

# Predacious Diving Beetle

Order: Coleoptera Family: Dytiscidae

Number of species in North America: 300

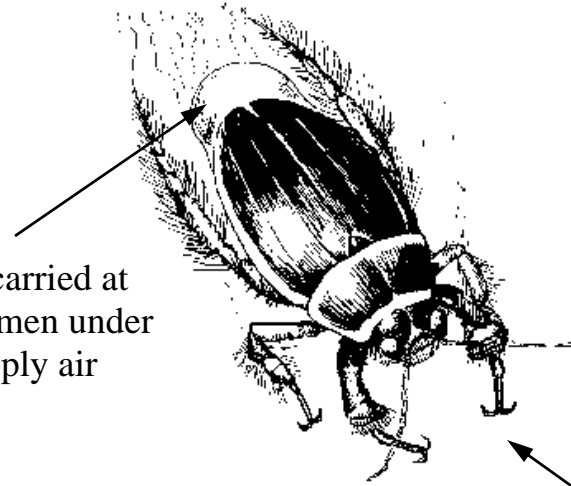


CREEK CONNECTIONS,  
Allegheny College

Size: 2-50mm (adult)



Air bubble carried at end of abdomen under water to supply air



Breathe through spiracles at end of abdomen when at surface and capture air pocket to breath while diving



2 prominent claws

ADULT DIVING BEETLES

Breathe dissolved oxygen through gills or spiracles at end of abdomen

DIVING BEETLE LARVAE  
(nicknamed Water Tiger)



Gills protrude and wave to collect water

Credits: McCafferty, W. Patrick. *Aquatic Entomology*, 1981.

**Diet:** predator. Insects, small fish.  
**Food for:** birds and mammals, game fish.  
**Habitat:** standing water of ponds and streams esp. with muddy bottoms  
**Movement:** Clingers, – sit perfectly still until prey comes then lunges and catches prey  
**Breathing:** Through spiracles or gills at end of abdomen (larva) and spiracles (adults).  
**Water Quality Indicator:** Group I– generally sensitive to pollution; a large number indicates GOOD water quality.

## Life Cycle Corner

Complete metamorphosis

Generally return to water as adults and hunt insects and small fish. However they can fly and are attracted to light so can sometimes be found near houses

Pupae crawl into terrestrial chambers in mud at the edge of the water then emerge in about a week as adults

Eggs are laid either in water or on aquatic vegetation.

Larval stage called water tiger for voracious appetite



Larval diving beetle