

# Macroinvertebrate Fact File 1



## Dobsonfly - sensitivity scale 7

- Dobsonfly larvae can grow up to 5cm in length
- They have a long thin grey body with a jet black head featuring two large pincers that can inflict a painful bite
- They look a bit like a centipede, but only six of the spikes sticking out near the head end are legs, the rest are gills; through which they breathe
- Dobsonfly larvae live at the bottom of clean, stony streams
- They eat other stream insects with their fierce-looking jaws
- They live in water for two to three years then move to wet soil or moss near the water to form pupal cells
- They stay in the cells over winter then emerge as adults with a wingspan of around 8cm
- Adult Dobsonfly only live for seven days, they mate and the females lay up to 3,000 eggs in a cluster near streams.



**Dobsonfly  
Larva**

*Image courtesy of Otago Regional Council*

**Adult  
Dobsonfly**



### *Freshwater Bug Fact File 1*

*Collect the fact files, laminate them and put them on to a key ring to produce a macroinvertebrate reference guide.*