



Freshwater Slater

Freshwater Slaters often look like the slaters you see in your garden. They are sometimes called sowbugs.

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Pollution tolerance	Very sensitive Sensitive Tolerant Very tolerant
Size	6 - 20 mm long

What they look like

Freshwater Slaters vary greatly in appearance, but they are all flattened from top to bottom (that is, their bodies are wider than they are thick). They have hard body segments, each bearing a pair of legs - they have seven pairs of legs. They also have two pairs of antennae, one pair longer than the other.

Where they live

Freshwater Slaters are found in freshwater lakes, swamps, springs, creeks and streams.

What they eat

Freshwater Slaters are scavengers and eat a variety of dead plant and animal material.

Pollution tolerance

Very tolerant, rating 2

While some species will tolerate salty or turbid water, Freshwater Slaters cannot tolerate chemical pollution. Pollution damages their delicate gills, which they use to breathe.

What's interesting about the Freshwater Slater?

- When the young emerges from the brood pouch, they look like the adult but have only six pairs of legs and six thoracic segments. They get the last segment and pair of legs as they moult.
- Large numbers in a waterway indicate organic enrichment. That is, the water contains large amounts of the remains of living organisms.

Where they fit in

Phylum Arthropoda > **Class** Crustacea
> **Order** Isopoda

