

### Pond Invertebrate Biology Briefs

**Scud** (Amphipoda) – Eat mostly detritus, although they also eat algae. Also called sideswimmers.

**Sowbug** (Isopoda) – Eat mostly detritus, although they have been known to hunt for smaller prey.

**Copepods** – A type of crustacean, eats mainly phytoplankton. A food source for many other invertebrates.

**Cladocerans** – A type of crustacean, eats mainly phytoplankton but also other zooplankton.

**Spiders and mites** (Arachnids) - Feed by sucking the body fluids from their prey.

**Damselflies** (Odonata) – Aquatic nymphs hatch from eggs that are laid in the water. Many overwinter as nymphs, which crawl up on vegetation in the spring to emerge as adults. Predators of invertebrates and sometimes vertebrates.

**Dragonflies** (Odonata) – Same as above.

**Mayflies** (Ephemeroptera) – Overwinter as aquatic nymphs. Diet is mostly algae or detritus.

**Springtails** (Collembola) – Feed on detritus, algae, fungi or dead animal matter.

**Fishflies and Alderflies** (Megaloptera) – Aquatic larvae are active predators that feed on aquatic insects, worms, crustaceans, snails and clams.

**Leeches** (Hirudinea) – Worm-like, soft-bodied organisms without legs and suckers at either end of the body that attach to hosts and suck fluids from other animals.

**Snails and clams** (Mollusca) – Snails scrape algae and other organic matter from ponds substrates. Clams are filter feeders that live on phytoplankton, zooplankton, detritus and bacteria.

**Aquatic Earthworms** (Oligochaeta) – Most eat detritus.

**Flies** (Diptera) – Aquatic larvae have diverse feeding habits.

**Water Scorpions** (Nepidae) – Predators that prey upon various types of small aquatic animals

**Backswimmers** (Notonectidae) - Predators that feed on other insects and occasionally on tadpoles and small fish and suck the body juices from their prey.

**Pygmy Backswimmers** (Pleidae) - Predators that feed on other insects and occasionally on tadpoles and small fish.

**Giant Water Bugs** (Belostomatidae) - Predators that feed on other insects, snails, tadpoles, and even small fish.

**Water Measurers** (Hydrometridae) - Predators that feed on smaller invertebrates on or just below the water surface.

**Water Boatmen** (Corixidae) – Sucking mouth parts are used to eat algae and small aquatic organisms. Some are predaceous and feed on mosquito larvae.

**Creeping Water Bugs** (Naucoridae) – These bugs feed on various small aquatic animals.

**Water Striders** (Gerridae, Veliidae, Mesoveliidae) – Able to run on the surface, these animals prey on insects that fall on the surface of the water.

**Whirligig Beetles** (Gyrinidae) - Beetles that swim on the surface or underwater and are primarily scavengers.

**Crawling Water Beetles** (Halplidae) – Beetles that live in or near water and feed on algae and plants.

**Diving Beetles** (Dytiscidae) - Most are predators. Prey include worms and tadpoles.

**Water Scavenger Beetles** (Hydrophilidae) – Primarily scavengers that feed on detritus