

# Chironomidae Larvae

## Biology and Ecology of the Chironomini

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. The Chironomini larvae are the well-known red bloodworms. Almost all species in this group are coloured red by the presence of haemoglobin. They are the most important group of the Chironomidae family in stagnant water and can be very numerous, especially in polluted water. Many species are detritus feeders and play a part in the decomposition of organic material. Most species live in a tube of small particles, attached to the substrate.

The author has brought together a wealth of information on the biology and ecology of this group geared especially to water quality assessment. This collected knowledge is required in the interpretation of macroinvertebrate samples. An introduction gives background information on the influence of environmental factors on chironomid larvae.



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