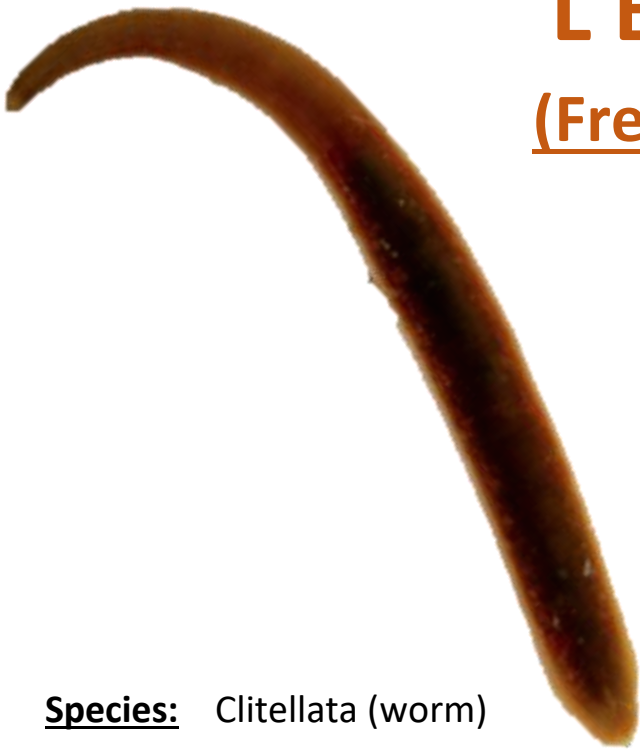


LEECH

(Freshwater)



Species: Clitellata (worm)

Scientific name: *Erpobdella testacea*

Size: 20 to 50mm

Key Features:

The freshwater leech is a uniform reddish-brown, almost black colour with segmentation all along its body. They look almost featureless, with a wide and flat body. It has 4 pairs of clear eyes.

They have two cup-like suckers, one at either end of their body, using these to attach themselves firmly to objects.

They move by expanding (make longer) and contracting (make shorter) their body, though can also free-swim through the water in a rapid up/down movement.

Feeding:

The freshwater leech does not feed on blood, but instead are predators of small aquatic invertebrates, worms and insect larvae, which they often swallow whole!

Leeches themselves are eaten by fish, dragonfly larvae and aquatic birds.

Amazing facts:

The freshwater leech has 32 segments ... and each segment has its own brain! So, it has 32 brains in its body!