

Identification of macroinvertebrates

Extensive training in macroinvertebrate identification is provided to each workshop participant. The training includes techniques on how to identify them and what pollution problems they indicate. During the training, participants are shown a diverse sample of organisms for identification purposes. In addition, workshop site will be located in a stream of good quality to exhibit a good variety of the types of organisms typically found in the stream.

As part of the initial and follow up training workshops, the program coordinator will incorporate the bug library into the monitor's training and testing procedures. This is a complete catalogue of preserved macroinvertebrates native to West Virginia. With this comprehensive macroinvertebrate catalogue the staff are able to provide any macroinvertebrates that volunteers may encounter and test each monitor on his/her identification skills.

Also, each workshop attendee receives a copy of names of additional resource guides that are useful in identifying macroinvertebrates. In addition, copies of resource guides are available at each regional office, and these resources are easily available to monitors by request. Monitors are encouraged to preserve any unknown specimens in rubbing alcohol, and deliver them to regional offices, or request a jar and send specimens to the program monitoring coordinator. At the advanced level, either a state approved contractor identifies macroinvertebrates to family level, or state colleges and universities with approved facilities.

