

# WATERBOATMEN

## *Sigara*

IMG 513



Waterboatmen swim in ponds, lakes and slow-flowing streams. They are related to more familiar insects such as the cicada and aphid. Waterboatmen generally thrive in waterbodies that have been modified, but are less common in streams that are highly polluted where more sensitive invertebrate species are rare.

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They collect air bubbles under their wing so they can breathe when diving underwater



IMG 512

### Description

Waterboatmen have long, hairy back legs designed for swimming. They are only 5-6 mm long. They have three pairs of legs but from above only two pairs are visible. The forelegs are only used to hold food while it is eating.

### Food

They feed at the bottom of water bodies on algae and decaying plant and animal material. Their main food source however is mosquito larvae.

### Breeding

Females lay eggs inside the tissue of aquatic plants such as raupo. The eggs hatch in about three weeks. The larvae do not look like the adults and are known as "water tigers".