**Stonefly Nymph**

**Order**: Plecoptera  
**Families**: Perlidae– Common Perlodidae– Perlodid Leuctridae– Rolledwinged

Number of species in North America: 500

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.

**SLENDER WINTER STONEFLY NYMPH**

**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.

**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.

**COMMON STONEFLY NYMPH**

Long, slender **antennae**

**Some stoneflies have hairy looking gills around base of legs**

**Hairy legs with 2 claws at end**

**PERLODID STONEFLY NYMPH**

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

**Life Cycle Corner**

**Incomplete metamorphosis**

Larva crawl out of water and then transform into adult.

Eggs deposited in water; a sticky coating keeps them on the bottom.

Larva or nymph stage is long (months-year). Molts up to 22 times.