



# Trichoptera



(Caddis Flies)

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Family Leptoceridae, *Nectopsyche intervena*

## Overview

The Order Trichoptera (Tr-kop'-ter-a), or more commonly the Caddis Flies are a medium sized order of insects, widely distributed across nearly habitable land mass. More recent estimates have placed the number of species at about 7,000 worldwide. This is considerably lower than the 10,000 species estimated in 1973. The word Trichoptera describes the body characteristics of the adult insect. It means; Tricho=hair and ptera=wings. The adult Trichoptera possess a heavy covering of hairs on their wings, which are positioned in an inverted "V" over the body. The mouthparts consist of large, poorly developed palpi which are non-functioning in most adults. Their metamorphosis consists of an aquatic larvae stage followed by a much shorter adult stage. In their larval state the Trichoptera build [larval cases](#) from gravel, sand, and plant vegetation or in some cases a mixture all three. Trichoptera are generally found in areas of fresh water, streams and stagnant ponds where they are a vital link in the food chain for fish and water birds.

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