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# Invertebrate of the Month

## November - December 2008



### Collembola

Collembolans (spring-tails) are part of the diet of the Pselaphid beetles featured last month. They are soft bodied arthropods and usually vary in size from 1 – 3 mm, but a few can reach 10 mm. Their habitat ranges from soil and leaf litter to marine and fresh water, to the polar ice caps. They are often encountered in the black scum on deep puddles after rain, or in the cloud of small creatures that waft from disturbed compost heaps or decaying leaf litter under trees. Most species feed on micro-organisms associated with decomposing organic matter, bacteria, nematodes, protozoa, and fungi; although some are known to feed on pollen and some are known as predators. They are known to be sensitive to disturbance and are therefore considered as potential environmental indicators.