

# Megaloptera

Dobsonfly  
Hellgrammite

Native to Maine

Freshwater  
Ponds, Lakes, Rivers, and Streams

## Larval Form

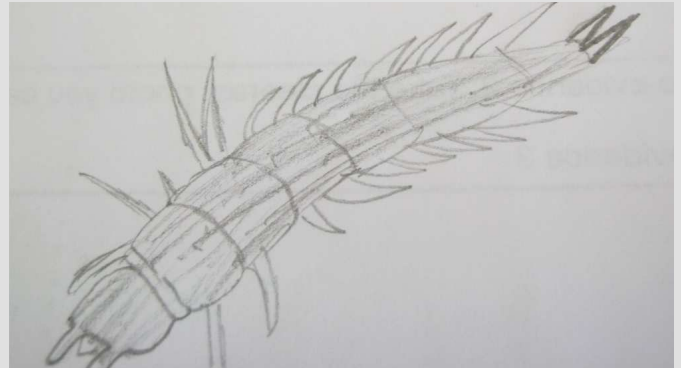


Bob Henricks



Look for larvae with pincers on their heads, tiny hooks on their abdomens, and gills all along the sides of their segmented bodies.

## Larva Illustration



VS user Bucktooth Beavers, SeDoMoCha Middle School



Look for larvae with fleshy, filamentous lateral appendages on each side of the abdomen. Abdomen of larvae ends in a pair of short, spiny prolegs (appendages that resemble legs).

## Variations and Details

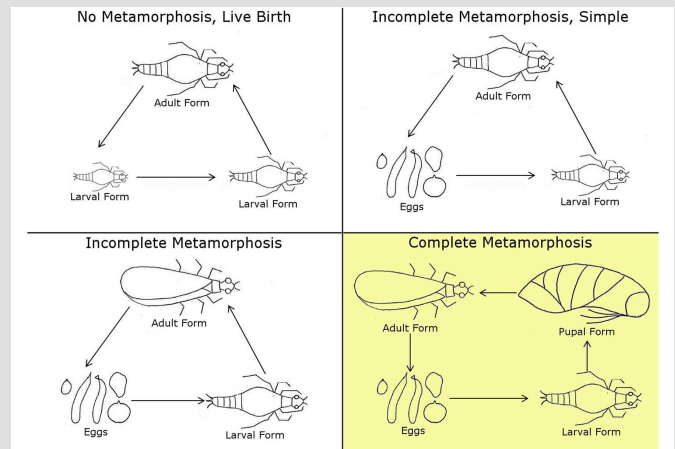


Bob Henricks



Look for larvae under rocks. Larvae move around by crawling. Males and females have different pincer shapes. Both the adult and larvae have a flat head and beady eyes.

## Life Cycle Diagram



## Adult Form



Flickr user holdit



Dobsonflies can reach up to 12.5 cm in length. Dobsonflies have long, multi-segmented antennae. Both the male and female dobsonflies have pincers as adults.

## Similar Species

Dobsonfly larvae can be confused with alderfly and fishfly larvae. Unlike dobsonflies, alderflies have their hairs on the abdomen pointing in an upward direction. Fishflies lack the very distinctive dobsonfly mandibles (pincers).

## Did You Know?

The male dobsonflies use their large mandibles to attract female mates. Otherwise, they are useless. The etymology of "hellgrammite" is a compound of "hell," "grim" (fierce, cruel) and "mite" (small creature).

## Intolerant of Pollution



Gulf of Maine  
Research Institute



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

Researched and created by Jeffrey Rubel

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