

## Freshwater Hoglouse (*Asellus aquaticus*)

An Isopod Crustacean

(flattened top-to-bottom)

2 pairs of antennae and 6 pairs of legs.

Size: Up to 20mm

**Detritivore** – feeds on dead and decaying organic matter (plants, algae, carrion etc.) at the bottom of a river or pond.

Breathes by ventilating gills under the last segment of its body. It is adapted to survive low O<sub>2</sub> levels and can tolerate moderately polluted water.

Also known as 'Water Slaters', they are related to terrestrial Woodlice. Females carry their eggs and young in a brood pouch under abdomen. Body flattened and streamlined to allow it to remain on the riverbed amongst the detritus. Does not swim but crawls. Only other species in UK (*A. meridianus*) has just one white spot on head.

