

Welcome to Clubtail Count 2019



Getting Started

Register the 1km OS grid square(s) you would like to survey.
You can view your squares and the surrounding area using Magic Map:
<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>

Please stick to permissive footpaths and do not stray onto private land.

When to Visit

The Common Clubtail is usually on the wing between **early May and late July**.
The species emerges in synchrony in response to weather conditions and time of year, with the peak usually between **late May and early June**. It is a priority to survey your area during this time.
You can survey for the Common Clubtail at any time of day, although the species is more likely to emerge in warmer parts of the day.

Weather

The Common Clubtail generally requires warm, still and dry weather in which to emerge, although they can do so in substandard conditions in a bad season. For the best results you should conduct your survey when there is little wind, no rain and the temperature is above 17°C. However, surveys conducted outside this limit may also yield useful results.

Conducting your Survey

Walk slowly along the river edge, looking at bankside vegetation, mud, rocks and man-made structures for emerging and newly emerged dragonflies. Most sightings of the Common Clubtail are of emerging or newly emerged adults, although females will return to the river to lay eggs and males do hold territories on the river.

As you walk along you can part the vegetation in thick areas to look more closely for exuviae. These are the skins of larvae, left behind after emergence. The larvae choose emergent supports which provide enough space for emergence without surrounding objects deforming their wings. However, it is surprising how well camouflaged the species can be so take care to go slowly and look carefully! Your ID guide will take you through how to identify both exuviae and adults. As the Common Clubtail is a species known to emerge en masse, if you find any exuviae or adults, look on the nearby bankside for more.

If you are surveying by canoe or kayak, keep an eye out for adult territorial males and egg laying females on the river itself. Use the boat to get close to the bankside where possible and look here for emerging larvae and exuviae.

Where possible, collect any exuviae you see. As exuviae are the left behind skin of the larvae there is no harm in taking them, but take care that it is definitely an empty exuvia: these will be hollow with a hole on the back where the dragonfly has emerged. Collecting these will prevent them from being double counted by yourself or another surveyor. If you are unsure of an identification, you can send a photo or exuvia specimen to the email or postal address given below. If you are unsure of an adult identification, take a photograph. You can then try and identify the species at home or send it to the email address given below for identification.

When you find a Common Clubtail please note the date, location (your chosen square's grid reference),

life-stage (whether the individual you saw was a larva, exuvia, emerging adult or adult) and species in the survey form. If you would like, you can also note any other dragonfly or damselfly species you see on your section of river bank. If you would like to add information on the sex of the individual you saw or any additional notes on behaviour, these would be gratefully received.

We welcome records of other species from your monad which you make while surveying for the Common Clubtail. For advice on the identification of other species, visit the BDS website., in particular visit the White-legged Damselfly Investigation page. Other species found on rivers include the White-legged Damselfly, the Demoiselles and the Scarce Chaser. We are encouraging surveyors to submit complete lists of the dragonflies they see on a visit to a wetland site in order to enable trend analysis of dragonfly populations. If you have carried out a complete list of the dragonfly species you have seen on your stretch of river bank, please tick the box on the form so we can include this in our trend data set. This will also help us to build a picture of the dragonflies associated with the habitat.

Safety and access

For this survey we are asking you to walk alongside rivers, some of which may be dangerous as they are deep or fast flowing. When looking for dragonflies on banksides or on top of steep banks, consider using binoculars to look down on them from a safe position rather than accessing the bank itself. Be aware that river banks can be unstable and prone to collapse, do not stand very close to edge of steep river banks as they may be likely to collapse. When going to river to conduct a survey, always leave a note of your whereabouts with a responsible person. This should include: a date and time of survey visit, expected time of leaving the site and return to home, and vehicle identification details. The person to whom these details are given should be told who to contact if you do not return and at what time to raise the alarm. If possible, do not work alone. It is advisable to carry a fully charged mobile phone, which may be useful in case of an emergency. Before undertaking any survey activity, every surveyor should consider the particular health and safety risks associated with their individual survey sites and whether their individual circumstances and medical conditions expose them to particular risks. Individuals should assess any potential risks arising from their survey activities, which should include considering the risks specific to individual sites. You should think about what precautions are needed to minimise risks.

As a volunteer, you are under no obligation to participate or continue with this survey. Volunteers are responsible for their own health and safety, and should not put themselves in a position that could place them, or others, in danger. You should never undertake any activity if you have concerns about your own or others' health and safety. If you have any such concerns, you should stop the survey and raise these with the survey coordinators. You are under no obligation to visit a particular site, even if the coordinator has asked you to.

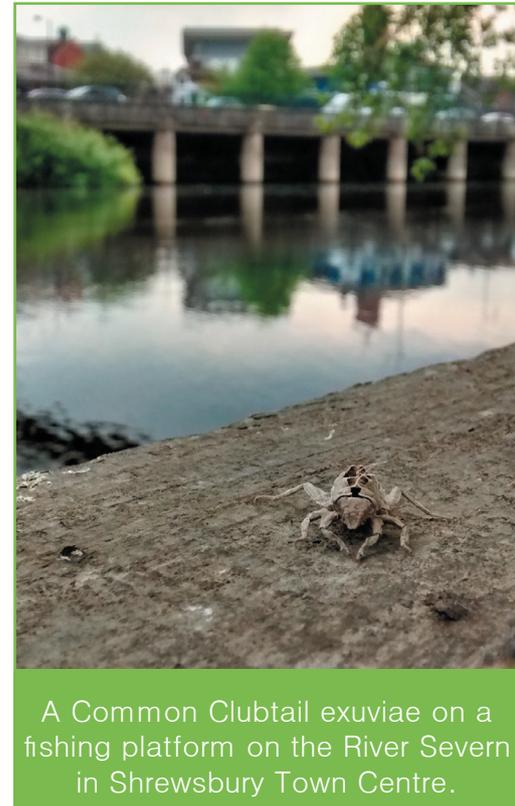
Submitting your Data

Keep hold of your survey sheets, even if you did not find any Clubtail as we will need the dates of your site visits. You will be contacted at a later date with instructions on how to report your data. It is important that you do not submit these records via any other means as all data sent to us via this survey will be submitted to the national dataset once we have received your results.

If you have any further questions about the survey, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Eleanor Colver, Conservation Officer Email: eleanor.colver@british-dragonflies.org.uk

Tel: 07792 231 925



A Common Clubtail exuvia on a fishing platform on the River Severn in Shrewsbury Town Centre.