



The Net-Building Caddis

Aoteapsyche colonicas

ngaro waiwai

Size

Typically 9 mm.

Habitat

The larvae of this caddisfly are found in stony parts of streams with clear water and moderate or rapid water flow.

Feeding Habits

This caddis uses its net to trap **detritus** (floating rubbish) **algae** and small **invertebrates**, and may also graze the algae from the surface of stones around its retreat. Younger larvae are more herbivorous with the older larvae adding trapped animals to their diet. Adults may eat nectar.

Special Features

- The caddisflies Order Trichoptera) show **complete metamorphosis**
- The silk for the larvae's net is secreted as a thread from its mouthparts, and it builds a stony retreat under stones, using the same sticky silk.

- The pupa swims to the water surface and usually crawls onto a rock, where the adult emerges.
- Caddisfly adults look a bit like skinny moths but their wings are covered with fine hairs rather than scales like moths have: from the Greek, **Trichos** – a hair, **Pteron** – a wing

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Many insects have life-cycles with an aquatic or watery part, so there must be some big advantages in that way of life. What do you think they might be?

Typical Size

