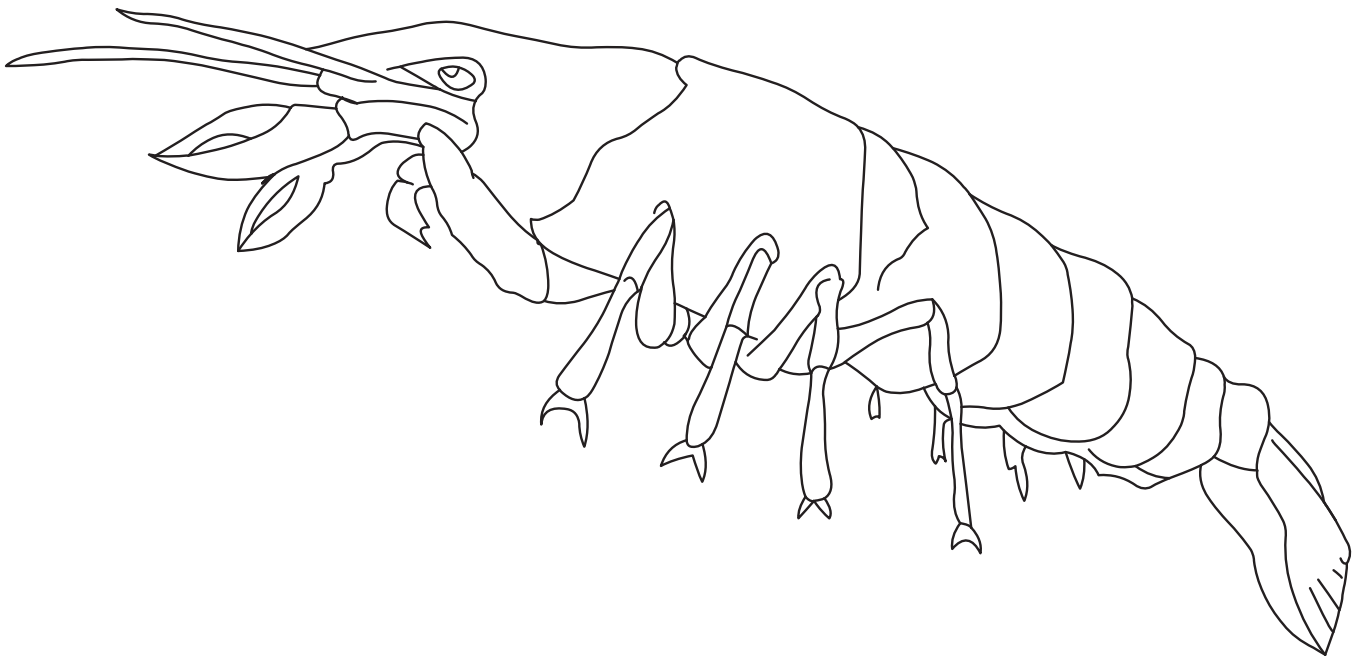




Inside the world of **macros**

Macroinvertebrates are animals without a backbone that you can see without using a microscope or magnifying glass. Macros that live on or in the ground beneath the water are called benthic macros and include snails, mussels, crayfish, worms and leeches. Scientists look for young (nymph or larva) benthic macros to measure water quality. Certain macros can tolerate polluted water, while other types cannot. Healthy waters usually have many different kinds of macros.



Macroinvertebrate (MAC-row-in-VERT-ih-brate)

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Crayfish, order Decapoda, are often called crawdads. They are usually brownish green in color but can change color to reflect the surface they are on. They have five pairs of walking legs and one pair of long antennae. The first two or three pairs of legs have a hinged claw at the end. A broad flipper extends from the lower abdomen. Crayfish live in shallow water or burrow in the mud of a wetland. They are an important part of the food chain of most wetlands. Crayfish can tolerate temperature, pH and alkalinity, but are sensitive to toxic substances such as metals. They are partially tolerant of degraded water quality.