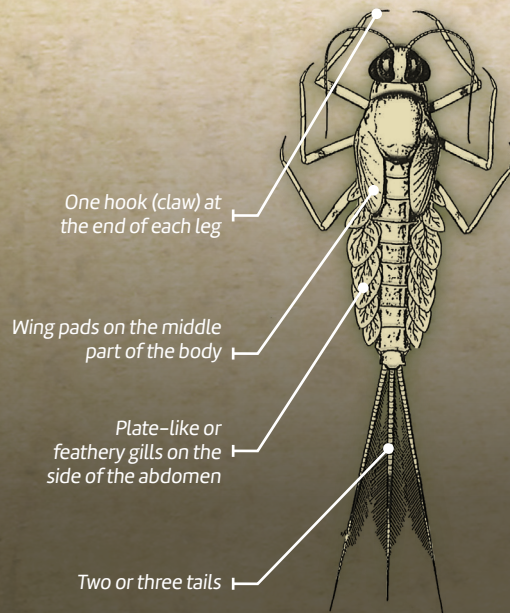


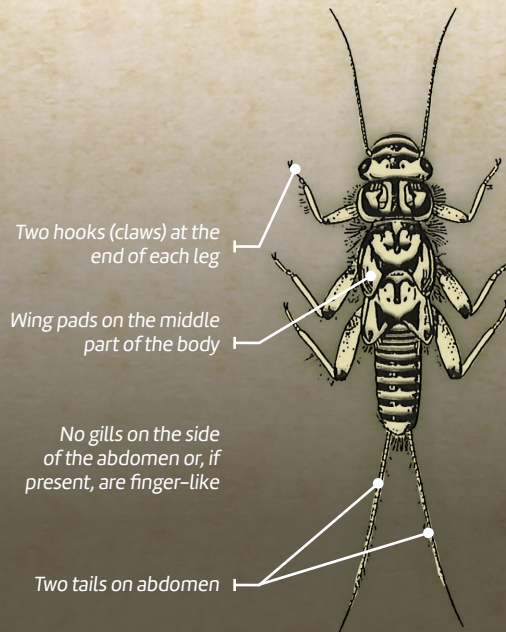
# THE BIG THREE

In streams, these three insect groups are widely known for giving a strong signal of stream health.



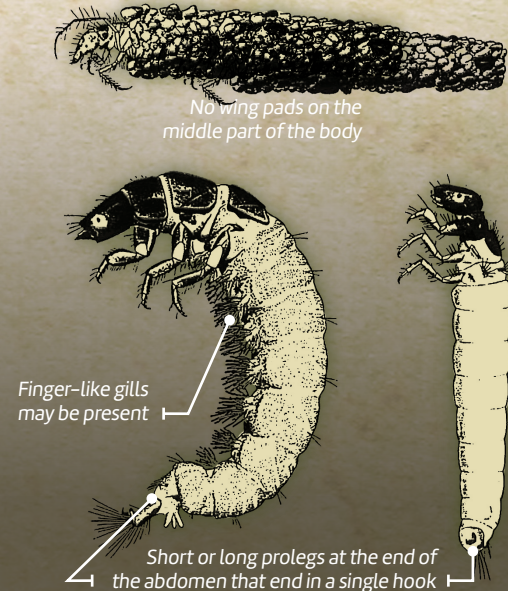
## MAYFLIES (Ephemeroptera)

Mayflies are abundant and diverse insects with gills on their abdomen and two or three tails. They scrape, graze, and filter food from the stream. Some are particularly sensitive to pollutants in the water.



## STONEFLIES (Plecoptera)

Stoneflies may be best known as the lions of the stream, with two tails and finger-like gills on their neck or thorax (if at all). Some prey on a variety of other stream bugs, but many species shred leaves and other organic debris. Stoneflies as a group are very sensitive to water quality and are the first to disappear as conditions deteriorate.



## CADDISFLIES (Trichoptera)

Caddisflies protect their soft backsides by building houses out of sand, pebbles, silk, twigs, or leaves. They filter, scavenge, scrape, and shred their food. One family of caddisflies rejects both the protective house and vegetarian lifestyle and crawls around the rock hunting prey. Caddisflies are diverse in species and in tolerance to disturbance.