |



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