Macroinvertebrate keys based on the work of University of Wisconsin-Extension, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg Wisconsin

Identification Key #1

**Shells**

**Single Shell**
- spiral, opening on left
  - Pouch Snail
- spiral, opening on right
  - Gilled Snail
- coiled
  - Orb Snail

**Double Shell**
- small, whitish, tan, or brown
  - Pill or Fingernail Clam
  (Actual Size: 10mm)
- large, 2 to 8 inches, dark-colored
  - Freshwater Mussel

**Without Backbone (Invertebrates)**

**Labs**
- No Legs
  - Go to Key 2
- With Backbones (Vertebrates)
  - Go to Fish ID Sheet
  - and to Reptiles and Amphibians ID Sheet

**No Shells**

**Without Backbone (Invertebrates)**

**Legs**
- No Legs
  - Go to Key 2
- With Backbones (Vertebrates)
  - Go to Fish ID Sheet
  - and to Reptiles and Amphibians ID Sheet

**Ten or More Legs**

- lobster-like
  - Crayfish
- rust-colored spots; invasive species
  - Rusty Crayfish
  (Invasive Species)
- pinkish, feathery
  - Scud or Amphipod
  (Actual Size: 15mm)
- shrimp-like, swims on side
  - Fairy Shrimp
  (Actual Size: 15mm)
- walks on bottom
  - Aquatic Sowbug or Isopod

**Four Pairs of Legs**

- runs on top of water
  - Fishing Spider

**Three Pairs of Legs**

- No Wings
  - Go to Key 3
- Wings
  - Go to Key 4

Macroinvertebrate keys based on the work of University of Wisconsin-Extension, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Riveredge Nature Center, Northwest Wisconsin

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Identification Key #2

Microscopic
Go to Microscopic ID Sheet

No Legs

Wormlike

With Tentacles, Brushes, or Tails

suckers, expands and contracts
reddish brown
glides along bottom
tan to brown, long
small, hairlike, swims in S shape

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

No Legs

Wormlike

With Tentacles, Brushes, or Tails

suckers, expands and contracts
reddish brown
glides along bottom
tan to brown, long
small, hairlike, swims in S shape

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

No Legs

Wormlike

With Tentacles, Brushes, or Tails

suckers, expands and contracts
reddish brown
glides along bottom
tan to brown, long
small, hairlike, swims in S shape

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

No Legs

Wormlike

With Tentacles, Brushes, or Tails

suckers, expands and contracts
reddish brown
glides along bottom
tan to brown, long
small, hairlike, swims in S shape

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

No Legs

Wormlike

With Tentacles, Brushes, or Tails

suckers, expands and contracts
reddish brown
glides along bottom
tan to brown, long
small, hairlike, swims in S shape

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm

Leech

Tubiflex Worm

Flatworm or Planaria

Horsehair Worm
Identification Key #3

No Wings (Wing Pads May Be Present)

No Obvious Tails
- brown, featherlike, usually six legs, C-shaped
- six legs and prolegs on abdomen
- suction cup-like

Water Penny
(Actual Size: 10mm)

Riffle Beetle Larva
(Actual Size: 8mm)

Pyralid Caterpillar

One or Two Tails
- large body, hinged mouth
- lives in stone or stick case; green, tan, orange, or white body
- moves slowly; abdomen blunt, round on end; thick jaws

Dragonfly Larva

Caddisfly Larva

Water Scavenger Beetle Larva

Three Tails
- long tails, gills on abdomen
- plate-like tails, no gills on abdomen

Mayfly Larva

Damsel fly Larva

4 hooks on last segment, body creamy white

Whirligig Beetle Larva

Alderfly Larva

Dobsonfly Larva

Stonefly Larva

Predaceous Diving Beetle Larva

One or Two Tails
- small, "spines" on side
- large mouthparts, "spines" on side
- tails long and stiff
- hangs from surface, large mouth parts
- small, hops on surface

Springtail
(Actual Size: 2mm)