

Water Penny Beetle Fact Sheet

Order: *Coleoptera*

Family: *Psephenidae*

Number of species in North America: 16

Size: 3–10 mm (larvae)

Diet: Larvae are scrappers, they feed on algae, especially diatoms, that collect on rocks and stones in the stream, adults may not feed.

Food for: Trout, predaceous water insects.

Habitat: Larvae can be found on rocks and stones in areas with riffles. Adults can be found

on land near water.

Movement: Larvae are clingers; they are able to grip rocks tightly in areas with strong currents.

Breathing: Larvae collect oxygen through gills on underside of abdomen.

Water Quality Indicator: Group I—can exist under a limited range of water quality conditions; a large number indicates good water quality.

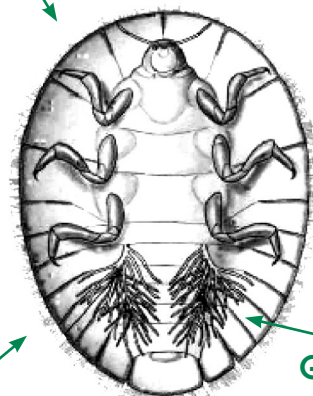
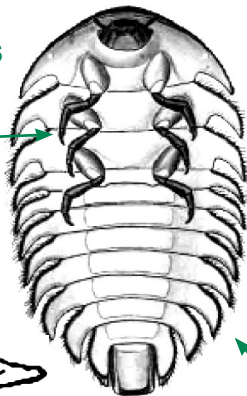
Jaws have thin sharp edge to scrape algae.

Dense fringe of fine hairs to increase grip on rocks and stones.

Adults can be found on rocks and logs above the water surface.

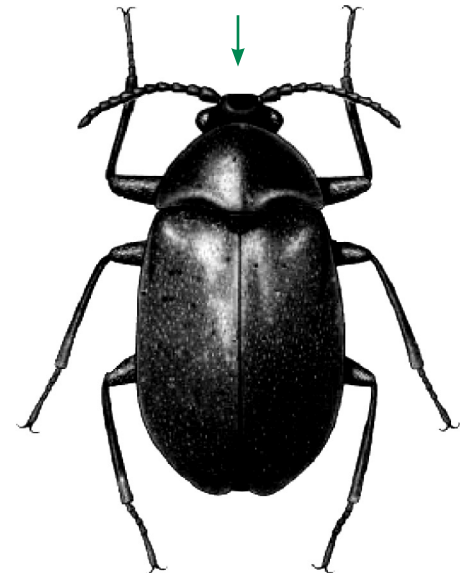
Single hooks at the end of legs.

Side view (larva).



Gills

Thin, flat, flexible plates to help mold body to rock shape.



EUBRIINAE LARVA (ventral)

PSEPHENINAE LARVA (ventral)

ADULT WATER PENNY BEETLE

Life Cycle Corner

Complete Metamorphosis 1–2 years to complete life cycle



Little is known about adults, they are thought to live for only a short period of time.

Pupate on protected rocks near the water surface.

Mature larvae crawl out of water.

Eggs are deposited in patches. Each patch is a single layer contains 400–600 bright yellow eggs.

Larvae are facultative. They can not live in areas with large concentrations of algae and sediments.

Images: McCafferty, W. Patrick. *Aquatic Entomology*, 1981.
Voshell, Reese J. Jr. *A Guide to Common Freshwater Invertebrates of North America*, 2002.



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