

# Some Insects Found in Woodland Gardens Pond



Woodland Gardens Pond is homes to many insects like mayflies, mosquitoes, drone flies, caddisflies, alderflies, water bugs, water fleas, and water mites. Some insects live all their lives in ponds, while others live their larval and nymph stages in the pond and leave once they become adults. Pond insects feed on larvae of other insects found in the pond, decaying vegetation and algae.

## MAYFLY

Mayflies are usually found in fresh running water of ponds. They have leaf-like gills. On each side of the mayfly's abdomen are 7 pairs of gills that look like tiny leaves.



The mayfly nymphs have flat bodies, a flat head and flat legs which help them stick to lower surfaces of rocks and other rough surfaces. These nymphs are about 2.5 cm long, and usually have three tails attached to the abdomen. They also have 3 pairs of segmented legs ending in claws and visible wing pads. Mayfly nymphs are harmless and feed on algae and other decaying vegetation. Fish, trout, water bugs, etc eat these nymphs as food. The mayfly lives in the nymph stage for as long as a year, and when it becomes an adult, it flies into the sky.

During the evening mayflies are found flying over the pond. This is their mating time. Adult mayflies do not eat because their mouth parts become useless once they become adults. So, as soon as they mate, the female lays eggs in the pond and the parent mayflies die.

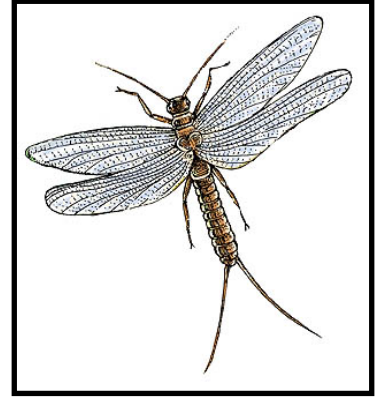
## WATER BUGS

The term 'bug' is often used to refer to the term 'insects', however, not all insects are bugs. The difference between water bugs and other water insects is its jointed beak, which is used for sucking juices. Water boatmen, giant water bugs and backswimmers are the types of water bugs.



# STONEFLY

Stoneflies are found in running water streams and pools, and are usually not found in quiet, still ponds. They look a lot like mayflies, except they don't have leaf-shaped gills; and instead have thread-like gills. Two long antennae and three segmented legs ending into two claws on each foot, four wings (which are held flat in resting position) and two tails on the adult are features of this insect.



# DRAGONFLY



Female dragonflies lay their eggs on the surface of water plants, which then hatch into nymphs. The nymphs spend most of their life below the surface of water, using their large lips to catch tadpoles, snails, insect larvae, etc. as food. The dragonfly can live in the larval stage from one year, to a period as long as five years, before it metamorphoses into an adult.

Adult dragonflies have long, transparent wings which are held stiffly away and perpendicular to the body like a helicopter's wings. Six legs, 360 degree vision, and brown or green elongated body are some other features of this insect. They are found flying across ponds, scooping down to catch little insects and mosquitoes. Despite their ferocious appearance, they are harmless insects which do not sting or bite human beings.



# WATER STRIDER

These pond insects are seen to skate or walk on the water. Their bodies are covered with black-brown hair and are easy to identify because of their second and third long legs (double the size of the body). The tiny water repellent hairs on legs have tiny air bubbles on them, which allow them to skate on the water surface. The front legs are shorter and are used to attack and catch the prey. It uses the vibrations on the water surface to locate its prey, then uses its piercing and sucking type of mouth to suck the prey dry.

