

# Crane Fly Larvae

Order: Diptera Family: Tipulidae

Number of species in North America: 300



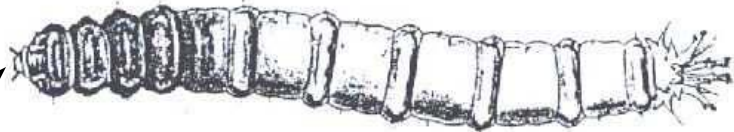
CREEK CONNECTIONS,  
Allegheny College

Size: 10-100 mm (larvae) / 25-38 mm (adult)

## LARVA

### Retracted

head (head can be pulled inside)



Fleshy, plump, segmented, worm-like body

Rear end disc section. Has breathing structure here.



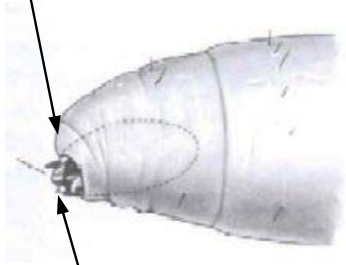
spiracular disc

Rear end disc section

spiracular lobe  
spiracle

No legs and no wings

Usually brown, white, or green in color.



retracted head

3 to 6 finger-like extensions surrounding an open disc at rear end

Sometimes a rear swollen section

Variety of rear ends



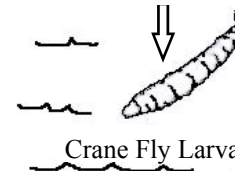
## ADULT

Credits: McCafferty, W. Patrick. *Aquatic Entomology*, 1981.

## Life Cycle Corner

Elongated, shiny, black eggs are deposited in soil or algae mats near shore and hatch in less than one month.

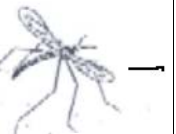
Complete metamorphosis



Crane Fly Larva



Pupa leaves water, goes to edge of pond and develops in muddy bank.



Adult pushes out of soil.

**Diet:** Small microorganisms (plants and animals), periphyton, even wood. Most eat plants.

**Food for:** Trout, bass (game fishes), beetles, predaceous water insects.

**Habitat:** Bottom dweller in streams, some in ponds, marshes, and lakes. Sometimes in algal growths or woody debris.

**Movement:** Cling to bottom, some swim.

**Breathing:** Through skin in well oxygenated water and from air through rear end in poorly oxygenated water.

**Water Quality Indicator:** Group II—Can tolerate some water pollution. Does better in well oxygenated water.