

Swimming Mayfly Nymph (*Baetis* sp.)

An Insect (6 legs) with no pupal stage (incomplete metamorphosis).

Size: Up to 12mm

Herbivore – Mainly grazes algae and plant debris.

Breathes using leaf-like gills along the side of the body. These gills have a large surface area for diffusion of O_2 and can be pulsed to provide a fresh current of water over their surfaces.

Mayfly nymphs can shed their exoskeleton up to 40 times before they are full size. They first emerge as a weak-flying sub-imago or 'dun' before moulting for the final time to become an adult or 'spinner'. They are the only insect to moult after gaining wings. Adults only live for 1 or 2 days and do not feed (mouthparts already lost).

