

INVERTEBRATE SPECIMEN PRESERVATION

Ethyl alcohol (Denatured alcohol)

- Dilute to 80% alcohol solution.
- Best method for long-term storage.
- More expensive than isopropyl and may be more difficult to find at retailers.
- Located with painting supplies and may contain high percentage of methanol so check label or SDS for a product that is mostly ethyl alcohol.

Isopropyl alcohol

- Dilute to 40% alcohol solution; buffer with a drop or two of glycerin or a pinch of calcium carbonate antacid tablets.
- Inexpensive and can be found easily at most general retailers.
- Often harsh on invertebrates and can make them brittle over time.
- Remember isopropyl alcohol comes in 70% or 90% concentrations.

Hand sanitizer

- Fill vial part way with sanitizer, insert specimen, then fill completely to top to avoid any air space between gel and cap; screw cap tightly.
- Suspends invertebrates for easier viewing.
- **NOT** recommended for soft-bodied or large invertebrates because hand sanitizers are only 60% alcohol.
- Gel will break down into liquid over time; must be replenished occasionally.
- Organism must be euthanized before being placed in the hand sanitizer.