

# Stonefly Nymph

Size: 5-35mm

Order: Plecoptera

Families: Perlidae– Common

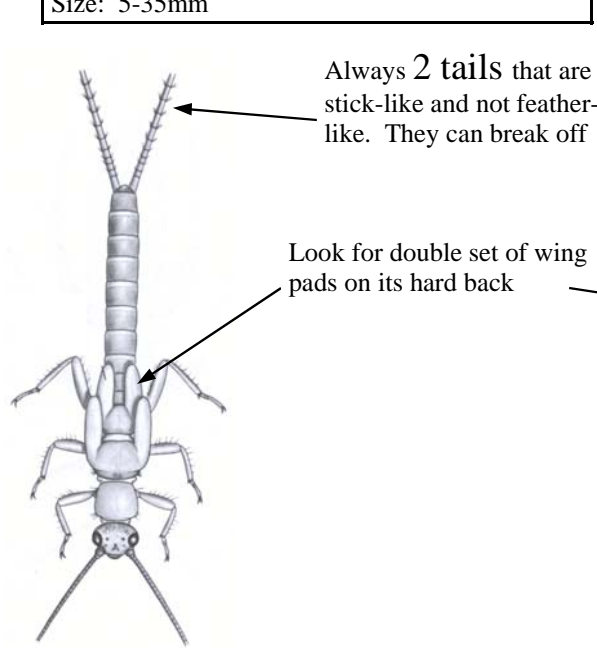
Perlodidae– Perlodid

Leuctridae– Rolledwinged



CREEK CONNECTIONS,  
Allegheny College

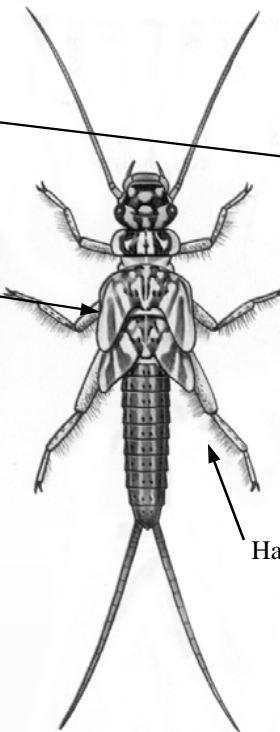
Number of species in North America: 500



SLENDER WINTER STONEFLY NYMPH

Always 2 tails that are stick-like and not feather-like. They can break off

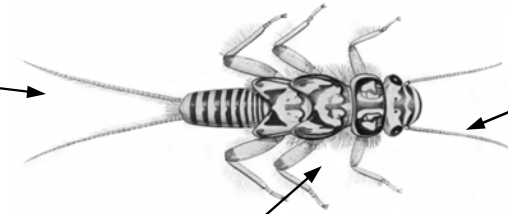
Look for double set of wing pads on its hard back



PERLODID STONEFLY NYMPH

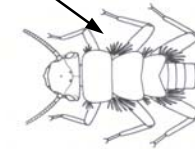
Hairy legs with 2 claws at end

COMMON STONEFLY NYMPH



Long, slender antennae

Some stoneflies have hairy looking gills around base of legs



COMMON STONEFLY ADULT

## SIMILAR TO: Mayfly Nymph

- Stoneflies have 2 tails, while mayflies have 3.
- Stoneflies have 2 claws, while mayflies have 1.
- Stoneflies do not have abdominal gills, while mayflies do.
- Stoneflies have long antenna, while mayflies have short antenna.
- Stoneflies have a double set of wings, while mayflies have one set.

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

**Diet:** Small aquatic plants (periphyton) and animals; organic debris; fungi and bacteria from decomposing leaves.

**Food for:** Fish (especially trout), predaceous water insects, crayfish.

**Habitat:** Bottom dweller, on/under rocks, flowing waters (streams and rivers), rarely ponds or lakes.

**Movement:** Crawling on the bottom, some drift.

**Breathing:** Gills, which are sometimes visible around base of legs; will do "push-ups" to elevate oxygen flow over body.

**Water Quality Indicator:** Group I– generally sensitive to pollution; a large number indicates GOOD water quality.

## Life Cycle Corner

### Incomplete metamorphosis

