



## water boatman

representative species

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Arthropoda
Class:	Insecta
Order:	Hemiptera
Family:	Corixidae

### Features

Water boatmen undergo incomplete metamorphosis (egg, nymph, adult). They have piercing and sucking mouthparts. Their middle and hind legs have long swimming hairs, which help the legs act as oars in the water. They swim upright and breathe through the tip of their abdomen. The front wings are hard at the base and membranous (thin, pliable) at the tip. The hind wings are membranous and shorter than the front wings. The dark gray or black body is elongate to oval in shape. The dorsal body surface is flattened with narrow, dark crosslines. They may be up to one inch long.

### Natural History

Water boatmen live in ponds and streams. They eat animals, plants, and decaying matter. Although water boatmen can swim fast, they spend much time clinging to submerged vegetation.

### Habitats

Mississippi River; Missouri River; interior rivers and streams; natural lakes and prairie marshes; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs

### Iowa Status

common; native

### Iowa Range

statewide

### Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001. *Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats* CD-ROM.