

Dobsonfly

HANDOUT

Common Name: Dobsonfly
Scientific Name: *Corydalus* sp.
Order: Megaloptera

Description: Dobsonflies are large insects that can be over 2 inches in length and also have long antennae. Forewings are large and often mottled with many veins. Wings in the resting position are held flat over the back and extend beyond the abdomen. Male dobsonflies have long, extended curved mandibles, used to grasp the female during mating. The immature stages are called hellgrammites and are aquatic. Hellgrammites are elongate, dull colored larvae with gill filaments and feathery gill clusters along the sides of the abdomen. They have two hooks on the end of the abdomen.

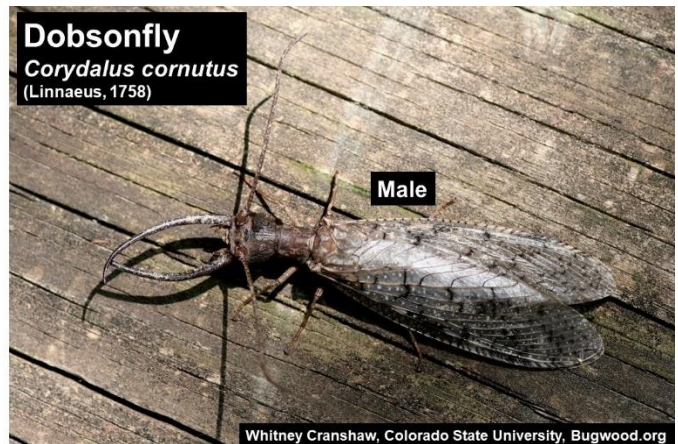
Alderflies (Megaloptera: Sialidae) are similar to but smaller than dobsonflies. Alderfly larvae differ from hellgrammites (dobsonfly larvae) in that they lack the two hooks at the end of the abdomen.

Life Cycle: Immature life stages of the dobsonfly develop in water, especially well oxygenated and high-quality water.

Habitat and Food Source(s): Dobsonfly adults probably do not feed. The long mandibles of the males would make feeding very difficult. Hellgrammites are predatory and feed on other aquatic insects and organisms in the water. They are found in flowing rivers and streams hidden among rocks. These immatures can be collected in riffle areas of streams where they hide among rocks.

Pest Status: Adult dobsonflies are noticed when attracted to lights at night. Immatures (hellgrammites) are collected and used as fish bait. Hellgrammites are fierce biters and can deliver a strong pinch, but are otherwise medically harmless.

Management: None recommended. Dobsonflies are considered beneficial insects and are not pests.



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