Aquatic Ecology Activity

# Stream Invertebrates

**Materials** Garden rakes or hoes Seine net or butterfly net

Container for specimen specimen key

Binocular microscopes or magnifying lenses or boxes

Boots, hip waders (*not absolutely necessary, but recommended*)

Stream Invertebrate Key

## Specimen Collection

* Students really enjoy this activity
* They do not think they will catch much when at the stream, but find all kinds “disgusting” bugs when they look “closer” under magnification.

1. It is best to have another person with you. One person holds the seine net or butterfly net downstream of the person with the rake or hoe. Place the netting so it touches the bottom of the stream and is in direct line of the current flow from the rake or hoe. You do not have to enter the water.
2. The student with the rake or hoe will lift rocks and stones or gently stir up the bottom of the stream. The dirt will be carried by the current through the net. The aquatic specimen will be trapped in the netting.
3. Take the net over to the container and **INVERT** the net (turn it inside out) and rinse the contents into the container.
4. Fill up three or four containers, making sure to get some invertebrates.
5. Once inside, use petri dishes or **SMALL** containers to place some invertebrates in, and look under magnification.
6. Students should attempt to identify the invertebrates using the specimen key provided.
7. List the stream invertebrates that you observe and give an image next to the name.