

## Top 10 must know terms

Taxonomy has its own technical language that allows the description of an animal to be specific in fewer words than would be required using everyday language e.g. sclerite = any hardened portion of the outer surface, usually darkened with pigment.

Many terms are commonly used in one major group but may not be common in another major group e.g. proleg, notum and sclerite are common terms when identifying insects whereas carapace, pleopod and uropod are common terms when identifying crustaceans.

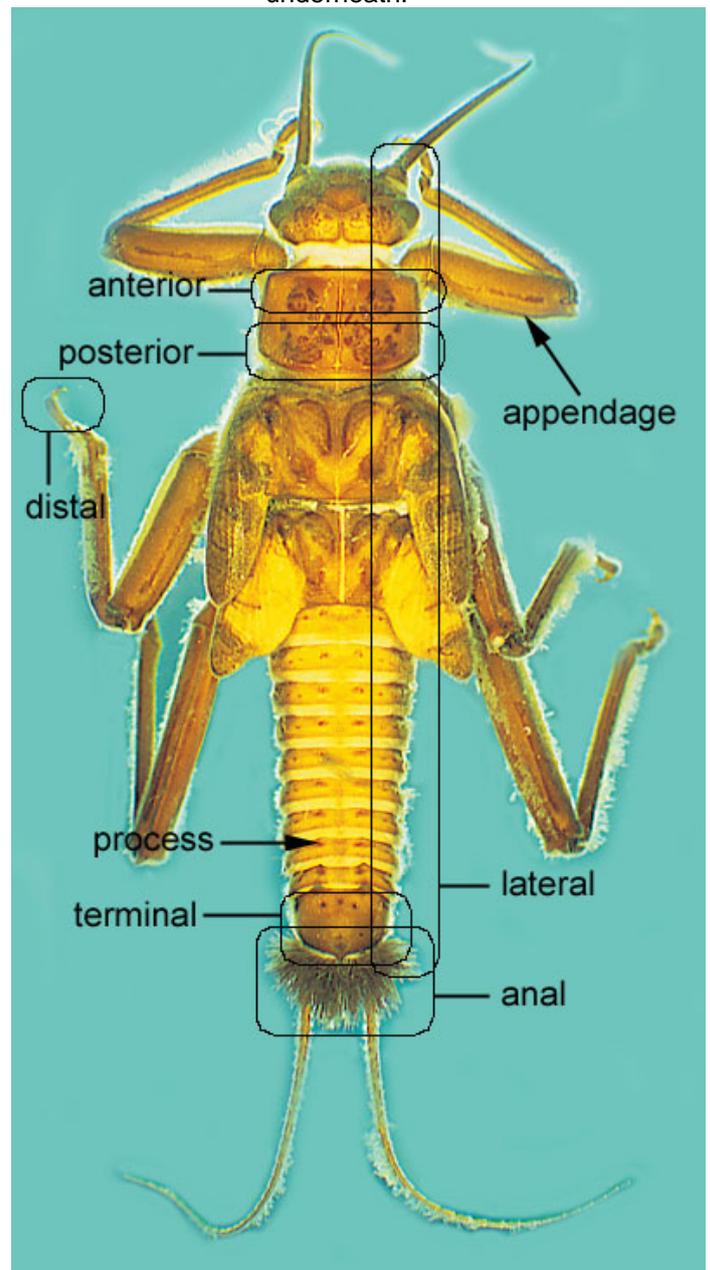
Some terms have different meanings depending upon which major group of animals are being identified e.g. proboscis = in **Insecta**, any extended or extendable mouth structure; in **Nemertea**, a muscular trunk-like appendage of the head end

The following 10 terms span many major groups. Knowing these terms in addition to the basic anatomy of each group will help you achieve your identifications more readily.

<b>anal</b>	descriptive of structure or process associated with the anus, or last abdominal segment
<b>anterior</b>	referring to, or situated toward the head end or forward facing section
<b>appendage</b>	any part, piece or organ attached to the body by a joint or other main structure
<b>distal</b>	end of any structure furthest away from midline of an organism or from point of attachment
<b>dorsal</b>	descriptive of the upper or top surface of the body
<b>lateral</b>	descriptive of a structure or action to the side
<b>posterior</b>	referring to, or situated toward the rear or anal end
<b>process</b>	any projection from a surface, margin or appendage
<b>terminal</b>	descriptive of being the last part or referring to being at the end
<b>ventral</b>	descriptive of the underside of the body

The terms indicated with a box refer to regions rather than specific parts and as such are only examples, not all inclusive i.e. distal can refer to an area on a leg or antennae or filament or body.

This is a view of the **dorsal** surface, **ventral** is underneath.



Many terms, or the stem of a term, can be used in combination e.g. anterolateral margin of the dorsal sclerite on the terminal segment. Break down the terms and start from the end of the description; go to the last segment, look on the upper surface for a hardened area (sclerite), then look to edge (margin) of the sclerite, now focus on the front part of the side margin.