

30# Aquatic Insects

If you visit the Class of 1918 Marsh on a nice, warm day you will see insects flying over the water and along the shoreline. Dragonflies and damselflies dart like little helicopters or perch on plants. At dawn and dusk, a cloud of tiny midges may dance over a bush or near the water's edge.

On the surface film you may spot a water strider skating along or whirligig beetles swimming in circles.

And there is more to see under the water. You might see a caddisfly larva dragging the case it made of small plant stems; with the slightest disturbance it crawls inside its case to hide.

A small aquarium net may help you catch insects by scooping water and sediment. Giant water bugs, water scorpions, and diving beetles hunt for food among the decaying tree leaves and submerged plants. Water boatmen swim quickly beneath the surface, their oar like legs moving like the sculls a rower uses on Lake Mendota.

You may find immature dragonflies, mayflies, and damselflies standing or walking along the bottom. If you are lucky, you may see them crawl out onto a plant stem or log to molt from their immature aquatic forms to their adult forms that live, fly, and mate in the air.

So many different kinds of insects live all or part of their lives here in the waters of the marsh.

You can search for "aquatic insect photos" online, then come back and look even harder.