Bug Report

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September 19, 2012

River watch 2012

Purpose: We caught the aquatic insects, studied them, and used them to figure out the water quality. The river watch class does this yearly.

Materials: For this project, we used a bug screen, rubbing alcohol, bowls, tweezers, and a storage place for the insects (a large jar).

Hypothesis: If we collect a good amount of sensitive insects, then the water quality will be good.

Procedure: 1) We took our nets and all of the materials to the collection site. 2) We set the nets, while piling rocks on the bottom to ensure no insects escape. 3) Three of us took 10 steps upstream while the others held the nets. 4) The people upstream stirred up the rocks and the insects underneath were swept up by the current and into the net. 5) We pulled out the net and with the tweezers we picked all the insects of and into the bowls of alcohol. 6) We did this 2 more times upstream. 7) We poured the insects into the jar for storage. 8) Back in class, we sorted them by species.

Riparian Description: South Beach is a section of the Yampa River south of Craig, Colorado. The day before we tested the water, September 11, 2012, it had rained all day, with heavy fog in the morning. The picture below is inaccurate because it was taken in 2011, and the water was much higher then compared to present date. The area around consists of sand and gravel beaches, willows next to the edge of the bank, cottonwood trees a further ways back, and many shrubs throughout the land around. There are Gambian Bags on the northern side of the river, with gravel along the southern side. The width of the river is 10 yards, with a depth of 14 inches. Three main water pumps pull water out, including pumps for the Power Plant, Trapper Mine, and one used for irrigation. There are many potential causes that could harm the water and its inhabitants. One is the pumps that pull the water out could leak diesel or bad chemicals, harming the water, the fish, insects and anything else in the water. Another thing is if there was a dead carcass near, then it could also expose harmful substances to the water. If algae dies in the water, and more bacteria grow and eat all of the algae, then the water around will become oxygen deficient because the bacteria take up a lot of oxygen.



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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Bug | Number | Tolerance | Index |
| Rat tailed Maggot Larva | 41 | T | 3 |
| Crane fly Larva | 431 | F | 5 |
| Midge Pupa | 38 | T | 3 |
| Dragonfly Nymph | 76 | F | 5 |
| Black fly Larva | 24 | T | 3 |
| Fingernail Clam | 11 | F | 5 |
| Crawfish | 7 | F | 5 |
| Caddis fly Larva | 9 | S | 3 |
| Stonefly Nymph | 87 | S | 3 |
| Mayfly Nymph | 40 | S | 3 |
| Damselfly Nymph | 13 | F | 5 |



A Rat tailed Maggot larva, flycontrol.novartis.com



A Crane fly larva, livingwithbugs.com



A Midge Pupa, west-fly-fishing.com



A Dragonfly nymph, seantwiddy.com



A Black fly larva, seanet.com



A Fingernail Clam, pearl-guide.com



A Caddis fly larva, extension.entm.purdue.edu



A Stonefly nymph, riverwatch.ab.ca



A Mayfly nymph, flyfishusa.com



A Damselfly nymph, state.ky.us



Conclusion: Out of all the insects that we collected, and what tolerances they had, we can honestly say that the water quality is fairly good and healthy. There are no signs of pollution or contamination in the water from the water testing we have done. I will say that where we tested was up river from the pumps, so if the water may have had been exposed to toxics, then it may be recorded at the next testing site down river. Although, the site where we tested the insects was also up river from the pumps, so this area wasn’t affected if the pumps were potentially leaking. There was a lot of algae on the rocks, all healthy and alive.

