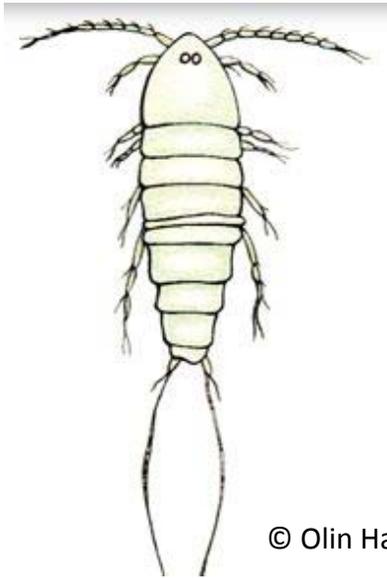


# copepod

## representative specimen

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Arthropoda  
Class: Maxillopoda  
Order:  
Family:

**ILLINOIS STATUS**  
common, native



© Olin Harris

representative specimen

### FEATURES

Copepods are microscopic arthropods. Their body shape is somewhat cylindrical and is divided into a cephalothorax, thorax and abdomen. The cephalothorax has a carapace (covering) over it. They have two pairs of antennae and three pairs of feeding appendages. The six pairs of legs are forked. These organisms make up a large portion of the zooplankton.

### BEHAVIORS

Copepods can be found in any body of water in Illinois. They are active throughout the year. These organisms grow slowly, and some reproduce only one generation per year. When mating, the male grasps the female, attaches sperm to her carapace and swims away. The female may use these sperm to fertilize eggs for several months afterward. Copepods sometimes produce “resting” eggs that may remain on the bottom for several months or years before hatching. Some copepods eat algae, while some are carnivores.

## ILLINOIS RANGE



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## **Aquatic Habitats**

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; Lake Michigan; marshes; peatlands; rivers and streams; swamps; wet prairies and fens

## **Woodland Habitats**

none

## **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none