

Mesocyclops leuckarti (Claus 1857)

Family Cyclopidae, G.O. Sars

Genus *Mesocyclops*, Kiefer 1927

Key characteristics:

M. leuckarti and *Thermocyclops* sp is easily distinguished from other cyclopoid copepods by the last pair of leg (P5). The antennae consist of 17 segments and the seta on the outer edge of the tail is attached near the middle. *M. leuckarti* is distinguished from *T. oithonoides* and *T. crassus* by the length of the lateral seta of the furca which is comparatively longer and about half as long as the inner seta. To separate it from *T. dybowskii* the most secure criteria would be to use the setae of P5 which are longer and more slender in *M. leuckarti* than in *T. dybowskii*. The colour is generally pale yellow, with a more or less distinct bluish green tinge.

Female: Length 0.9-1.5 mm

Male: Length 0.7-1.0 mm

Distribution:

M. leuckarti is a plankton/littoral species which is found in 18.4 % (398 loc.) of the localities and occurs in all parts of the country, being most common below 500 m a.s.l. It is never found in the alpine zone (>1000 m a.s.l.). It is found in all types of water bodies but occurs with highest frequency in ditches and small pools. It has a wide tolerance to pH (4.2-8.1). A high level of electrolytes seems to favour the species which occasionally occurs in lakes with conductivity less than 1.5 mS/m.

