There are 38 species of stonefly (Plecoptera) known in the UK and Ireland. Life-cycles can vary between species. The species shown is Perlodes microcephala. © The Riverfly Partnership

The fully grown nymph crawls out of the water and sheds its skin to emerge as the winged adult stonefly.

**Adults** mate on the ground or on vegetation. The female drums its abdomen on a surface to attract a mate. Fertilised eggs are attached to the tip of the female abdomen.

**Egg** masses are deposited onto the water surface, either during flight or whilst running or swimming across the water. Eggs sink through the water and adhere to the river bed.

The nymph goes through a number of moults as it grows.