

Gastrotrichs

Order: Macrotrichida or Chaetognatha

Class: Gastrotricha

Phylum: Aschelminthes

Kingdom: Animalia



Conditions for Customer Ownership

We hold permits allowing us to transport these organisms. To access permit conditions, [click here](#).

Never purchase living specimens without having a disposition strategy in place.

There are currently no USDA permits required for this organism. In order to protect our environment, never release a live laboratory organism into the wild.

Primary Hazard Considerations

Wash your hands thoroughly after handling.

Availability

Available year round, gastrotrichs are lab cultured. You will receive a plastic jar of water-based medium containing gastrotrichs. We over-pack each order of gastrotrichs. It is normal to have some deceased gastrotrichs in the container. You will receive at least the quantity of live gastrotrichs stated on the container. Loosen lid once received to provide oxygen and keep at room temperature, away from direct sunlight and windows.

Captive Care

Habitat:

- Gastrotrichs will thrive in the container they arrive in for up to two weeks. Gastrotrichs eat algae, bacteria, and small protozoans. They range in size from .06–3.0 mm. You may use a wheat medium or hay infusion to subculture your gastrotrichs if you need to use them longer. [Wheat Seeds 88 W 5650](#), [Hay Medium Working Solution 88 W 5205](#), [Hay Medium Concentrate 88 W 5300](#). If you choose this method, subculture once a month by transferring 40–60 organisms, using a pipette provided. Keep at room temperature.

Information

- Method of reproduction: Freshwater species are mostly parthenogenic and marine species are mostly hermaphroditic.

Life Cycle

There is no larval stage. Eggs hatch almost immediately or, if it is an overwintering egg, hatch when conditions become favorable. Gastrotrichs can reach sexual maturity in as little as two days and have a total lifespan on the order of three days.

Wild Habitat

Different species of gastrotrichs live in saltwater and freshwater environments in tropical and temperate climates. They are a major food source for many aquatic species, especially tubelarians, insects, and small crustaceans.

Special Notes

The name means “hairy stomach” and refers to the cilia covering its underside, enabling it to glide over surfaces. Gastrotrichs have a primitive nervous system and ciliary sense organs.

Disposition

- Please dispose of excess living material in a manner to prevent spread into the environment. Consult with your schools to identify their preferred methods of disposal.
- You can safely use one of the following methods:
- Treat culture with a 10% bleach solution for 24 hours (1 part bleach to 9 parts culture medium or water culture medium removed). Then rinse bleach solution down the drain with water until you can no longer smell bleach. Rinse remaining materials and containers with water and dispose of them in a general garbage container.
- Carefully wrap specimens and their containers in a biohazard bag (without containing anything sharp that might puncture the bag) and tie closed (a twist tie works well). Autoclave the bag for 30 minutes at 121 °C and at a pressure of 15 lbs. per square inch. Dispose of autoclaved bag as your school recommends.