



## New Laurier centre focused on water, cold region research

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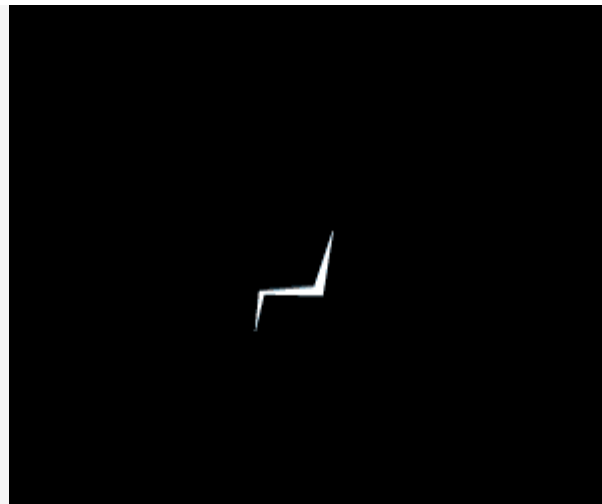
WATERLOO — They are tiny and transparent and you have to get up close to see the critters.

These invertebrates, about half a millimetre in size, are ubiquitous in Canada's freshwater ponds, rivers and lakes.

At a lab in the science research building at Wilfrid Laurier University, hundreds of these sensitive organisms known as daphnia and hyalella are central to research looking at the effects of contaminants on freshwater species.

Oliver Vukov, a master's student at Laurier, went to the Northwest Territories this summer and brought back daphnia and hyalella from Trappers Lake and Pontoon Lake. His research is looking at what happens to daphnia and other species when they come in contact with rare earth elements.

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Vukov is excited about his work because the N.W.T. is developing rare-earth mining sites and it needs to know how those metals — many of them used in high-end electronics such as LCD screens and iPods — will affect the species in the surrounding environment.

"This is cutting-edge work," said Vukov, 29.

This week, Laurier will officially open a 14,000-square-foot, two-story building focused on water

