



# Let's Go Mucking!

## Activity Booklet

After learning how to collect and identify macroinvertebrates with Rivers Are Alive, your students can go further by reading our fact sheets, completing the accompanying crossword puzzle, and doing a fun word search.

All questions in the crossword puzzle can be answered by reading the fact sheets.

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Let us know if you enjoyed doing this activity booklet with your class or if you have suggestions for improvement! Teachers, contact Nicole Biagi if you would like access to the answer keys.  
 Contact: Nicole Biagi, Outdoor Educator, [nbiagi@wildriversconservancy.org](mailto:nbiagi@wildriversconservancy.org)

Hello my name is...

## Backswimmer



- I swim on my back, that's how I got my name.
- I use my long back legs to chase after my prey.
- I am perfectly camouflaged with white on my back and black on my belly.
- Even though I primarily live in the water I can fly.
- I recommend not touching me with your hands, I bite and it hurts.

**RIVERS**  
ARE **ALIVE**

Hello my name is...

## Damselfly Nymph



- I'm just a baby. It takes up to 3 years of growing before I come out of the water and become an adult.
- My tails are actually my gills. They are very fragile so be careful when you hold me.
- Some people get me confused with my cousin the dragonfly. My body is long and slender.
- My favorite meal is other aquatic insects and tiny crustaceans.

**RIVERS**  
ARE **ALIVE**

Hello my name is...

## Dragonfly Nymph



- I'm just a baby. I live in the water and grow for 2 to 5 years before I come out of the water and become an adult.
- I catch my prey by shooting out my lower jaw like a chameleon tongue.
- I can get away from danger fast by blowing air out of my abdomen.
- Humans like me when I'm a grown up dragonfly, because I can eat 100 mosquitoes a day.

**RIVERS**  
ARE **ALIVE**

Hello my name is...

## Giant Water Bug



- I can grow to be really big; 2 inches or more!
- I'm so big I can catch tadpoles, fish and frogs for my meal.
- Water is in my name, but I am a strong flyer too.
- Be careful if you find me; hold me from the back or I might bite.

**RIVERS**  
ARE **ALIVE**

Hello my name is...

## Predaceous Diving Beetle



- As my name says, I am a predator. I'm not a picky eater; I eat whatever I can catch.
- I am one of the most common aquatic insects you can find.
- Unlike damselflies and dragonflies, I have a complete metamorphosis where I dig into the mud and form a pupa and then I emerge from the water as an adult.
- In my larval stage my nickname is the water tiger.

**RIVERS**  
ARE **ALIVE**

Hello my name is...

## Water Boatman



- Don't get me confused with my cousin the backswimmer; I swim on my belly.
- My back is dark, but I can look silver because I carry my air in a bubble like a scuba tank on my back.
- I have to hold onto vegetation so I stay underwater. My air bubble makes me float when I don't want to.
- I have long back legs that help me paddle through the water.

**RIVERS**  
ARE **ALIVE**

Hello my name is...

## Water Scorpion

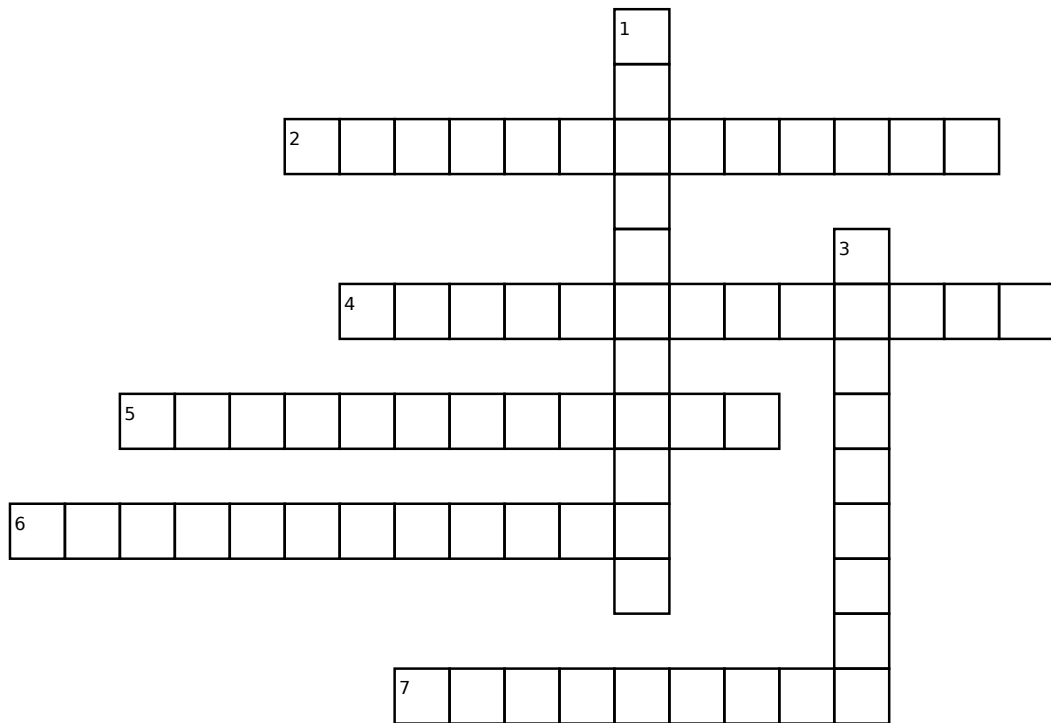


- I use my camouflage as a reed to ambush my prey. I can stand still for hours.
- Don't worry my tail isn't a stinger; it's more like a snorkel.
- Be careful when you handle me. I bite and it hurts.
- Even though I'm aquatic, I don't swim very well. I like slow moving water where I can crawl in the vegetation.

**RIVERS**  
ARE **ALIVE**



# Let's Go Mucking!

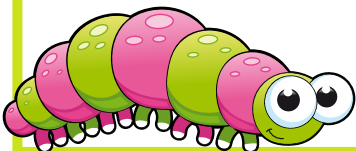


## Down:

1. I am perfectly camouflaged with white on my back and black on my belly.
3. I catch my prey by shooting out my lower jaw like a chameleon tongue.

## Across:

2. Don't worry -- my tail isn't a stinger; it's more like a snorkel.
4. I'm so big, I can catch tadpoles, fish, and frogs for my meals.
5. Don't get me confused with my cousin the backswimmer... I swim on my belly.
6. In my larval stage, my nickname is the water tiger.
7. Some people get me confused with my cousin the dragonfly. My body is long and slender.



# Let's Go Mucking!

X J Z W O K R W X T  
 S T S F M R M C K H  
 F E A R I S G F Y P  
 K I A D K S D R G S  
 N M N R P U H O X N  
 S N U S C O V G W A  
 W E S C E H L A A I  
 I T C L K C Q E T L  
 M V U P D P T D E E  
 V J D K D H T P R S

Tadpole

Insect

Search

Snail

Water

Swim

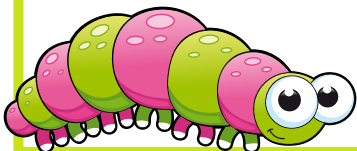
Muck

Fish

Frog

Scud

Net



# Let's Go Mucking!

O M W C K E S S X O D F U Z W I C R F H  
 A P W M W P V C F Z C D P E I J E E E F  
 I E E A J Q G A K C H G X U U Z A H D N  
 S D D M P Z Q J C O L L E C T I O N G D  
 V L E R A Z K L C R T N Z L Y I S G J F  
 L E M N A C B A C K S W I M M E R G K T  
 A L E H T G R M M T N J N U U A Q Q W B  
 J K Q Q H I O O V T D S U A O S V A C H  
 T V P M B L F N I C A U U G R C S O L C  
 E B E V F Z N I F N A D M M U U E Z O S  
 M G P G T G Q D C L V M P X A D A M Z W  
 Q M C O E Q Y A X A Y E O O E X R X L J  
 V D P R W T L D R X T O R U L N C X J N  
 M Z O Z A J A V I Q T I R T F E H X S R  
 U L J G T Y K T D O W Q O J E L U G T S  
 C L L K E I F Z I P P J G N M B A O A H  
 K M D I R M F I G O B B H N F T R G W S  
 I Z V S N A I L S T N N M E Y K K A E O  
 N G W U C C C V X H Q Z C T U P Z U T N  
 G L H H T A U X F D A M S E L F L Y L E

Macroinvertebrate Identification

Backswimmer

Vegetation

Damselfly

Dragonfly

Crayfish

Collection

Tadpole

Search

Snail

Camouflage

Water

Mucking

Scud

Net

