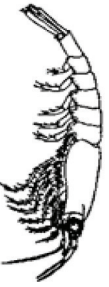


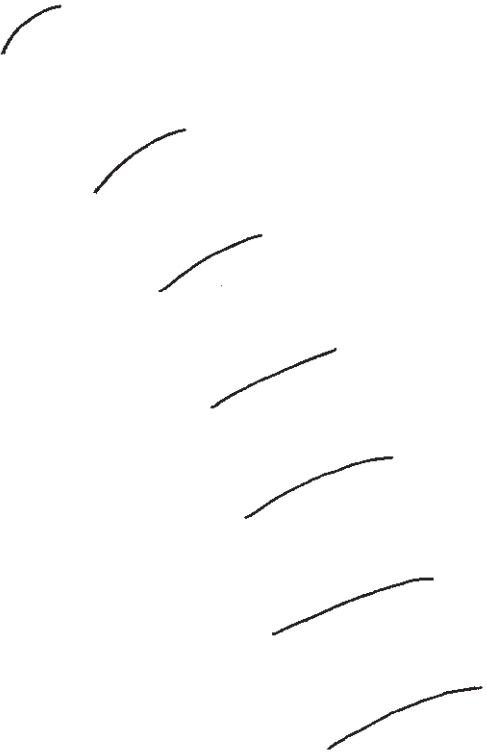
ANTARCTIC KRILL

Krill are members of the class *Crustacea*. Other Crustaceans include crabs, lobsters, shrimp, copepods, barnacles and pill bugs. They are the most abundant food source in the Southern Ocean. The krill has an almost transparent body, but often with a tinge of pink or orange color. They range in size from 2 cm to 15 cm.



Actual size

The tail is called the "tailson" and can be spread out like a fan while swimming.

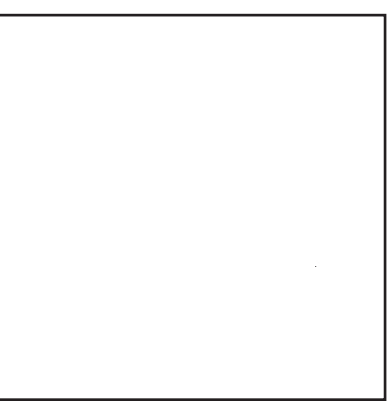


LARVAL STAGE

Like all Crustaceans, baby krill look very different from the adult form. The larva hatches as a "Nauplius" with only a few legs. It molts (sheds its skin) many times, and each time it does, new legs appear.

The eggs hatch on the dark sea floor and the nauplius must begin swimming up toward the surface to find food. It takes weeks to get to the surface and it molts several times on the way.

Krill have 6 pairs of skinny front legs that they use for filter feeding. They catch phytoplankton made of algae, diatoms and dinoflagellates.



Krill are a **KEYSTONE SPECIES**, which means they are a link between tiny microscopic organisms and larger animals. Animals that eat krill include fish, penguins and baleen whales.