

# Simuliidae

Black flies  
Turkey gnats

Native to Maine

Freshwater

## Larval Form

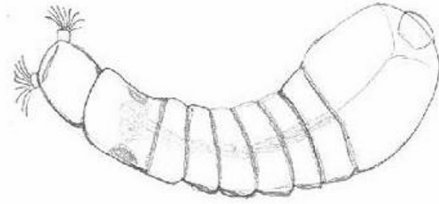


Jason Neuswanger, Troutnut.com

PERMITTED USE

Look for larvae attached to rocks in fast-running streams and rivers. Black fly larvae use tiny hooks at the end of their abdomens to hold on to stream bottom materials.

## Larva Illustration



Sue Donaldson



Look for worm-like larvae with a large bulge at one end. Black fly larvae have thick bristles around their mouth to help them filter food from the water moving around them.

## Variations and Details

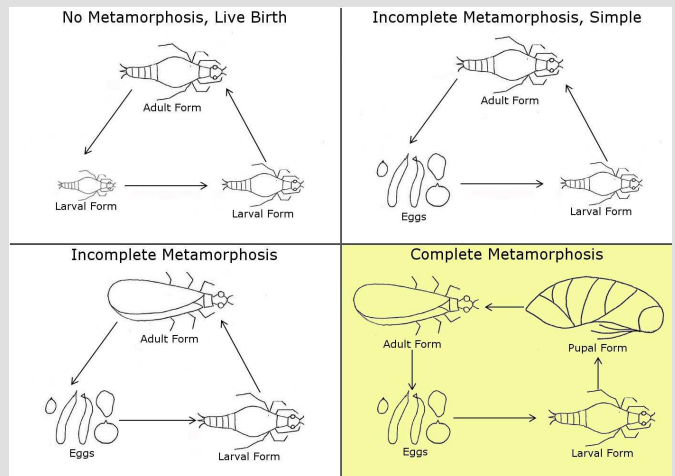


Troutnut.com, W. Cranshaw: C.S.U., D. Parker: Aqua

PERMITTED USE

Larvae vary in color and may be green, brown, or gray, but are usually black. The larvae molt 6 times, getting larger each time, before they pupate and change into adults.

## Life Cycle Diagram



## Adult Form



Head, Wikimedia



Look for small flies (less than 3 mm) that are black or gray with short legs and antennae. Adult males feed on nectar and adult females feed on nectar and blood.

## Similar Species

Black flies are similar to other true flies. The larvae of Simuliidae can be distinguished by their bulging tail end.

## Fun Fact

Black flies are attracted to mammals by the carbon dioxide and moisture in exhaled breath, dark colors, and perspiration. Black flies usually only bite during the day. After eating, some species of black fly rest for 2 to 3 days on vegetation to digest.

Moderately Tolerant of Pollution



Gulf of Maine  
Research Institute



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

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Help us improve this species card! Contact us with your updates.