

# Aquatic Moth Larvae (Lepidoptera)

Moth families do not have widely used common names.

- a. Thorax and abdomen with filamentous gills **or** case made of leaves or plant material; body with granular surface; crochets (hooks on prolegs) of 2 lengths and arranged in an oval ..... **Pyralidae**

**1** Some authors (e.g., Thorp and Covich) state that all truly aquatic Lepidoptera are in this family. They are herbivores; shredding, chewing or mining leaves of aquatic plants and algae. They climb and sometimes swim.

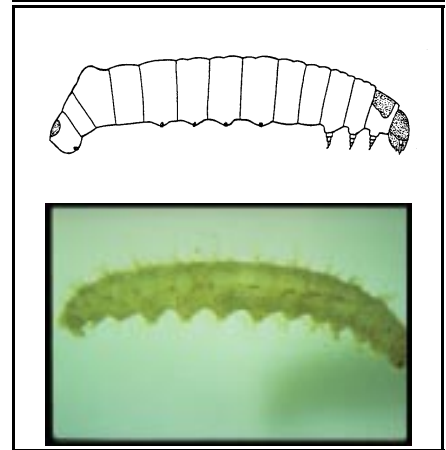
- b. Not with any of the above combinations of characteristics ..... **2**

- a. Terminal segment of abdomen with anal fork or comb **or** body covered with tiny spicules (needle-like spines); primary setae short; associated with nutgrass ..... **Tortricidae**

**2** The Tortricidae are represented by the single genus *Archips*. They burrow and climb in emergent and floating vegetation of lakes, ponds, and marshes.

- b. Not with any of the above combinations of characteristics ..... **3**

## Pyralidae (1a)

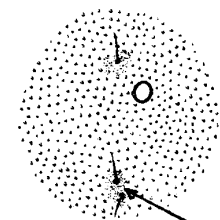


## Characteristics of Tortricidae (2a)

Anal fork or comb (2a)



Spicules on body (2a)



SPICULES

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Fig. 2a - From *An Introduction to Aquatic Insects of North America*, Third Edition by R.W. Merritt and K.W. Cummins. Copyright © 1996 by Kendall/Hunt Publishing company. Used with permission.

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- a. Body with prominent verrucae (elevated tufts of setae); head mottled black and white **or** large larvae (50-70 mm at maturity); crochets in a single slightly curved row or in a semi-circle; burrowers in aquatic plant stems

..... **Noctuidae**

*The Noctuidae generally live among vegetated margins of lakes, ponds, and marshes.*

**3**

- b. Not with any of the above combinations of characteristics; body smooth, without spicules; primary setae long; crochets in a single circular row; associated with sunflowers and other plants

..... **Cosmopterygidae**

*Cosmopterygidae live among vegetation at stream and lake margins, where they burrow into plant parts.*

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**Noctuidae**

**(3a)**

