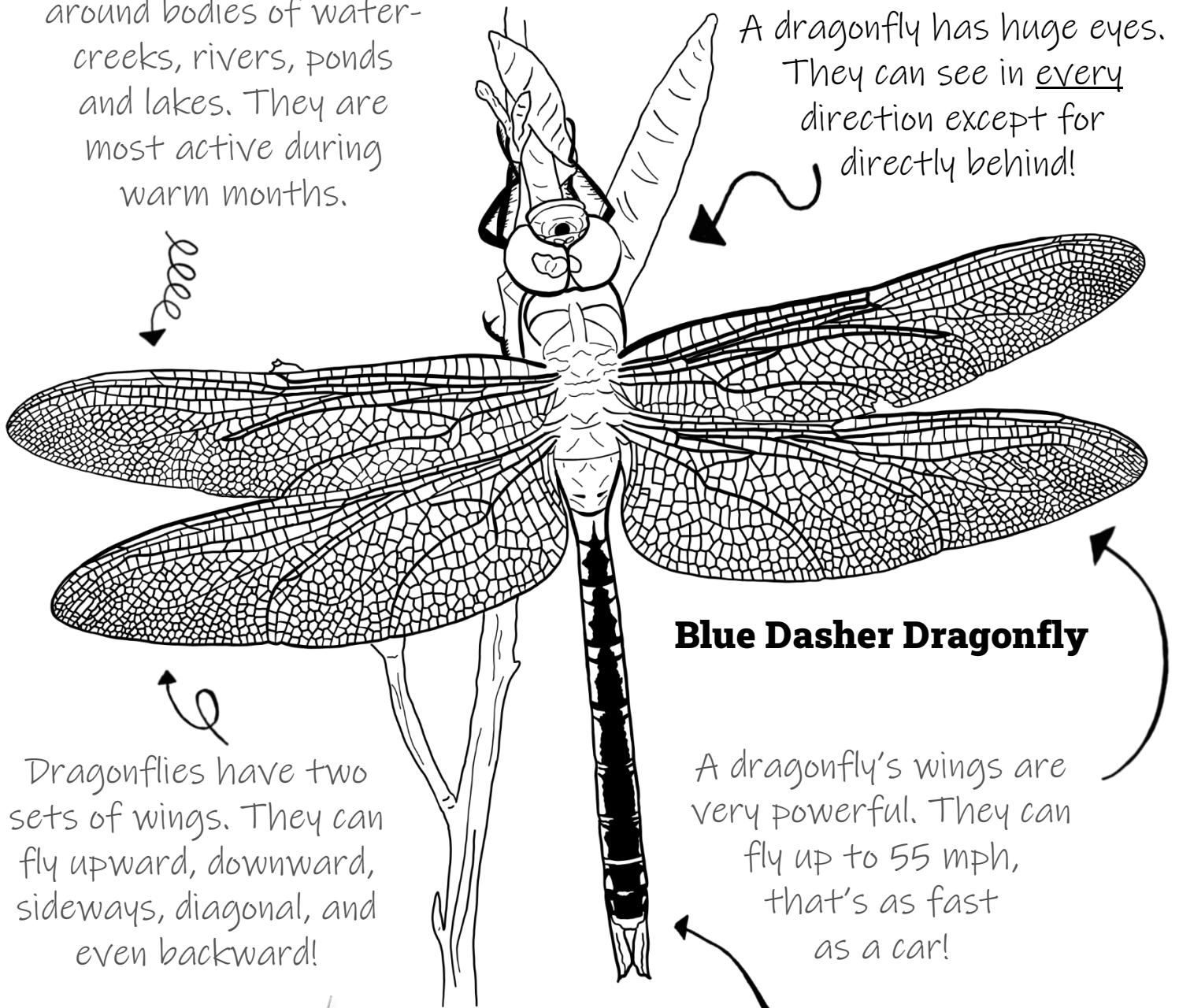


# Get to Know: Aquatic Insects

Look for dragonflies around bodies of water—creeks, rivers, ponds and lakes. They are most active during warm months.

A dragonfly has huge eyes. They can see in every direction except for directly behind!



**Blue Dasher Dragonfly**

Dragonflies have two sets of wings. They can fly upward, downward, sideways, diagonal, and even backward!

A dragonfly's wings are very powerful. They can fly up to 55 mph, that's as fast as a car!

Dragonfly Nymph



As predators, dragonflies feed on anything they can catch—mosquitoes, moths, flies and even other dragonflies!



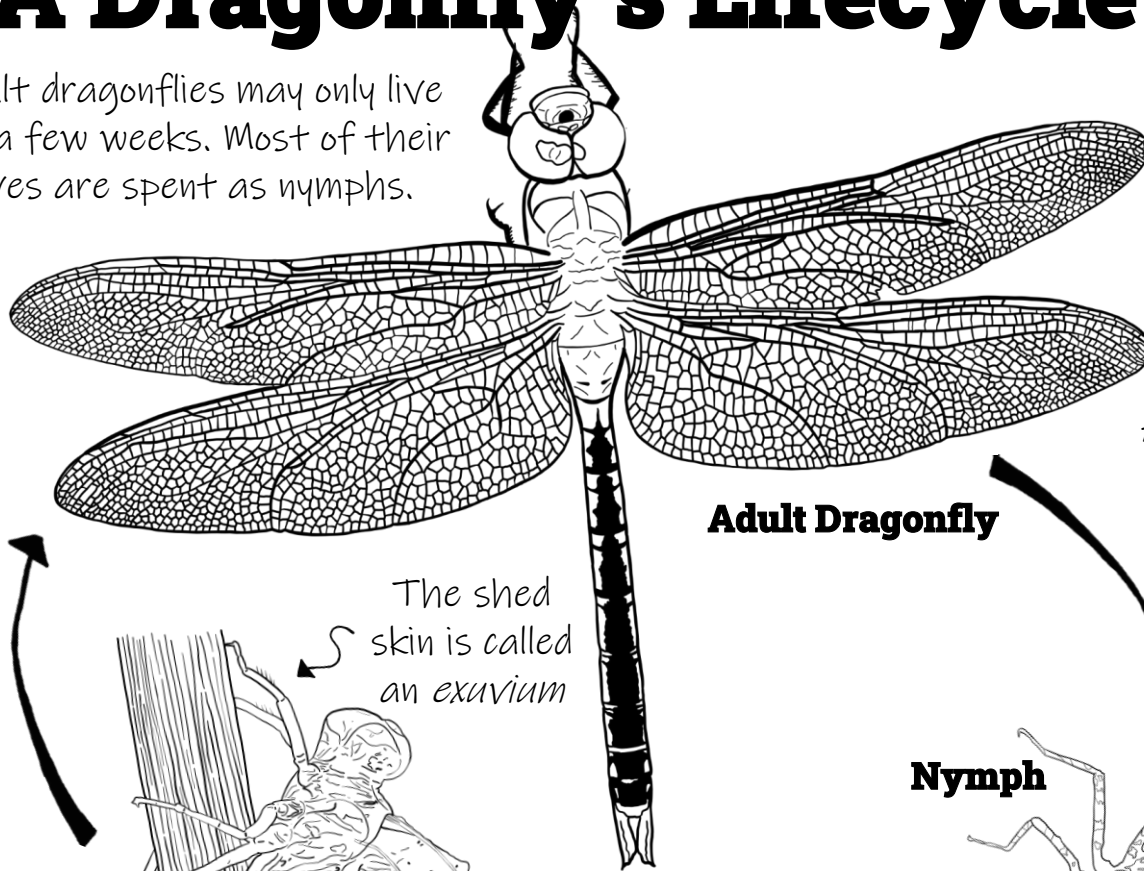
**For more visit:**

[www.FairfieldCountyParks.org](http://www.FairfieldCountyParks.org)

# A Dragonfly's Lifecycle



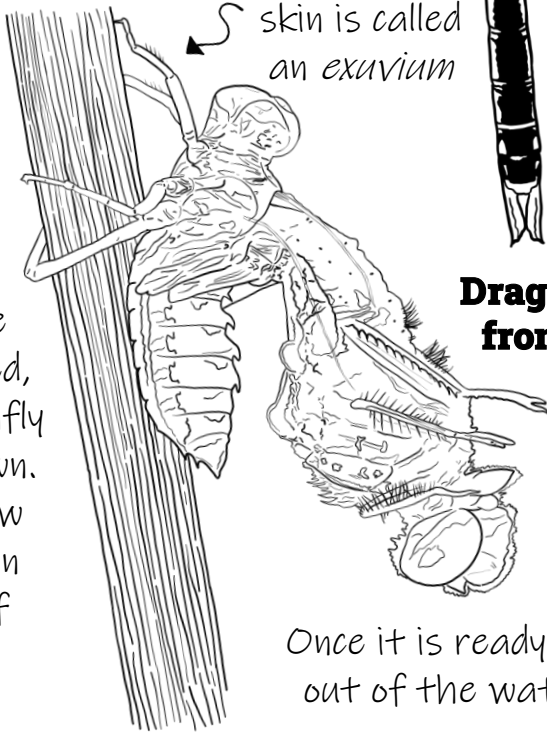
Adult dragonflies may only live for a few weeks. Most of their lives are spent as nymphs.



**Adult Dragonfly**

Adult dragonfly lays eggs in the water. These eggs hatch into nymphs.

The shed skin is called an *exuvium*

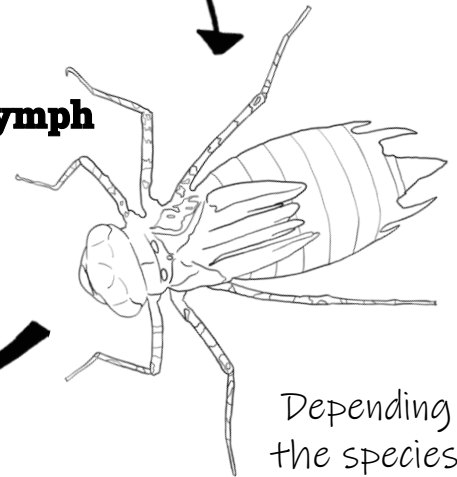


**Dragonfly emerging from nymph state**

Once the skin is shed, the dragonfly is full grown. It will now fly away in search of food and a mate.

Once it is ready, the nymph will crawl out of the water and shed its skin.

**Nymph**



Depending on the species, some dragonflies live for years as nymphs underwater.

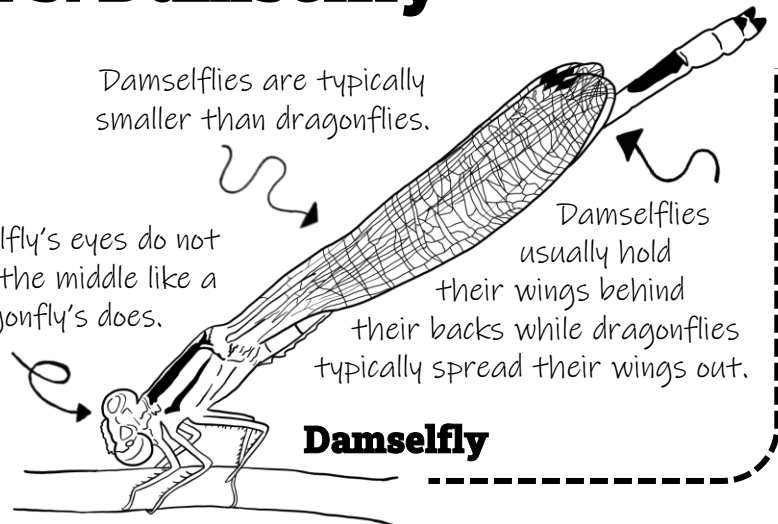
## Dragonfly vs. Damselfly

Dragonflies and Damselflies are both members of the order *Odonata*. They both live in and around bodies of water and have similar life cycles. Here are a few ways to tell the two apart with just a quick glance:

Damselflies are typically smaller than dragonflies.

A damselfly's eyes do not meet in the middle like a dragonfly's does.

Damselflies usually hold their wings behind their backs while dragonflies typically spread their wings out.



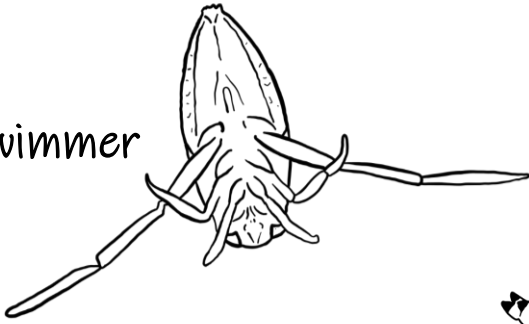
**Damselfly**

# Common Aquatic Insects

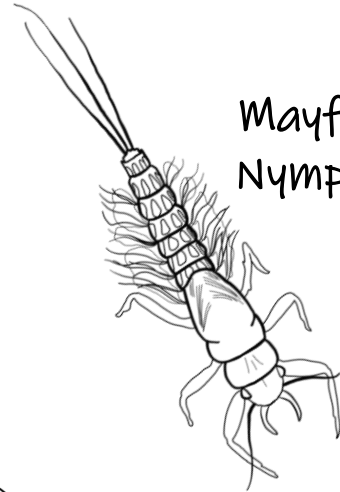


There are many insects that live in and around water. Here are just some of the most common insects you may find:

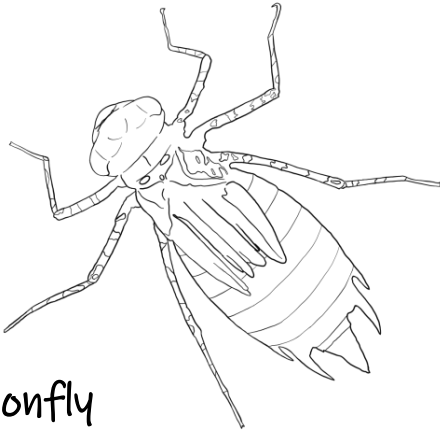
Backswimmer



Mayfly Nymph



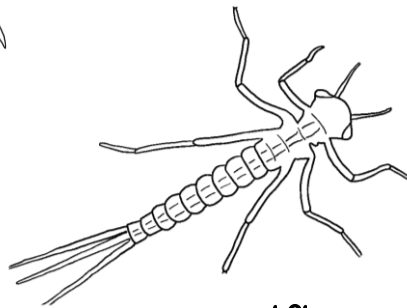
Dragonfly Nymph



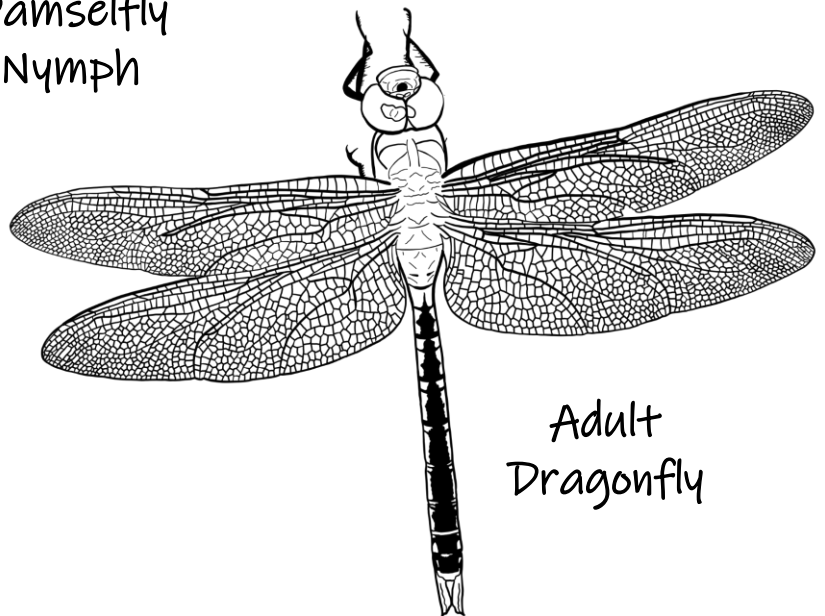
Adult Damselfly



Damselfly Nymph



Adult Dragonfly



Giant Water Bug

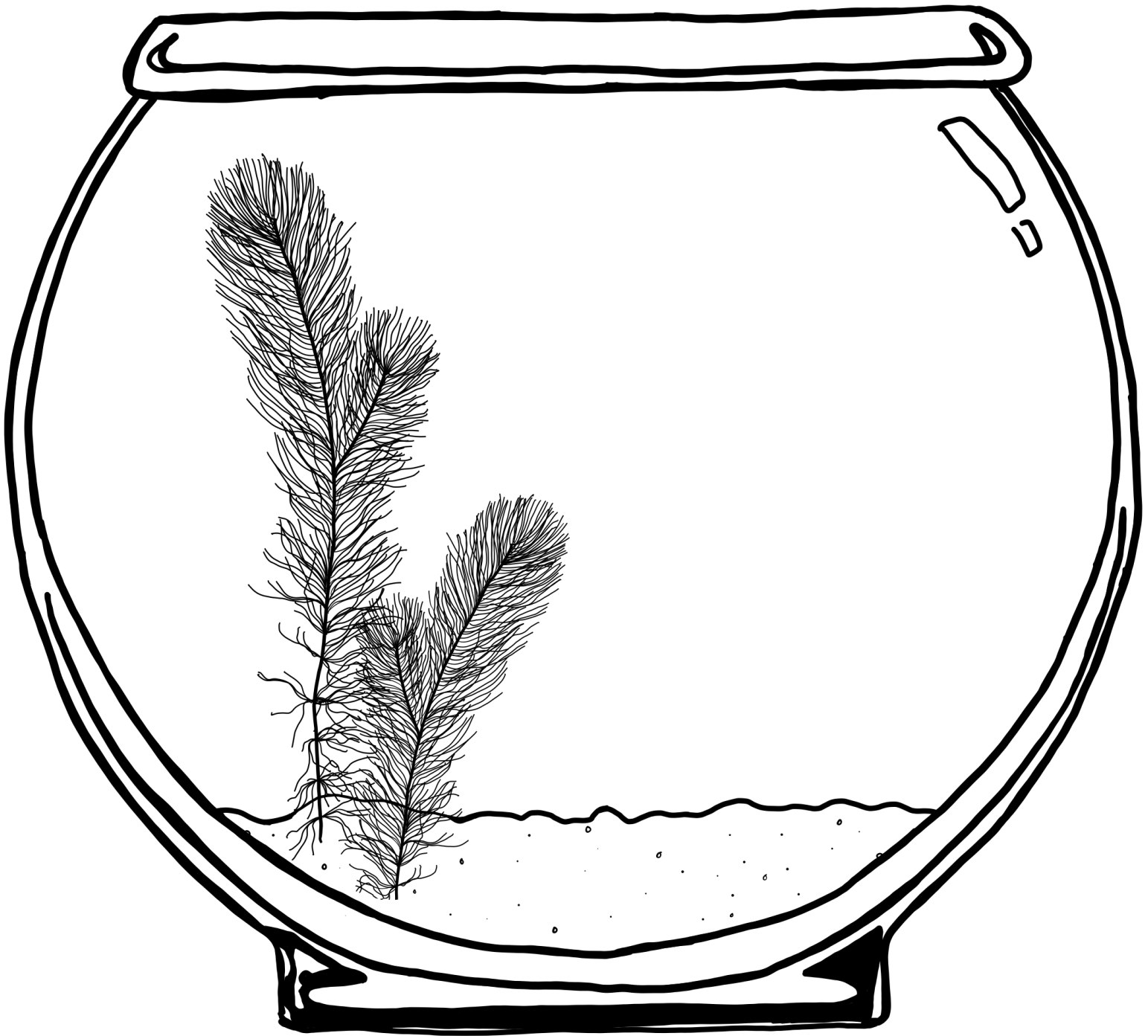


# My Aquarium



What aquatic insects can you find? Use a net to look in streams, shallow rivers, lakes or ponds.

Draw what you found here:



Don't forget to put everything back where you found it when you're finished!