

Daphnia cucullata Sars 1862

Family Daphniidae

Genus *Daphnia* O.F. Müller 1785

Key characteristics:

Though it may vary in size, *D. cucullata* is the smallest daphniid specie, even smaller than *D. cristata*. It is characterised by a head which forms an extraordinarily strongly protruding part that ends up in a sharp, somewhat dorsally curved point. It has no eyespot (oscellus). In both *D. cucullata* and *D. cristata* the sensory bristles are the only visible part of the first pair of antennae. However *D. cucullata* does not miss the setae on the first joint of the three-segmented-branch of the second pair of antennae as in *D. cristata*. Morphologically this is the best criteria to use to distinguish *D. cucullata* from *D. cristata*. The species is more or less transparent.

Female: Length 0.6-1.7 mm

Male: Length 0.6-1.0 mm

Distribution:

D. cucullata is found in 53 water bodies or less than 3% of the localities where plankton is sampled. Except for one record from the north west coast, it is distributed in two main areas, Jæren in the south west and in the Oslofjord area. *D. cucullata* is a typical lowland species, never found above 300 m a.s.l. It most commonly occurs in nutrient rich lakes (conductivity > 10 mS/m) with high densities of fish. It is never found when pH < 6.

