

Daphnia pulex Leydig 1860

Family Daphniidae

Genus *Daphnia* O.F. Müller 1785

Key characteristics:

Its body shape is generally rather short and stocky. Three characters separate this species from *D. longispina* with which it may co-occur; its eye is smaller, the head has a strongly rounded curve and its abdominal spine is normally very short. If there is still any doubt we can use the appearance of the abdominal spine, which has a varying number of coarse denticles close to the basis. The innermost ones are relative small, while the outermost consist of 3-5 very prominent coarse spines. *D. pulex* usually has a brisk red colour.

Female: Length 1.0 -3.3 mm

Male: Length 1.0-1.8 mm

Distribution:

D. pulex is common in fishless ditches and small ponds. It is a typical early colonisator, and may therefore also occur in lakes after disturbances, i.e. after treatment with rotenone. Though it is found in the far north and in the south west, the majority of 91 records are from small ponds and ditches in the surroundings of Oslo. The frequency of water bodies that contains *D. pulex* is highest when pH is above 7.0 and it is never found at $\text{pH} < 5.5$. *D. pulex* is associated with nutrient rich water, and does never occur in electrolyte poor water.

