

The Feisty Critters of the River

By: Maddie L.

On Monday, October 6, my classmates and I skedaddled on an Invertebrate Count. It was a brisk morning, not too chilly but not too hot. We walked over to the Rogue River from our school, which is about a ten minute walk. My classmates and I jumped in our waders and trudged into the cold water. It had an uneven river bed and had a small current that was powerful, but not too powerful to drag you down the river. When in the water with your waders on, it makes your legs feel like hotdogs in an airtight package. We took our D-nets and went to trap and observe all of the different invertebrates. We caught and acquired many creatures that varied in size and breed.

When catching the invertebrates in the river and seeing them in your net, the process gives you an adrenaline rush! You instantly want to know what that creature is and everything in detail about that creature. The most interesting invertebrate I saw was the Fishfly Larva. The Fishfly Larvae had a very long body with ten legs on each side. It was very interesting in how it moved. The Fishfly Larvae moved in an S shape. I think that people can better care for the river so it remains as clear and clean as this for the future. They can do this is by not littering and developing an awareness of what you do in the community and how it affects everything. People can also be more involved in trying to help make and keep our community a better and cleaner place for all, and for generations to come.

While on our Invertebrate Count we collected roughly 50 Crayfish, 30 Skud, one Fishfly Larva, one Leech, twenty Stonefly, one Damselfly, three WaterPenny, five Snails and five Riffel Beetles. The Fishfly Larva was one of the invertebrate that really interested me. I researched the Fishfly Larva and according to *InsectIdentification.org*, I found out that the fishfly larva is part of the dobsonfly and alderfly family. They are most active at night during late spring and throughout the summer. They have saw-like teeth and prefer to live in murky water.

We could have not done this without Mr. Stegmier and the Izaak Walton League. Why I think the Izaak Walton League is so eager to help students learn about Invertebrate Counts is it allows kids to have the resources and learning tools to be involved and to help understand and learn how to protect our environment. The Izaak Walton League is an organization that advances conservation, engages people in outdoor recreation and safeguards natural resources for the future in communities across the country. The primary purpose of the Izaak Walton League is to defending our outdoor America for generations to come.



Works Cited:

<http://www.insectidentification.org/insect-description.asp?identification=Fishfly>