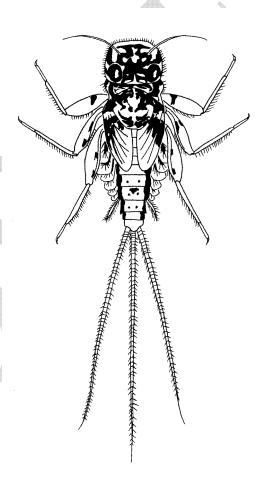
CHAPTER 4

EPHEMEROPTERA

(Mayflies)



Draft June 17, 2009

ORDER EPHEMEROPTERA

Mayflies

Mayfly larvae are found in a variety of locations including lakes, wetlands, streams, and rivers, but they are most common and diverse in lotic habitats. They are common and abundant in stream riffles and pools, at lake margins and in some cases lake bottoms. All mayfly larvae are aquatic with terrestrial adults. In most mayfly species the adult only lives for 1-2 days. Consequently, the majority of a mayfly's life is spent in the water as a larva. The adult lifespan is so short there is no need for the insect to feed and therefore the adult does not possess functional mouthparts. Mayflies are often an indicator of good water quality because most mayflies are relatively intolerant of pollution. Mayflies are also an important food source for fish.

Ephemeroptera Morphology

Most mayflies have three caudal (tails) (Figure 4.1) filaments although in some taxa the terminal filament (middle tail) is greatly reduced and there appear to be only two caudal filaments (only one genus actually lacks the terminal filament). Mayflies have gills on the dorsal surface of the abdomen (Figure 4.1), but the number and shape of these gills vary widely between taxa. All mayflies possess only one tarsal claw at the end of each leg (Figure 4.1). Characters such as gill shape, gill position, and tarsal claw shape are used to separate different mayfly families.

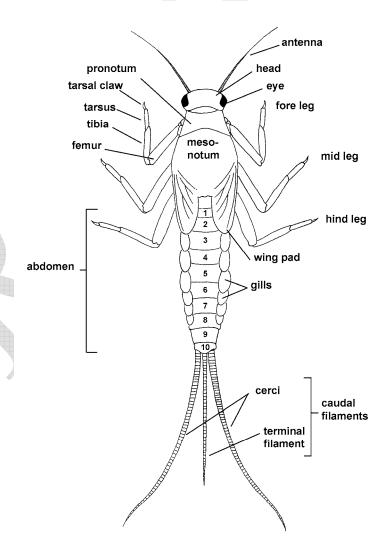
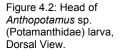


Figure 4.1: Dorsal view of ephemeropteran larva.

Key to Ephemeroptera Families (Larvae)





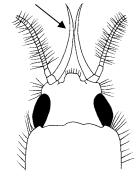


Figure 4.4: Head of Hexagenia limbata (Ephemeridae) larva, Dorsal View.



Figure 4.3: Gill of *Ephoron* sp. (Polymitarcyidae) larva.

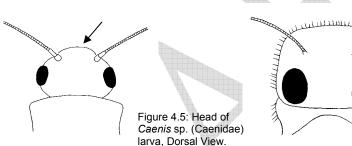


Figure 4.6: Head of Maccaffertium exiguum (Heptageniidae) larva, Dorsal View.

2(1) Abdominal gills held laterally (Figure 4.7); legs slender...... Potamanthidae p. 60

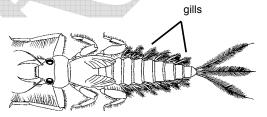


Figure 4.7: Anthopotamus sp. (Potamanthidae) larva, Dorsal View.

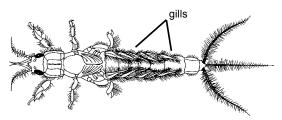


Figure 4.8: *Hexagenia limbata* (Ephemeridae) larva, Dorsal View.



Figure 4.9: Head of *Ephemera* sp. (Ephemeridae) larva, Lateral View.



Figure 4.10: Head of *Ephoron* sp. (Polymitarcyidae) larva, Lateral View.

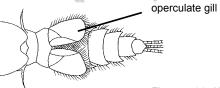


Figure 4.11: Abdomen of *Caenis* sp. (Caenidae) larva, Dorsal View.



Figure 4.13: Abdomen of Leptophlebia sp. (Leptophlebiidae) larva, Dorsal View.

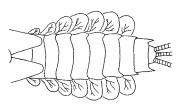


Figure 4.12: Abdomen of *Isonychia arida* (Isonychiidae) larva, Dorsal View.

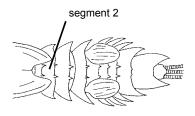


Figure 4.14: Abdomen of *Eurylophella doris* (Ephemerellidae) larva, Dorsal View.

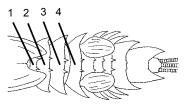


Figure 4.15: Abdomen of Eurylophella doris (Ephemerellidae) larva, Dorsal View.

5'. Gills present on abdominal segments 1-7 or 2-7 (Figure 4.17, Figure 4.16)6

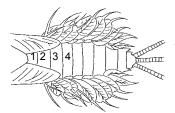


Figure 4.17: Abdomen of Leptophlebia sp. (Leptophlebiidae) larva, Dorsal View.

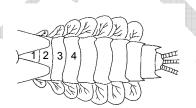


Figure 4.16: Abdomen of *Isonychia arida* (Isonychiidae) larva, Dorsal View.

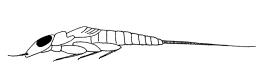


Figure 4.18: Heptageniidae larva, Lateral View.

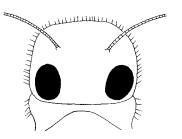
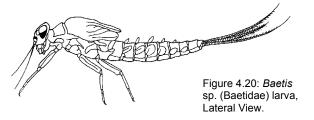


Figure 4.19: Head of Maccaffertium exiguum (Heptageniidae) larva, Dorsal View.



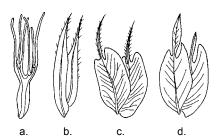


Figure 4.21: Gills of a) Habrophlebia sp., b) Paraleptophlebia sp., c) Leptophlebia sp., and d) Choroterpes sp. (Leptophlebiidae) larvae.







Figure 4.22: Gills of a) *Ameletus* sp. (Ameletidae), b) *Acanthametropodidae* sp. (Acanthametropodidae), and c) *Siphlonurus* sp. (Siphlonuridae) larva.

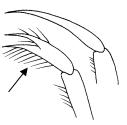


Figure 4.23: Tarsal claws of fore leg and hind leg of *Siphloplecton* sp. (Metretopodidae) larva.

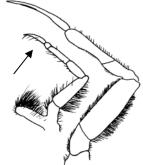


Figure 4.24: Tarsal claws of fore and hind leg of *Ametropus* sp. larvae.

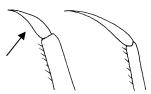


Figure 4.25: Tarsal claws of Baetidae larvae.



Figure 4.26: Tarsal claws of fore leg and hind leg of *Siphloplecton* sp. (Metretopodidae) larva.

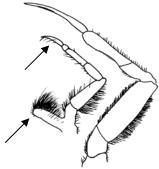


Figure 4.27: Tarsal claws of fore and hind leg of Ametropus sp. larvae.

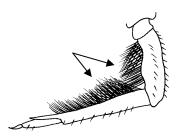


Figure 4.28: Leg of *Isonychia* sp. (Isonychiidae) larva.

10'. Scattered hairs present on fore legs but not as long or arrayed as above (Figure 4.29).... 12

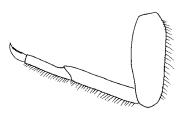
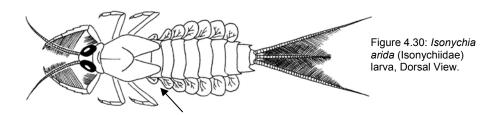


Figure 4.29: Leg of *Acentrella* sp. (Baetidae) larva.



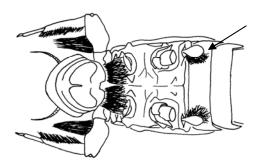
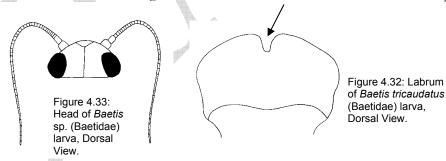


Figure 4.31: Head and thorax of *Lachlania sp.* (Oligoneuriidae) larva, Ventral View.



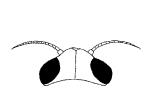


Figure 4.34: Leg of Siphlonurus sp. (Siphlonuridae) larva, Dorsal View.

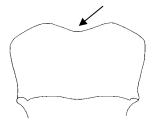


Figure 4.35: Labrum of *Siphlonurus* marshalli (Siphlonuridae) larva, Dorsal View.

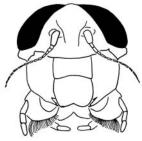


Figure 4.36: Head of *Ameletus sp.* (Ameletidae) larva.

13(12'). Tibiae and tarsi bowed (Figure 4.37); tarsal claws long and slender, with hind leg claws as long as tarsi (Figure 4.37); rare; large rivers; Not known from Mongolia

Acanthametropodidae p. 54

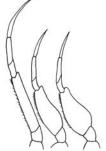


Figure 4.37: Legs of *Analetris* eximia (Acanthametropodidae) larva

13'. Tibiae and tarsi not bowed (Figure 4.38); tarsal claws usually not long an slender........... 14



Figure 4.38: Fore and hind legs of *Ameletus sp.* (Ameletidae) larva.

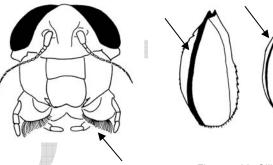


Figure 4.40: Head of Ameletus sp. (Ameletidae) larva.

Figure 4.39: Gills of Ameletus sp. (Ameletidae) larva.

Ephemeroptera Family Descriptions

Acanthametropodidae

Common Name: Acanthametropodid Mayflies

Feeding Group: Predators Tolerance Value: Unknown

Habitat: Larvae of acanthametropodids are found in rivers with swift

flow and sand and rock substrates.

Size: Large (20 mm)

Characteristics: Antennae less than 2x the width of head; tibiae and tarsi

bowed; tarsal claws long and slender, with hind leg claws as

long as tarsi

Notes: Not known from Mongolia. Larvae of this family are

adapted for dwelling in sand. This family is not commonly

collected due to the habitat in which they occur.



Figure 4.41:

Acanthametropus pecatonica
(Acanthametropodidae) larva,
Dorsal View.

Ameletidae

Common Name: Ameletid Minnow Mayflies **Feeding Group:** Scrapers, Collector/Gatherers

Tolerance Value: 0 (Low)

Habitat: Larvae of this family are found in small, swift streams on a

variety of substrates.

Size: Small to Medium (6-14 mm)

Characteristics: Antennae less than 2x the width of head; maxillae with

pectinate spines; gills consisting of a single oval-shaped plate with a sclerotized band; gills usually present on abdominal segments 1-7; long setae present on caudal filaments (present on both sides of terminal filament and only on the

inner side of the cerci).

Notes: These mayflies superficially look like brush-legged

(Isonychiidae) or small minnow (Baetidae) mayflies, but they can be separated by the presence of pectinate spines on the maxillae and the lack of rows of long hairs on the fore legs. Ameletid larvae are very good swimmers which allows them to navigate strong currents. Some species can inhabit temporary streams through a dormant egg stage when the

stream is dry.



Figure 4.42: Ameletus amador (Ameletidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Ametropodidae

Common Name: Sand Minnow Mayflies

Feeding Group: Collector/Filterers, Collector/Gatherers

Tolerance Value: Unknown

Habitat: Ametropodid larvae live in large rivers with relatively

strong current and firm sand.

Size: Medium (14-18mm)

Characteristics: Tarsal claws on fore legs simple; oval gills on abdominal

segments 1-7; spinous pad present on coxae of fore legs.

Notes: When at rest the larvae are partially buried in sand. The

long claws are possibly an adaptation for burrowing in sand. The feed on algae associated with the sand. This family is not commonly collected due to the habitat in

which they occur.

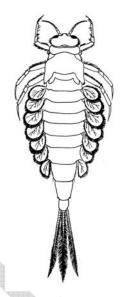


Figure 4.43: *Ametropus* sp. (Ametropodidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Baetidae

Common Name: Small Minnow Mayflies

Feeding Group: Collector/Gatherers, Scrapers

Tolerance Value: 4 (Moderate)

Habitat: These mayfly larvae are found in a variety of habitats

and are widespread. Some are found in streams of moderate current or in areas of slack water. Other

species are primarily restricted to lakes and ponds.

Size: Small to Medium (3-12 mm)

Characteristics: Antennae in most genera 2-3x longer than the width

of the head; gills present on abdominal segments 1 or 2 through 7; gill shape variable; 2-3 caudal filaments

present.

Notes: These mayflies are often very small and sometimes

very abundant when conditions permit. Most baetid mayflies are good swimmers, hence the name minnow mayfly. Some species can be very common in

polluted streams.

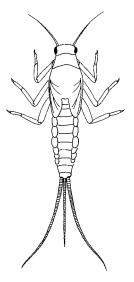
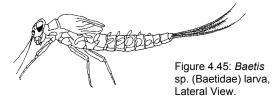


Figure 4.44: Generalized Baetidae larva, Dorsal View.



Caenidae

Common Name: Small Square-Gill Mayflies Feeding Group: Collector/Gatherers, Scrapers

Tolerance Value: 7 (High)

Habitat: Caenid mayfly larvae occur in streams in areas of

slow current, at the edges of lakes, and in wetlands.

Size: Small (2-8 mm)

Characteristics: Gills on abdominal segment 1 vestigial (small and

finger-like); gills on abdominal segment 2 square operculate (plate-like) and covering succeeding gills; operculate gills touch or overlap at midline; fringed gills present on abdominal segments 3-6; setae on caudal filaments restricted to apex of each

annulation.

Notes: The operculate gills do not take up dissolved

> oxygen, but instead are used to cover and protect the other gills, which absorb dissolved oxygen from the water. Since these mayflies occur in areas where the current is slow, sediment can rapidly settle on the gills and prevent dissolved oxygen In order to keep their gills free of sediment, caenid mayflies wave their operculate

gills.

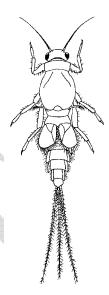


Figure 4.46: Caenis sp. (Caenidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Ephemerellidae

Common Name: Spiny Crawler Mayflies Feeding Group: Collector/Gatherers

Tolerance Value: 1 (Low)

Habitat: Spiny crawler mayflies occur in a variety of habitats,

> but are most common in flowing waters of streams and rivers. They can also occur in lake edge habitats.

Size: Small to Medium (4-15 mm)

Characteristics: Gills absent from abdominal segment 2; gills present

on abdominal segments 3-7 or 4-7.

Notes: When threatened, spiny crawler mayflies have an

interesting habit of raising their three tails up, presumably to appear larger. If this posture does not frighten the intruder, the mayfly will curl its abdomen over its body so that their tails project in front of the head. The tails will then be used to jab the attacker.



Figure 4.47: Eurylophella doris (Ephemerellidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Ephemeridae

Common Name: Common Burrowing Mayflies

Feeding Group: Collector/Gatherers

Tolerance Value: 4 (Moderate)

Habitat: Ephemerid mayflies are found in the soft silt or sand

of streams and lakes.

Size: Medium to Large (10-32 mm)

Characteristics: Upturned mandibular tusks present; frontal process

> between antennae; fore legs modified (widened) for burrowing; gills present on segments 1-7; gills on segment 1 are small (vestigial) and simple; gills on segments 2-7 forked with fringed margins (feathered)

and held over the abdomen.

Notes: Ephemerid mayflies make U-shaped burrows in soft

sediments. Within this burrow these mayflies generate flow through the burrow by moving their gills. This current brings dissolved oxygen and food particles into the burrow. When the adults emerge on warm summer evenings they can cause problems as they can cover bridges, buildings, and vehicles near lakes and

streams where they occur.

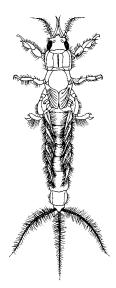


Figure 4.48: Hexagenia limbata (Ephemeridae) larva, Dorsal View.

Heptageniidae

Common Name: Flathead Mayflies

Feeding Group: Scrapers **Tolerance Value:** 4 (Moderate)

Habitat: Flathead mayflies are most common in slow to

fast flowing streams where they occur on the surface of rocks, logs, vegetation, and leaves.

Size: Small to large (5-20 mm)

Characteristics: Body, head, and legs (femora) flattened;

mouthparts not visible from dorsal view; gills present on abdominal segments 1-7; only short

setae present on caudal filaments.

Notes: Flathead mayflies are well adapted for swift

> flowing waters. Their bodies, head, and legs are flattened which reduces drag by forcing water over the organism. Most of these mayflies feed on algae and microorganisms growing on rocks. One genus of heptageniid mayfly has only two tails, but can be separated from stoneflies by the presence

of a single tarsal claw at the end of each leg.

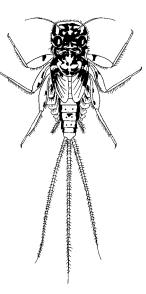


Figure 4.49: Maccaffertium exiguum (Heptageniidae) larva. Dorsal View.

Isonychiidae

Common Name: Brush-Legged Mayflies **Feeding Group:** Collector/Filterers

Tolerance Value: 2 (Low)

Habitat: Species of this family usually occur in streams with

swift to moderate current. They are commonly associated with tangles of vegetation consisting of

sticks, leaves and roots.

Size: Medium (8-17 mm)

Characteristics: Forelegs with a double row of long setae; gill plates

oval and present on abdominal segments 1-7; gills on segment 1 similar to other gills; gill fibrils shorter than plates; long hairs along the margins of caudal

filaments.

Notes: Isonychiids feed on algae, diatoms, and detritus

which they filter from the water using the brush-like hairs on their fore legs. They do this by clinging to the substrate with their middle legs and hind legs and holding their fore legs in the current to collect small particles in the water. Isonychiids then consume the material collected in their hairs. These mayflies are good swimmers, but they spend most of the time clinging to the substrate. The rows of hairs on the tails help these mayfly larvae swim by functioning as

a paddle.

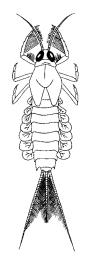


Figure 4.50: Isonychia arida (Isonychiidae) Iarva, Dorsal View.

Leptophlebiidae

Common Name: Prong-Gilled Mayflies Feeding Group: Collector/Gatherers

Tolerance Value: 2 (Low)

Habitat: The larvae of prong-gilled mayflies occur in a variety

of habitats including lakes, ponds, and swift and slow flowing streams. They are found on rocks and gravel,

leaf packs, and submerged roots.

Size: Small to medium (4-15 mm)

Characteristics: Gills on first abdominal segment usually slender and

finger-like; gills on abdominal segments 2-7 forked with variable shape (consisting of slender filaments, or broad and ending in slender filaments); setae on caudal filaments present at apex of each segment.

Notes: A common distinguishing characteristic of

leptophlebiid mayflies is the presence of forked gills. Unfortunately, these gills are commonly broken off

making identification difficult.

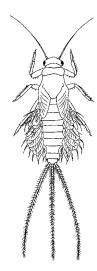


Figure 4.51: Leptophlebia sp. (Leptophlebiidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Metretopodidae

Common Name: Cleft-Footed Minnow Mayflies **Feeding Group:** Predators, Collector/Gatherers

Tolerance Value: 2 (Low)

Habitat: Metretopodid mayflies are generally collected from

vegetated margins of slow flowing streams and rivers.

Size: Medium (9-16 mm)

Characteristics: Tarsal claws on fore legs bifid (forked); spinous pad

absent from coxae of fore legs; oval gills on abdominal segments 1-7; terminal filament (middle tail) with long hairs on both sides; cerci (outer tails) with long hairs

only on inner margin.

Notes: One genus of this family has been collected in deep

dredges of large lakes. Cleft-footed mayflies are apparently very good swimmers and tend to be difficult to collect. This family is not commonly collected

possibly because they are active, strong swimmers.

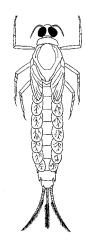


Figure 4.52: Siphloplecton sp. (Metretopodidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Oligoneuriidae

Common Name: Brush-Legged Mayflies **Feeding Group:** Collector/Filterers

Tolerance Value: Unknown

Habitat: Oligoneurids encountered in large streams with

considerable flow and shifting sand substrate and in riffles

of streams of varying size.

Size: Medium (8-12 mm)

Characteristics: Forelegs with a double row of long setae; gills on segment

1 ventral; gill fibrils longer than gill plate or consisting of fibrils only; gill plates oval and present on abdominal

segments 1-7.

Notes: Adults of this family are different from other mayfly

families in that they are swift fliers with modified wings.

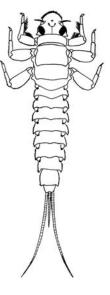


Figure 4.53: Chromarcys sp. (Oligoneuriidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Polymitarcyidae

Common Name: Pale Burrowing Mayflies Feeding Group: Collector/Gatherers, Filterers

Tolerance Value: 2 (Low)

Habitat: These mayflies burrow in rivers under rocks or in clay

banks.

Size: Medium to large (9-30 mm)

Down turned mandible tusks present; fore legs **Characteristics:**

> modified (widened) for burrowing; gills present on segments 1-7; gills on segment 1 are single or double; gills on segments 2-7 forked with fringed margins

(feathered) and held over the abdomen.

Notes: Pale burrowing mayflies are uncommon or are not

commonly collected, possibly due to the habitat in

which the larvae occur.

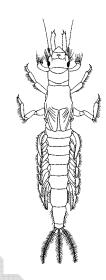


Figure 4.54: Tortopus incertus (Polymitarcyidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Potamanthidae

Common Name: Hacklegill Mayflies Collector/Filterers Feeding Group: Tolerance Value: 4 (Moderate)

Potamanthids generally occur in moderate to fast Habitat:

flowing streams and rivers.

Size: Medium (8-15 mm)

Characteristics: Mandibular tusks present; fore legs slender (not

> modified for burrowing); gills held laterally; feathery gills present on segments 1-7; gills on segment 1 are small (vestigial) and simple; gills on segments 2-7 forked with fringed margins and held laterally; caudal

filaments fringed with hairs.

The young larvae of potamanthids are burrowers in Notes:

> soft silt, but as the larvae mature they move to erosional habitats with cobble and gravel where they can be found on rocks. The potamanthid mayflies are closely related to other burrowing mayflies (Ephemeridae and Polymitarcyidae), but their fore

legs are not adapted for burrowing.



Figure 4.55: Anthopotamus sp. (Potamanthidae) larva, Dorsal View.

Siphlonuridae

Common Name: Primitive Minnow Mayflies **Feeding Group:** Collector/Gatherers

Tolerance Value: 7 (High)

Habitat: Primitive minnow mayflies can be found in

vegetation along large rivers, in the riffles of small

streams, in seeps, in swamps, and in ponds.

Size: Small to large (6-20 mm)

Characteristics: Antennae less than 2x the width of head; maxillae

without pectinate spines; gills usually present on abdominal segments 1-7; gills usually oval; long setae present on caudal filaments (present on both sides of terminal filament and only on the inner side

of the cerci).

Notes: These mayflies superficially look like brush-legged

(Isonychiidae) or small minnow (Baetidae) mayflies, but they can easily be separated by the lack of rows of long hairs on the fore legs and short antennae (<2x width of head). Like the small minnow mayflies, these larvae are also good swimmers. The rows of hairs on the tails help these mayfly larvae

swim by functioning as a paddle.

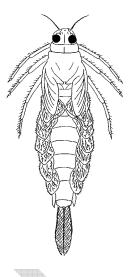


Figure 4.56: Siphlonurus occidentalis (Siphlonuridae) larva, Dorsal View.



Families and Genera of Ephemeroptera Known from Mongolia

Baetidae Ephemeridae Ametropodidae Acentrella *Ephemera* Ametropus Baetiella Ameletidae Metretopodidae Baetis Ameletus Metretopus Ephemerellidae Baetopus Siphlonuridae Drunella Centroptilum Siphlonurus Ephemerella Cloeon Isonychiidae Caenidae Isonychia Serratella Brachycercus Heptageniidae Torleya Caenis Cinygmulla Uracanthella **Ecdyonurus** Leptophlebiidae Oligoneuriidae Oligoneuriella Epeorus Leptophlebia Polymitarcyidae Paraleptophlebia Heptagenia Ephoron Iron Potamanthidae Nixe* Potamanthus Rhithrogena



^{*} Occurrence in Mongolia needs to be confirmed.