

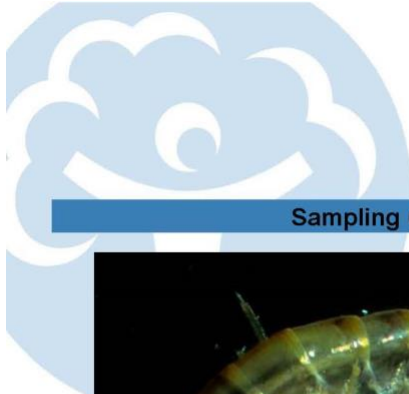
**Fish parasite, the spiny-headed worm
Pomphorynchus in freshwater shrimps *Gammarus pulex*.**

Lucy Wood
Wetlands Officer at Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

The Freshwater Shrimp *Gammarus pulex* is being monitored nationally for a fish parasite: the spiny headed worm *Pomphorynchus*. The parasite is visible within the shrimp body as one or more orange spots. The orange spots make the shrimp more visible and likely to be predated by fish thus completing the parasite's lifecycle. There is also evidence that the shrimp may lose its sense of smell or alter behaviour so they are more likely to be eaten.

Shrimps with the parasite have been found in August and September 2016 within Lickey End and Catshill, Bromsgrove, through the *Love Your River Bromsgrove Project*. The Environment Agency is asking for a small number of shrimps to be sent to them for analysis. They are supplying tubes and packaging to do this. For more information and collecting tubes contact: Hannah.Bradley@environment-agency.gov.uk
More information in Environment Agency leaflet (01) with photograph by Margaret Ehrenberg

Image
01. Environment Agency leaflet on the spiny-headed worm *Pomphorynchus*



Sampling *Gammarus* for fish parasites



A project is underway to establish the distribution of a fish parasite that uses the freshwater shrimp *Gammarus pulex* as an intermediate host. The parasite we are interested in is a spiny-headed worm called *Pomphorynchus*. It causes the shrimp *Gammarus pulex* to develop either single or multiple orange spots in the body, like those in the picture above. These spots increase the chances of the shrimp being eaten by a fish, completing the life cycle of the parasite.

If you find any shrimps like these during your river surveys, please let us know. If possible, put a small number of shrimps into a small container with some wet tissue and send them to us at the address below. Please include the name of the river and either a grid reference or the name of the nearest town. Should you require any containers sending to you, please let us know.

We are hoping to obtain samples of shrimps from as many rivers as we can throughout England and Wales and even a single shrimp can help provide some very useful information. Many thanks!

Please send samples to: Hannah Bradley
Environment Agency, National Fisheries Laboratory
Bromholme Lane
Brampton,
Cambridgeshire
PE28 4NE

If you have any queries or would like more information about this project, please contact: hannah.bradley@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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