

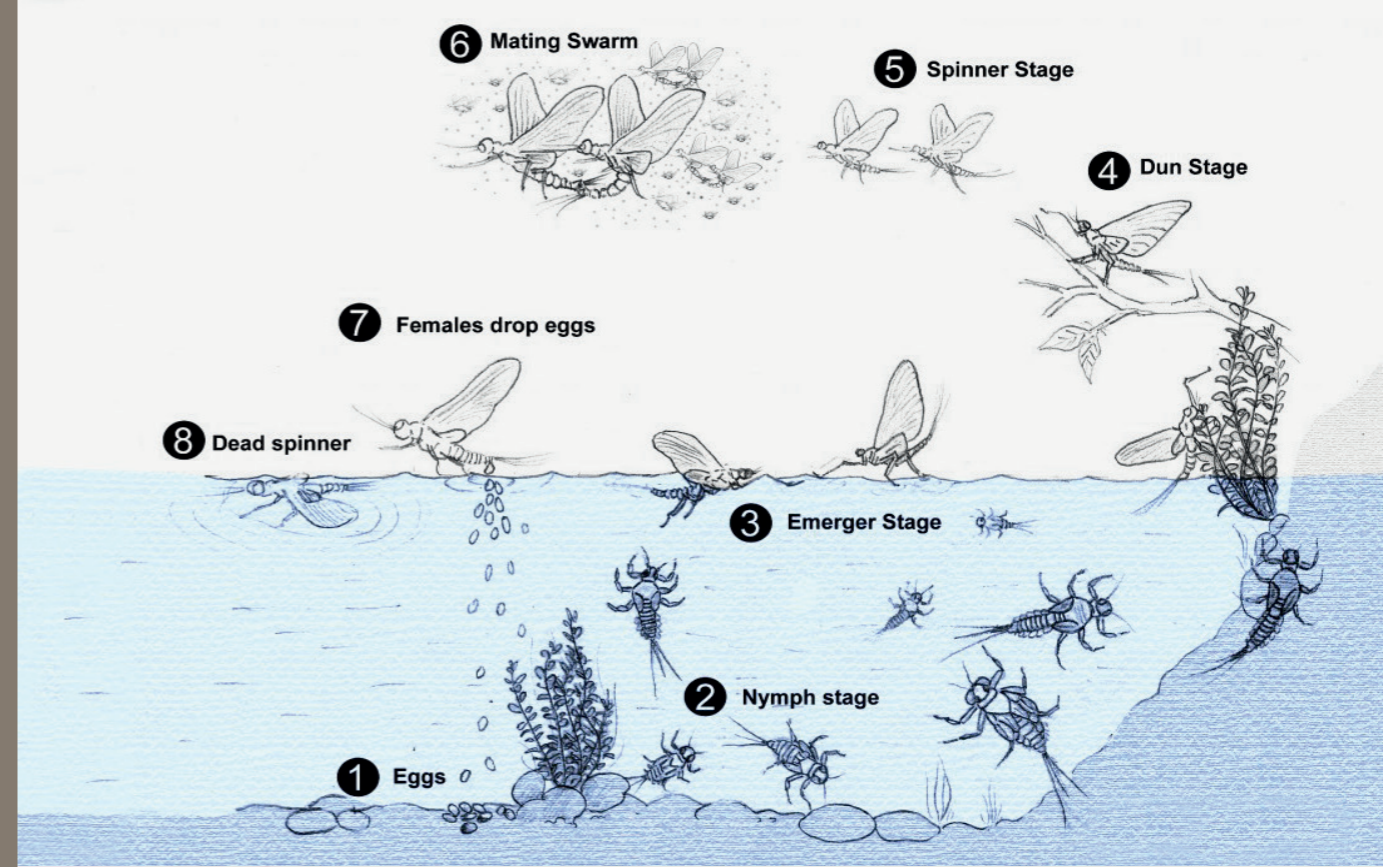


# FASCINATING RIVERFLY LIFE

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Within the UK there are more than 2500 insect species with a freshwater stage in their life cycle.



As juveniles (nymphs or larvae) they spend the best part of their life under water.







Sitting in the gravel or weeds they feed on plankton and algae. They are unique food source for fish like salmon, trout and grayling etcetera.



As adults they swarm in the air and are most important food for birds like swifts, swallows, flycatchers, wagtails, dippers and many more.



## Stonefly

As nymph they live up to 4 years in the water and grow as large as 4 cm.

As adults they spend only 2-4 weeks in the air before they mate and die.







High numbers of larvae and nymphs need healthy rivers and streams to grow up and become insects like this Mayfly beauty.



Water quality in many UK rivers is checked regularly by monitoring their insect life. Sampling is carried out by statutory bodies, anglers and conservation volunteers.





The invertebrates are identified and sorted into target groups, then all nymphs and larvae are counted to produce a score.





If numbers are lower than usual the monitoring is repeated nearby and if the results are bad again the Environment Agency can be alerted to check for pollutants which may have caused such a depletion, for example chemicals, sewage, slurry and other pollutants.

**It is vital to find these chronic pollutions before fish and birds starve and die.**





On Exmoor 20 river sites  
have been regularly monitored  
by volunteers since 2009.  
To date, the alarm has had to be  
raised just once so our rivers remain  
in relatively good condition.

**Let us all contribute so that they  
stay clean and healthy.**

**More Information:**

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

[www.buglife.org.uk](http://www.buglife.org.uk)

[www.aquascienceconsultancy.co.uk](http://www.aquascienceconsultancy.co.uk)

[www.matchahatch.com](http://www.matchahatch.com)

