

# Planaria Information Sheet



Planaria Geoplanidae, 3 cm (02), by Xavier Japiot – Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0.

## WHAT ARE PLANARIA?

Planaria are freshwater flatworms that have heads shaped like arrows. (Flatworms are simply worms that have flat bodies.) They are black with two white spots on their heads. These spots can sense light. Since they are worms, they are classified as invertebrates.

## WHERE ARE THEY FOUND?

Planaria can be found under rocks, in streams, and in ponds. They are found in freshwater habitats.

## WHAT DO THEY EAT?

Planaria will eat living or dead small animals that they trap using a tube that shoots out from their mouths. The enzymes that come from the tube soften the tissue of the animals, making it easier for the planaria to tear apart pieces of the prey into microscopic bits and eat them.

## REGENERATION

If planaria lose a head or tail, they can regrow those body parts. In other words, the worm can regenerate those body parts. They can do this because they have special, microscopic body parts called stem cells, or neoblasts, that are like a living library: They contain all the chemical instructions for the animal to grow new parts.