

# *Acanthocyclops vernalis* (Fischer 1853)

Family Cyclopidae, G.O. Sars

Genus *Acanthocyclops*, Kiefer 1927

## Key characteristics:

*A. vernalis* is more slender than *A. robustus*, and its furca is some longer, approximately 6 times as long as wide. The anterior antennae's are composed of 17 segments reaching the first thorax segment. Studies have shown that the spine formula may vary and can not be used to distinguish the two species, which for sure have been mixed up. The spine formula of the last segment of the exopodite of the first to fourth pairs of legs is normally 2.3.3.3, but 3.4.4.4., or a mix, do also occur. The colour is light yellowish with a more or less distinct reddish tinge.

Female: Length 1.40-1.50 mm

Male: Length smaller than the female

## Distribution:

*A. vernalis* is a littoral copepod found in 7 % (156 localities) of the investigated lakes. It is widely distributed in the south of Norway, while it is rare in north where it is only found in small pools. The frequency of *A. vernalis* increases with altitude and it is found at 1444 m a.s.l. It occurs in water bodies of all sizes, being most common in ponds and small lakes. Acid (pH<5.0) and electrolyte poor water (conductivity<4 mS/m) seems to favour the species.

