

Mosquito Larvae Fact Sheet

Order: *Diptera*

Family: *Culicidae*

Number of species in North America: 166

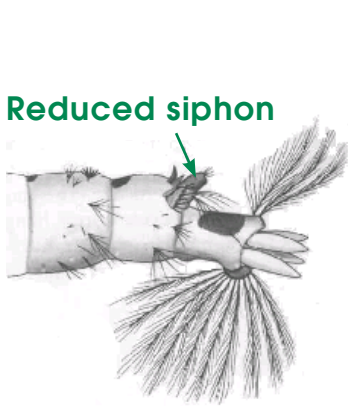
Size: 4-14 mm

Diet: Collector-filterers collect algae, bacteria, fungi and protozoa, some feed on other species of mosquito larva.

Habitat: Any type of still water habitat.

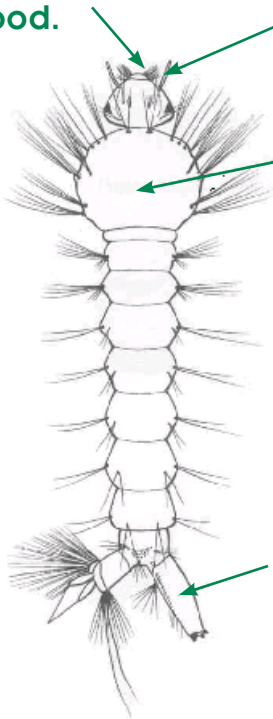
Movement: Swimmers, both larvae and pupae swim below the surface by alternately bending and unbending the body.

Breathing: Siphons and respiratory horns collect oxygen from air above the surface.



ANOPHELINEAE LARVA, end of abdomen.

Mouth brushes consist of 10 short rods used to collect food.



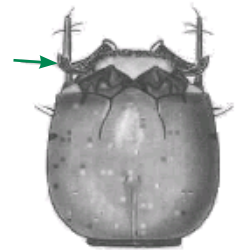
CULICINAE LARVA

Antenna

Mouth brush rods

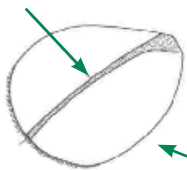
Thorax is thicker than abdomen.

Siphon sticks out above the water surface and is used to breathe air.

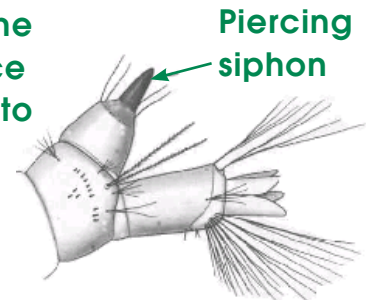


TOXORHYNCHITINAE LARVA, head

Midrib

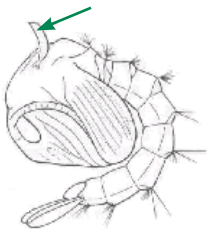


Paddle is used by pupa to swim in a jerking motion



CULICINAE LARVA, end of abdomen

Respiratory horn



Life Cycle Corner

Complete Metamorphosis

The pupae stage takes place in a sealed cocoon (fixed to an object).



Days later, the mosquito emerges as an adult.

Larva live in the water and shed their skin four times. Larvae live in the water from 4 to 14 days.



Eggs can remain dormant until there is sufficient water to hatch.



Eggs are deposited individually or in groups called rafts in the water or on a land area that will be flooded.

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

Voshell, Reese J. Jr. *A Guide to Common Freshwater Invertebrates of North America*, 2002.



CREEK CONNECTION
Allegheny College