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#### AQUATIC INVERTEBRATE DRIFT IN STREAMS OF NORTHERN UTAH DIEL PATTERNS OF

University of Minnesota, St. Paul THOMAS F. WATERS

### INTRODUCTION

night. While the night-active forms appear to be more common each characteristically with two peaks: (1) the bigeminus-type, with a sharp drop to daytime low levels at dawn; these early observations ogy of stream fishes. Earliest reported periodicities in drift took the charge, is well recognized as a constant feature of streams. However, ent taxa, and effect of environmental factors. occurs in shape of pattern, degree and type of behavior among differest drift during the daytime (Müller 1966; White 1966; Andersor several investigators have reported day-active periodicities with high with the minor peak occurring first and a major peak later in the peak occurring later just prior to dawn; and (2) the alternans-type the major peak occurring first, or following sunset, and a secondary been reported. Müller (1966) has emphasized two common patterns concerned primarily the mayfly genus Baetis and amphipods of th ing an explosive increase at about full darkness in the evening, and form of low drift during daylight, high nocturnal drift, often includinvertebrates, energy flow in stream ecosystems, and the trophic ecolthis phenomenon to population dynamics and life histories of stream tities involved, has added new emphasis to the possible significance of the discovery of a diel periodicity in drift, often with large quan-More recently, diel drift patterns other than the one described have genus Gammarus (Tanaka 1960; Waters 1962; Miller 1963a,b) 1967; Besch 1967). It appears likely that considerable variation The downstream drifting of invertebrate animals, even at low dis

streams in the region of northeast Utah in the summer of 1966. Speiation. I determined the diel drift patterns in a number of mountain Toward the objective of gaining basic data on such possible var-

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of the drift phenomenon can be ascertained for the species involved a complete generation time, will be required before the full signficance short range observations only; long-term studies, ranging over at least observed, drift propensities for heretofore unreported taxa were meassity to drift among various taxa. Some new drift patterns were drift rate to bottom fauna abundance as a measure of relative propenured, and some new problems were defined. These were, however cific purposes were to measure drift characteristics according to different species and environmental conditions, and if possible, to relate

### Descriptions of Streams

R116W, Sec. 6, Lincoln Co., Wyoming) and one small stream in Cache Valley, Mendon Creek (T11N, R1W, Sec. 8, Cache Co.), addition, one stream in the Pacific drainage, Deadman Creek (T34N, were included. Paradise Creek on the south (T2S, R21W, Sec. 36, Uintah Co.) In Green River) on the north (T2N, R14E, Sec. 11, Summit Co.) and tains, one each on the north and south slopes: Henry's Fork (of the R3E, Sec. 1, Cache Co.,) Spawn Creek, tributary to Temple Fork (T13N, R3E, Sec. 35, Cache Co.), and Right Fork (T12N, R3E, Sec. 21, Cache Co.). Two streams were included in the Uinta Moun-Logan River (T14N, R3E, Sec. 14, Cache Co.), Beaver Creek drainage in northeast Utah. These included an upper reach of the (T16S, R3E, Sec. 14, Franklin Co., Idaho), Temple Fork T12N, Greatest emphasis was placed on streams in the Logan River

nated by the insect orders Ephemeroptera, Trichoptera, and Plecopgravel. The invertebrate faunas of the mountain streams were domitain streams were of moderately high gradient at the sampling sites, streams in the Uinta Mountains were very soft, 12 ppm. All mountera, with other groups in a minor status quantitatively; drift and the sample site and the bottom composed mainly of silt, sand and ing from coarse gravel to large rubble. Mendon Creek was a small with current velocities about 0.5 to 1 m/sec and bottom types rangwere all relatively hardwater streams with total alkalinity (as CaCO<sub>3</sub>) low-gradient valley stream with current velocity about 0.3 m/sec at from about 150 to 200 ppm; Mendon Creek was 310; and the two parable. The Logan River streams with Deadman Creek in Wyoming two streams of the nine sampled could be considered exactly comutaries, there were significant differences in their faunas such that no Despite some similarities, particularly among the Logan River trib

# DIET PATTERNS OF AQUATIC INVERTEBRATE DRIFT 111

any suggestion of a diel periodicity in drift, and consequently no furabundant, G. lacustris did not drift in large quantities nor did it exhibit Gammarus lacustris, while insects were relatively uncommon; while ceans were observed in any of the mountain streams. ther data from Mendon Creek is included in this report. No crusta-In Mendon Creek, the dominant invertebrate was the amphipod, bottom samples were analyzed only for taxa within these three orders

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#### **METHODS**

counted and weighed (wet) in the laboratory; all data were expressed organisms and debris, were preserved in formalin and later sorted, as drift rates in number or weight per hour per net. degree of debris accumulation. The contents of the nets, including sampling interval varying from 15 min. to 1 hour, depending on the surface (Fig. 1). Net mesh was of Nitex of 471  $\mu$  opening. Two of a riffle and extending from the stream bottom to above the water nets were used to provide two samples each hour for 24 hours, the wide by 30 cm (12 in) high, positioned approximately midstream Drift was sampled with stationary rectangular nets, 15 cm (6 in)

approximate measure of bottom densities and relative abundance Rough-quantitative bottom samples were taken to provide an

of each 24-hour sampling series; air and water temperature and light intesity were measured through the sampling period at hourly Current velocity and alkalinity were measured at the beginning



Figure 1

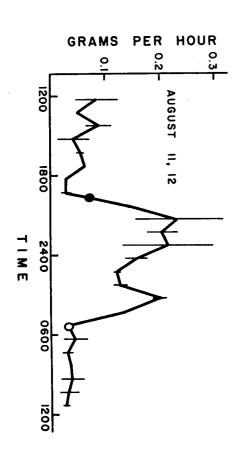


Figure 2

#### RESULTS

#### Logan River

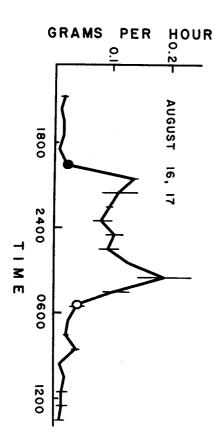
2). No other species was common in the drift. a major peak after sunset and a secondary peak prior to sunrise (Fig diel periodicity; this pattern appeared to be the bigeninus-type, with relatively low. Baetis bicaudatus exhibited high drift rates in a marked Drift in this upper reach of the Logan River (August 11-12) was

of these latter appeared irregularly in the drift but never in signifiphila, Epeorus (Iron) longimanus, and several plecopterans. Several were several trichopterans, including a hydropsychid and Rhyacotendency to drift. Also present in the bottom fauna at low densities were abundant on the stream bottom, but the last two showed little Baetis bicaudatus, Cinygmula sp., and Ephemerella coloradensis

#### Beaver Creek

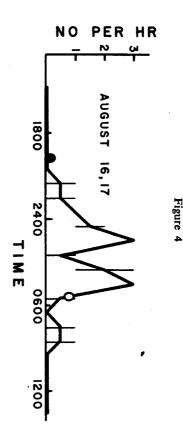
to that in the Logan River. Baetis bicaudatus again was the only group that drifted in large numbers (Fig. 3). The pattern included two The fauna was somewhat similar in Beaver Creek (August 16-17)

Figure 3



nymph, Ameletus (probably velox), appeared in the drift in low numdant on the stream bottom but drifted very little. A large mayfly peaks, with the second prior to dawn being slightly larger. As in the Logan River, Cinygmula sp. and Ephemerella coloradensis were abun-

bers but with a definite night-active periodicity (Fig. 4). This species, more representative of a slow-water fauna, was not present in the riffle bottom samples; presumably it inhabited the many small beaver dam reservoirs in the area and drifted during the night due to increased activity.



Several trichopterans, including *Rhyacophila*, and several plecopterans were present in the bottom fauna at low densities and very infrequently in the drift.

#### Temple Fork

Drift rates in Temple Fork, considering all species, were among the highest of all streams sampled. This stream was visited twice, June 23-24 and July 16-17; for all species, drift rates were lower on the latter date, apparently because considerable emergence had taken place in the interim. Outstanding in the drift in Temple Fork was the marked day-active pattern exhibited by the larvae of the caddisfly, Oligophlebodes sigma, previously reported (Waters 1968). This small larva drifted with its case, constructed of small stones, with maximum drift at about noon; drift rates appeared strongly correlated with water temperature. Drift rates were extremely high; the daily total for the entire stream (discharge about 0.34 m³/sec or 12 ft³/sec) in June was about 400 g or 160,000 individuals.

Several mayfly nymphs exhibited marked night-active drift periodicities. *Baetis bicaudatus*, as expected, exhibited highest drift rates during the night on both dates (Fig. 5); the species was the same on both dates, although the nymphs in July were considerably smaller and probably constituted a succeeding generation. In June, in addition to the high nocturnal drift, there also appeared fairly high drift during the daytime.

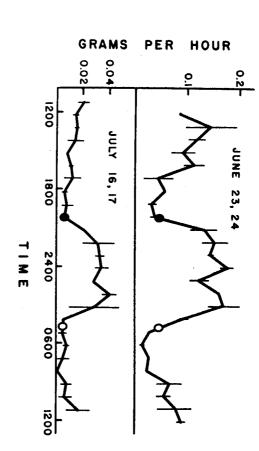


Figure 5

Ephemerella coloradensis exhibited a marked night-active periodicity on both dates (Fig. 6), although in June, as with Baetis bicaudatus, there appeared relatively high drift during the daytime. It appeared likely that the exceptionally high day-active drift of the caddisfly O. sigma induced a high drift of B. bicaudatus and E. coloradensis during the daytime. In July, the O. sigma drift was much reduced, and a high daytime drift of B. bicaudatus and E. coloradensis did not occur. Temple Fork was the only stream in which E. coloradensis was observed to drift appreciably.

Another mayfly, Ephemerella doddsi, also exhibited a marked night-active drift pattern (Fig. 7). This large nymph — a slow and apparently clumsy swimmer, with a friction hold-fast organ on its ventral abdomen — was present in other streams but was found in abundance only in Temple Fork. It apparently was strong enough to withstand the daytime disturbances of the O. sigma drift and itself drifted only during the night.

Common on the stream bottom in addition to all of those species above that drifted, were the mayflies *Rhithrogena* sp. and *Cinygmula* sp., which only occasionally were found in the drift samples. At lower densities were hydropsychids, *Rhyacophila*, and stoneflies of the genera *Alloperla* and *Nemoura*; these groups were also found in low numbers in the drift samples, although there was the suggestion of higher drift at night.

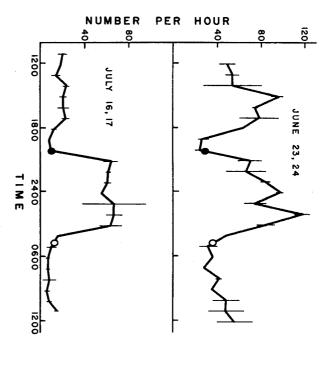


Figure 6

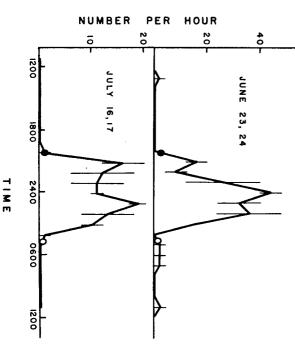


Figure 7

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#### Spawn Creek

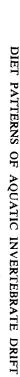
Prominent in Spawn Creek (June 27-28) was the drift of *Baetis bicaudatus* in a marked night-active periodicity with two definite peaks and high drift rates (Fig. 8). Drift of *B. bicaudatus* in this stream was the highest observed among all streams sampled, the daily total being about 120 g or 100,000 individuals for the entire stream (discharge about 0.14 m³/sec or 5 ft³/sec). Even daytime drift rates were high, relative to other streams.

A small stonefly nymph, Nemoura (Malenka) sp., exhibited high drift rates in a marked periodicity that appeared to be a bigeminustype (Fig. 9). These nymphs were virtually absent from the stream bottom at the sampling site and were therefore presumed to originate in a reach farther upstream. Because of their small size, they were not noticed at the time of sampling, and therefore no search was conducted for their source upstream. This was the only instance among the streams sampled wherein a riffle-inhabiting organism occurred in large quantities in the drift but not on the stream bottom at the sample site.

In the bottom samples, *B. bicaudatus* was common, *Nemoura* sp. was not. Also common on the bottom, but showing low propensity to drift, were the mayflies *Cinygmula* sp., *Rhithrogena* sp., and *Ephemerella coloradensis*. Relatively rare in both drift and bottom samples were the mayflies *Epeorus* (*Iron*) longimunus and *Ephemerella doddsi*, and the stonefly *Isogenus modestus*; also rare was the caddisfly *Oligophlebodes sigma*, the same species that drifted with a day-active periodicity in Temple Fork, to which Spawn Creek was tributary.

#### Right Fork

The Right Fork was sampled twice, June 20-21 and August 22-23. Baetis tricaudatus exhibited a clear example of an alternans-type diel pattern, with only a suggestion of a secondary peak in the early part of the night and a relatively high peak prior to dawn (Fig. 10). This was the only stream among those sampled in which this species of Baetis dominated, and in which the alternans-type pattern was so clearly exhibited. Drift rates were high, variation was small, and the same basic pattern was observed on both sample dates; there appeared little question, therefore, that the pattern type was significant. The nymphs on the August date were the same species as in June, although a succeeding generation.



Nymphs of the small stonefly, *Nemoura* (*Malenka*) sp., exhibited marked periodicities in drift on both dates, the pattern appearing to be the *bigeminus*-type (Fig. 11). This stonefly appeared to be the same species as in Spawn Creek, where the daily pattern was similar. The drift in numbers was much lower in August, although drift in biomass was about the same, because growth had occurred; however, density on the stream bottom, while only measured roughly, did not appear to be reduced as much in numbers between June and August as in the drift. That is, there appeared here the suggestion that this species has its highest propensity to drift in early life history stages. The nymphs in August were approaching maturity.

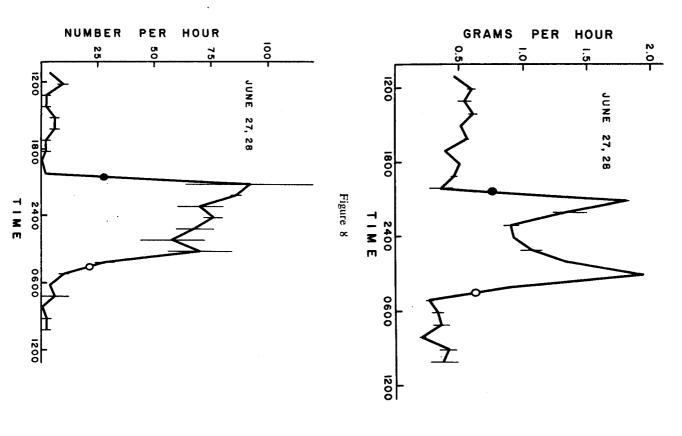
The larvae of the caddisfly *Neothremma* sp. (Limnephilidae) showed a definite night-active periodicity; the degree of organization in the diel pattern was not as great as for other species, there appearing only a single, rounded peak during the night (Fig. 12). This caddisfly drifted with its case; the night-active character was not apparent from the samples, however, until the larvae were extracted from the cases and counted, because many empty cases were in the drift during the daytime. This species was present only in June, it apparently having emerged completely prior to the August sampling date.

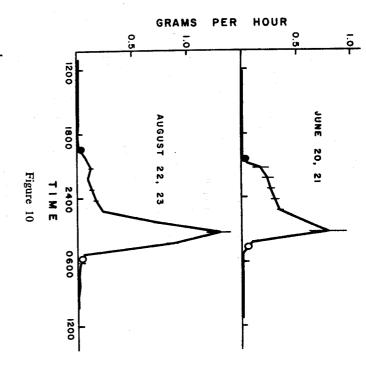
The above three species were abundant on the stream bottom. The average size of the *B. tricaudatus* nymphs in June appeared to be significantly smaller in the bottom samples than in the drift, suggesting that propensity to drift was greater in later life history stages for this species; in August the mean size in the new generation was small in both bottom and drift. Also common on the bottom but rare in the drift samples were the mayflies *Epeorus* (*Iron*) longimanus and *Cinygmula* sp. on both dates. Uncommon on the bottom and in the drift were *Ephemerella coloradensis*, *Rhyacophila*, hydropsychids, leptophlebiids, and other stoneflies, including *Acroneuria*.

#### Henry's Fork

In Henry's Fork (July 7-8), on the north slope of the Uinta Mountains, two major groups exhibited marked periodicities in drift. Baetis bicaudatus showed a typical bigeminus-type pattern, with relatively high drift rates, low variation, and prominent second peak (Fig. 13). Several stonefly nymphs showed night-active periodicities, including Alloperla sp. with an early peak but no secondary peak and Nemoura (Zapada) sp. with a more typical bigeminus-type pattern (Fig. 14).

Figure 9





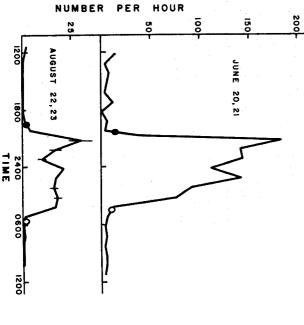


Figure 11

### DIET PATTERNS OF AQUATIC INVERTEBRATE DRIFT

In the bottom samples, the above groups were common as well as Cinygmula sp. which showed little tendency to drift. Present on the bottom, and drifting with only a suggestion of night activity were the mayflies Epeorus (Iron) deceptivus and Ephemerella doddsi, the stonefly Isogenus modestus, and the caddisfly Rhyacophila. The stonefly Leuctra sp. was present in fair numbers on the bottom but was completely absent in the drift samples. Present in low numbers in both bottom and drift samples were the mayflies Rhithrogena sp., a leptophlebiid, Ephemerella coloradensis and E. infrequens, and several trichopterans.

#### Paradise Creek

In Paradise Creek (July 11-12), on the south slope of the Uintas, Baetis bicaudatus exhibited a marked night-active periodicity with two definite peaks approximately equal in height (Fig. 15). At least five species of stoneflies, Alloperla sp., Nemoura spp., Isogenus modestus and Arcynopteryx parallela, although in low numbers, exhibited at least the suggestion of higher nocturnal drift rates (Fig. 16). Epeorus (Iron) longimunus showed a marked night-active periodicity, apparently in a bigeminus-type pattern (Fig. 17); this was the only instance among all streams sampled in which this genus clearly showed such a periodicity with substantially high drift rates.

Baetis bicaudatus was abundant in the bottom samples, as were also Cinygmula sp., Ephemerella coloradensis and E. tibialis, although the last three appeared only irregularly in low numbers in the drift. All the stonefly nymphs in the drift also were present, though not abundant, on the bottom. Epeorus (Iron) longimanus was common on the bottom, though not abundant. Other mayflies, Ephemerella doddsi and a leptophlebiid, were present but rare in both drift and bottom samples.

#### Deadman Creek

Insect groups in Deadman Creek (August 7-8), while in the Pacfic drainage in western Wyoming and separated from the streams in northern Utah, were about the same as those found in the Utah streams. Two unknown species of *Baetis*, together exhibited a marked night-active periodicity in a clearly defined higeminal—type pattern (Fig. 18). Soveral somethy complish, Ixogenus aestivalis and Nemouna app., showed clear night-active periodicities, although in lew many bers (Fig. 18).

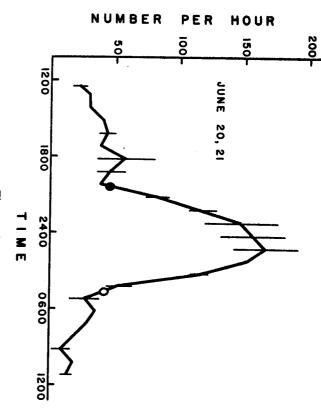
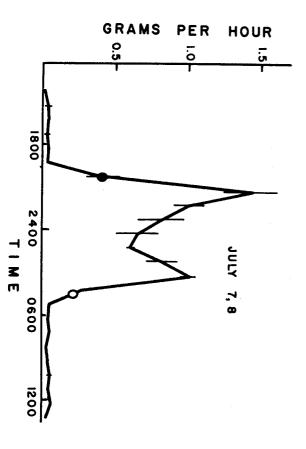


Figure 12



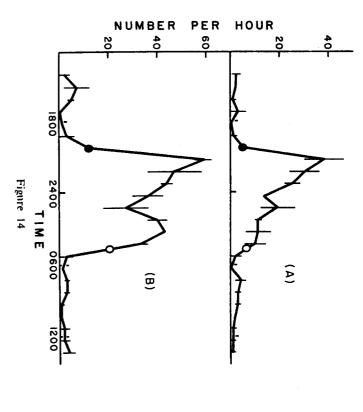
Fgiure 13

On the stream bottom, Buetis, Cinygmula sp., Ephemerella coloradensis, E. tibialis, and Rhyacophila were abundant, although with the exception of Baetis, none of these showed much propensity to drift; in some, there was a slight increase in drift at night. Also present on the bottom but rare or none in the drift, were a brachycentrid and the stonefly, Acroneuria.

#### DISCUSSION

The major component of the drift in almost all streams was constituted or mayfly nymphs. Of these, *Baetis* was by far the most common genus. In almost all streams, *B. bicaudatus* was the dominant species; this species apparently exhibited the *bigeminus*-type pattern, although with the second peak sometimes as high or slightly higher than the first. In one of the other streams (Right Fork), *B. tricaudatus* clearly exhibited the *alternans*-type pattern. In my first report on drift periodicities (Waters 1962), secondary peaks in *Baetis* drift were observed which I suggested were due to the occlusion of moonlight. In the present study, while secondary peaks were observed frequently for *Baetis*, in no instance was one observed to be related to moonlight occlusion or moonset. Therefore, while the precise effect of moonlight remains unknown, the secondary peak so frequently observed appears conclusively to be of endogenous origin.

a marked night-active periodicity, probably of the bigeminus-type; exception (Paradise Creek), wherein E. (I.) longimanus exhibited this species was also common in the Right Fork but did not drift present in most streams, but showed little tendency to drift with one tually no tendency to drift. The mayflies Epeorus (Iron) spp. were the last of these, Cinygmula sp., but it just as consistently showed virand Cinygmula sp. Consistently abundant in almost all streams was of a diel periodicity in drift, from widely separated regions of the (most streams other than Temple Fork), E. ibialis, Rhithrogena sp., no propensity to drift; this group included Ephemerella coloradensis Still others, though abundant on the stream bottom, showed little or periodicities, although not in all streams: Ephemerella doddsi and Müller 1963a). Other mayflies also clearly exhibited night-active world, all included the genus Baetis (Tanaka 1960; Waters 1962; versal in exhibiting diel periodicities in drift; indeed, the first reports E. coloradensis (Temple Fork), and Ameletus velox (Beaver Creek). reports on stream invertebrate drift, suggest that this genus is uni-The present results for Baetis, in concert with other published



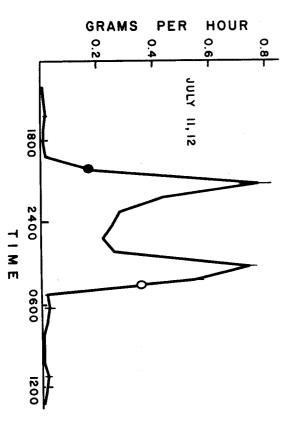


Figure 15

Other mayfly species were observed in low densities and for which, therefore, no conclusion as to propensity to drift could be firmly determined.

Stoneflies of the general Alloperla, Nemoura, Isogenus, and Arcynopteryx, while not abundant in all streams, exhibited night-active periodicities, apparently of the bigeminus-type, in all streams in which they were at least moderately abundant. In one instance (Henry's Fork), Leuctra sp. was present in fair numbers on the bottom but did not appear at all in the drift. Those stoneflies that exhibited a periodicity in drift were all night-active, but the propensity to drift, as with the mayflies, varied widely among species. The predaceous Acroneuria, while present in some streams, never occurred in the drift samples; it was not, however, found in abundance in any stream. Anderson (1967) reported a night-active periodicity for Acroneuria in an Oregon stream, where it was abundant as early instars.

The occurrence of caddisfly larvae in the drift was much less common than was the case for the two previous orders, although two species exhibited high drift rates, one day-active (Oligophlebodes sigma in Temple Fork; Waters 1968) and one night-active (Neothremma spin Right Fork). Both of these drifted with their cases. Other instances of caddisfly drift in a diel periodicity have been reported, some night-active and some day-active (Waters 1962; Müller 1966; Anderson 1967; White 1966). It appears that this order, while less commonly involved in diel periodicities, exhibits both night-active and day-active patterns. The rhythm of the day-active Oligophlebodes sigma in Temple Fork appeared strongly entrained by water temperature, while night-active patterns, as with those for mayflies and stoneflies as well, were entrained in an "on-off" fashion by light.

Müller (1966) has suggested that propensity to drift increases in later life history stages. This thesis could not be thoroughly tested in the present study because of the short period of the investigation. However, a larger mean size of Baetis nymphs in the drift in some streams relative to that in the bottom samples indicated the same relation. Elliott (1967) has also reported greater relative drift at later stages for some mayflies and stoneflies, and Anderson (1967) for caddisflies. On the other hand, the stoneflies of the genus Nemoura appeared in one stream (Right Fork) to exhibit higher relative drift at an earlier stage. Similar observations were made for Brachycentrus americanus by Anderson (1967) and for limnephilid larvae by Elliott (1967). Apparently there is variation in this respect also, with greater propensity to drift in the later stages being the more common.

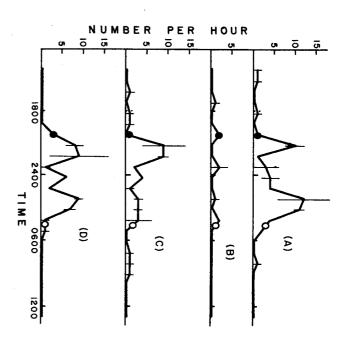


Figure 16

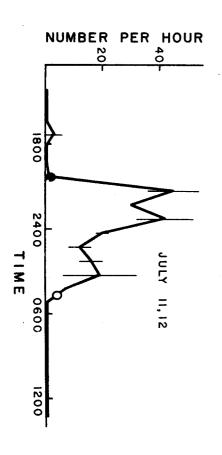


Figure 17

Rhyacophila and Acroneuria constituted the main invertebrate predators, but neither of these two groups exhibited a significant propensity to drift. Anderson (1967) has reported drift periodicities for both, but with very low drift rates relative to bottom densities. It may be suggested that invertebrate predators, most of which are large and strong swimmers, show little propensity to drift, except perhaps in early life history stages.

There appeared no consistent differences in drift or bottom fauna, either quantitatively or qualitatively, between the hard-water streams (150-200 ppm alkalinity) in the Logan River drainage and the very soft-water streams (12 ppm) in the Uinta Mountains. However, an investigation of longer duration would be much preferable for precise comparative studies on such relationships.

The absence of a periodicity in the drift of Gammarus lacustris in Mendon Creek was unexpected, in view of the marked periodicity that some other species of Gammarus exhibit. However, it would be premature to conclude that this species never exhibits a drift periodicity since the effect of other factors such as season, proximity to headwaters, etc., on the species is unknown. No other data on the drift of G. lacustris are presently available.

#### SUMMARY

- 1. Several 24-hr. series of drift sampling were carried out in eight small mountain streams and one low-gradient valley stream in the area of northeast Utah.
- 2. Daily patterns with two peaks appeared to be the typical form of night-active periodicities; no relationship between the secondary peak and moonlight could be detected.
- 3. Ephemeroptera nymphs constituted the major component of the drift in almost all streams.
- 4. The ephemeropteran genus *Baetis*, varying in species, exhibited marked night-active drift periodicities in all streams.
- 5. Other species of mayflies exhibited night-active periodicities; still other species, though abundant on the stream bottom, characteristically did not drift appreciably.
- 6. Several species of Plecoptera exhibited night-active periodicities, although some species exhibited no tendency to drift.
- 7. Among the Trichoptera, one species exhibited a day-active periodicity apparently entrained by water temperature, while another species showed a night-active periodicity entrained, as with Ephemeroptrea and Plecoptera, by light.

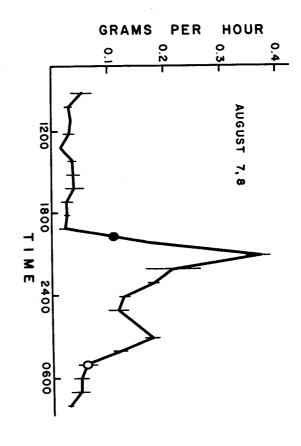


Figure 18

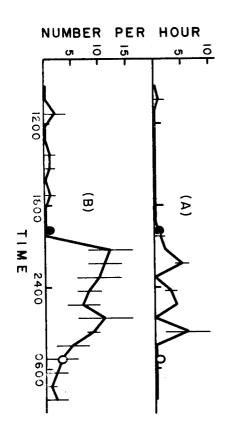


Figure 19

- appreciable drift. The predators, Rhyacophila and Acroneuria, did not exhibit
- 9. In the valley stream, Gammarus lacustris did not exhibit a drift

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- —Drift nets set into sampling position on stream bottom.
- Fig. 2—Drift of Baetis bicaudatus in Logan River, in quantity per hour per net (15 cm wide), mean of two samples. Vertical lines represent range. Closed circle represents time of sunset; open circle, time of sunrise.
- Fig. 3-Drift of Baetis bicaudatus in Beaver Creek (legend as in Fig. 2).
- 4-Drift of Ameletus (probably velox) in Beaver Creek (legend as in Fig. 2).
- Fig.
- Fig. 5—Drift of Baetis bicaudatus in Temple Fork (legend as in Fig. 2).
  6—Drift of Ephemerella coloradensis in Temple Fork (legend as in Fig.
- Fig. 7—Drift of Ephemerella doddsi in Temple Fork (legend as in Fig. 2).
- Fig. 8-Drift of Baetis bicaudatus in Spawn Creek (legend as in Fig. 2).
- Fig. 9-Drift of Nemoura (Malenka) sp. in Spawn Creek (legend as in Fig
- Fig. 10-Drift of Baetis tricaudatus in Right Fork (legend as in Fig. 2).
- 12-Drift of Neothremma sp. in Right Fork (legend as in Fig. 2). 11—Drift of Nemoura (Malenka) sp. in Right Fork (legend as in Fig. except only one sample per hour in the June 20, 21 series).
- 13—Drift of Baetis bicaudatus in Henry's Fork (legend as in Fig. 2).
- 14—Drift of stonefly nymphs in Henry's Fork; (A) Alloperla sp., and (B) Nemoura (zapada) sp. (legend as in Fig. 2).

- Fig. 15—Drift of Baetis bicaudatus in Paradise Creek (legend as in Fig. 2).
  Fig. 16—Drift of stonefly nymphs in Paradise Creek: (A) Alloperla sp., (B) Nemoura spp., (C) Issogenus modestus, and (D) Arcynopteryx parallela (legend as in Fig. 2).
  Fig. 17—Drift of Epeorus (Iron) longimanus in Paradise Creek (legend as as in Fig. 2).
  Fig. 18—Drift of Baetis spp., in Deadman Creek (legend as in Fig. 2).
  Fig. 19—Drift of stonefly nymphs in Deadman Creek; (A) Isogenus aestivalis, and (B) Nemoura spp. (legend as in Fig. 2).