

Pond Skater (Family Gerridae)

A Hemipteran Bug (6 legs)

Size: 8 to 17mm

Mainly **carnivorous** – feeds on small invertebrates e.g. mosquitoes that fall into water by gripping with front legs and stabbing with pointed beak (rostrum). Will even hunt nymphs of their own species.

Breathes by diffusion through tiny holes (spiracles) on body surface.

Feet are covered with tiny hairs which trap air and enable the insect to 'skate' on the surface of the water. Uses its middle pair of legs to propel itself forwards, and its rear pair to steer left or right. Can jump on water to evade predators. Flies from water to hibernate on land during winter months.

