

Common Stonefly

Perla bipunctata

Insects · On the wing Apr-Jul



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A large, flattened, brownish-yellow insect with two pairs of net-veined wings folded flat along the back at rest, long antennae and two tail filaments. Common stoneflies live along fast, stony, well-oxygenated rivers and burns in the uplands of Dumfries and Galloway, and adults are usually found resting on boulders and bridge parapets close to the water.

BEHAVIOUR

Stoneflies are among the most pollution-sensitive of all freshwater insects, needing cold, fast, clean and highly oxygenated water, so river ecologists use their presence as a direct measure of water quality — a burn with stoneflies is in good condition. The predatory nymph lives for two to three years under stones, and adults are weak, reluctant fliers that rarely stray far.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Common stoneflies (Perlidae)
SIZE	Body 15-25 mm
STATUS	Native; a key indicator of clean, fast-flowing water

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