

# Chironomidae Larvae

## Biology and Ecology of the aquatic Orthocladiinae

To most people midges are a nuisance – annoying creatures that can spoil a quiet evening or stick to the windscreen of your car in such numbers that you can't see through it. However, there are those who study these tiny insects with great passion, including the author of this book. Because the European Water Framework Directive requires the authorities to ascertain the presence status of macro-invertebrates in surface waters, their work gained more attention. Chironomids are a group of non-biting midges, the larvae of which are important in aquatic ecosystems.

Within the family Chironomidae, the subfamily Orthocladiinae is especially well represented in flowing water. Most of the species need a good supply of oxygen and few larvae are bottom dwellers. Many species emerge early in spring and may be scarce in summer. Other species live in stagnant and even temporary water bodies.

The author has brought together information about the life cycle and feeding behaviour of the larvae and their response to environmental factors such as oxygen conditions, current velocity and saprobity. Special attention has been paid to the interrelations between these factors. Problems with nomenclature and identification are also briefly treated.

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ISBN 978-90 5011 4592



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