

Celebrating
30 Years Conserving
Dragonflies



British Dragonfly Society

Dragonfly News 163

The Magazine of the British Dragonfly Society
Spring 2013

www.british-dragonflies.org.uk

**30th Anniversary
stamp issue**



Favourite Days



Observations



**On the Trail of the Orange-spotted
Emerald**



Dragonfly News 63

The Magazine of the British Dragonfly Society

Published twice a year, in April and October, *Dragonfly News* covers all aspects of the British Dragonfly Society's field, recording, monitoring, research, conservation and social activities, as well as information from the wider dragonfly, natural history and conservation world. The emphasis is on dragonflies recorded in the UK.

*The British Dragonfly Society aims to promote and encourage the study, conservation and understanding of dragonflies and their natural habitats, especially in the UK, and to raise public awareness of dragonflies.

Dragonfly News is edited & designed by:

Mark Tyrrell, 8 Warwick Close, Raunds,
Northants., NN9 6JH Tel. [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

Deadlines for inclusion of copy:

Spring 31 January

Autumn 31 July

Advertising Rates:

£15 for small-ad (text only); £40 for quarter-page; £60 for half-page; £100 for full-page.

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The views expressed by the contributors to *Dragonfly News* are not necessarily those of the Editor or the British Dragonfly Society.

BDS Subscriptions (annual)

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| Ordinary membership | £20 |
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| Ordinary – Overseas | £25 |
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Subscriptions are due on 1 April each year.

Please Gift Aid your subscription, if possible.

All subscriptions & membership enquiries to:

BDS Membership, Lynn Curry, 23 Bowker Way,

Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1PY

Registered Charity Number: 800196

web site: www.british-dragonflies.org.uk

ISSN: 1752-2633

Dragonfly News is printed by Artisan Litho using vegetable oil based inks on paper from well managed, sustainable sources, certified to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards.

<http://www.artisanlitho.co.uk>

The plastic envelope used to deliver *Dragonfly News* can be recycled with shopping bags at larger retailers.

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Trustees & Officers of the BDS

Chairman: Pam Taylor, Decoy Farm, Decoy Road, Potter Heigham, Norfolk, NR29 5LX. Tel. [REDACTED]

Vice-Chairman: Vacant

Secretary: Henry Curry, 23 Bowker Way, Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1PY. Tel. [REDACTED]

Treasurer: Brian Walker, 49 Roman Way, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 9YF. Tel. [REDACTED]

Trustees: Andy Harmer, Alan Nelson, *Mick Parfitt.

Journal Editor: Peter Mill, 8 Cookridge Grove, LEEDS, LS16 7LH. [REDACTED]

Shop Manager: Lynn Curry, 23 Bowker Way, Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1PY Tel. [REDACTED]

Dragonfly Conservation Group (DCG)

Convenor: Dave Smallshire, 8, Twindle Beer, Chudleigh, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 0JP. Tel. [REDACTED]

Members: Mike Averill, *Steve Brooks, Steve Cham, David Chelmick, Claire Install, Stephen Prentice, Adrian Parr, Val Perrin, Ian Smith, Pam Taylor.

Corresponding Members: Tim Beynon, Norman Moore, Charlotte Smith

Project Officers

Field Meetings Organiser: Mike Averill, 49 James Road, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY10 2TR

Migrant Dragonfly Project: Adrian Parr, 10 Orchard Way, Barrow, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP29 5BX.

Conservation Officer: Claire Install, c/o Natural England (West Midlands), Parkside Court, Hall Park Way, Telford, TF3 4LR. Tel. 0300 060 2338

'Dragonflies in Focus' Project Officer: Stephen Prentice, c/o Natural England (West Midlands), Parkside Court, Hall Park Way, Telford, TF3 4LR. Tel. 0300 060 0647

BDS Web Master: David Hepper, 12 Three Stiles Road, FARNHAM, Surrey, GU9 7DE. Tel. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] David.Hepper@Local-Software.co.uk



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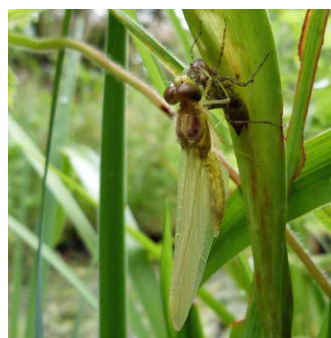
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Contents



30 Do you know your emerging Common Blue from Azure Damselflies?

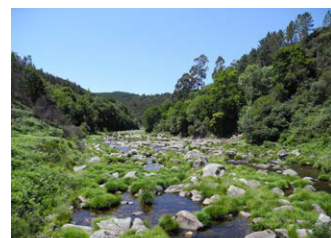


16 What would you do if rain threatened an emerging Darter in your pond?

08 Join one of the many BDS field trips and celebrate with birthday cake on some special 30th anniversary walks.



25 How two weeks in August 2012 revitalised Brian Walker's Dragonfly recording.



22 Join Damian Pinguey as he searches for the only dragonfly species typed in the UK.

Features

16 To Intervene or Not? *Terry & Judy Wood*

17 30th Anniversary Stamp Issue *Peter Mill*

17 An Unusual Colour Variant of the Male Southern Hawker *David Clarke*

20 Favourite Days *Peter Hunt*

22 On the Trail of the Orange Spotted Emerald *Damian Pinguey*

25 Two Weeks in August *Brian Walker*

30 Do you know your Dragonflies *Mark Tyrrell*

31 International Congress of Odonatology *Bill Wain*

Regulars

02 The President's View

04 From the Conservation Officer

05 InBox

08 Field Meetings & Other Events

14 Last Dates for 2012

15 Migrant Dragonflies

18 Notes & Observations

28 Members' Gallery

32 BDS Business

32 Annual Accounts

33 A note from the Membership Office

34 Minutes of the 25th AGM

35 Constitution and Bye-laws

36 30th Annual Members' Day

36 An Atlas of Dragonflies of Britain & Ireland



BDS REPORTS

The President's View



Pam Taylor

A year ago as I wrote this piece, there was a hard glistening frost on the reedbeds viewed from my desk window. This year I started the article whilst looking out over a snow-covered scene that had been here for nearly two weeks – quite a rarity for Norfolk. The following morning, after overnight rain and rising temperatures, the snow had suddenly gone and everything was brown (mud) and green again. Hopefully, by the time you read this in early April, the weather will have warmed properly for springtime and dragonflies will already be on the wing, at least in southern counties of England.

My President's column last autumn was one in which I had to share some serious concerns about the BDS and I'm afraid we're not much better off now. The funding situation is still difficult, with potential sponsors having to cut their own budgets and our grant applications not yet yielding the hoped for income. Partnerships have also been put on hold, hopefully only temporarily, as other organisations consider their own future plans. We unfortunately live in difficult times at the moment.

It is also with regret that I have to inform you that our Chief Executive, Gary Roberts, resigned at the end of October last year. At the Trustees' meeting that followed Members' Day we agreed a three month notice period with him and Gary left the BDS at the end of January. Taking into account several factors, including our current finances and the difficulties we are experiencing obtaining further funds, Trustees have decided not to appoint another Chief Executive at the present time.

If you recall, it was late in 2010 that the BDS took external advice about a Fundraising and Marketing Strategy. One of the three main recommendations was that we should appoint a full-time director to develop our fundraising, publicity and membership potential. The Chief Executive job was advertised early the next year, interviews took place in April and Gary took up his post in June 2011.

Once appointed and with a strategy agreed, Gary set about applying to Trusts and Foundations to support our BDS work. Sadly this yielded only one donation out of two hundred approaches made over the course of a year. A Corporate Membership scheme was also developed later, but at the time of writing this has not yet produced any corporate members. Our ordinary membership, after the price increase in April 2012, has also remained at about the same level as before.

Despite all these struggles, the BDS as a whole continues to function. We still have our other two officers, Claire and Steve, and they have been working hard to cover the recording, conservation and public outreach aspects of the Society. Together with a large number of key volunteers, they have helped the BDS to move forward with the atlas, collation of dragonfly records, dragonfly reintroduction proposals and species conservation.

By the time you read this, a new postcard to raise awareness of Large Red Damselfly in Scotland will have been prepared using the winning photograph from our BDS photographic competition in January. The competition, run through the BDS website and BDS Flickr page (<http://www.flickr.com/groups/2151651@N22/>), attracted over fifty entries in just twelve days and the winner was Martin Černý from the Czech Republic - see page 35. This image now features on the front of the postcard for 2013. On the back of the card, people will be given information about the species and told how they can submit records. The postcard is supported by Scottish Natural Heritage as part of their grant to us.

Another competition, of sorts,

was to see who would submit the one millionth record to the DRN database. You can read about the winning recorder elsewhere in this magazine, so I'll keep you guessing for now! I have to say though, that it's a fantastic achievement to have one million records for the new dragonfly atlas and a huge thank you must be said to all the BDS Vice County Recorders, as well as all the other observers who sent records to them or submitted their sightings online. We couldn't have done it without you! THANKS.

Speaking of the atlas, you should find an advert for it in this magazine. We hope the atlas will be ready by late autumn, so keep your eye out for an attractive pre-publication offer later this year. By completing a pre-publication order, you will save yourself money and also help us to print the right number of copies to meet demand. My thanks at this point must go to all the authors who have contributed text so far, as well as our partners at BRC (Biological Records Centre) who are assisting with atlas production. It's not too late for you to help though. We still need text on habitats and photographs to illustrate the chapters. Further details about these requirements can be found in the current issue of *Darter* magazine. Also look out for the new *DragonflyWatch* project, details of which can be found on the BDS website and in *Darter*.

Whether you love or hate social media, the BDS has to move with the times. Whilst in post, Gary Roberts set up both Twitter and Facebook accounts for the BDS. These have now been taken over by a small team of volunteers, so you have even more ways to keep in touch with the BDS. We had achieved 1,000 followers on Twitter by mid-January this year. As mentioned above, the BDS also has its own Flickr page now, so you can view some stunning dragonfly photographs whenever you wish. Why not join 'The British Dragonfly Society Pool' yourself and share your own pictures with us.

Spreading the word about dragonflies and just how amazing they are continues to be an important part of BDS work, especially in this our 30th Anniversary Year. You will notice we're using a new logo just for this year and we're hoping to provide our greatest ever selection

of walks and other events for you this summer. Out and about, the BDS will be at Gardening Scotland in May/June and by the time you read this, we will already have run two training courses in Wales. We're currently investigating a larger stand at this year's Birdfair to celebrate both our 30th Anniversary Year and the new atlas. As you'll read elsewhere, the BDS 30th Anniversary is also being celebrated by a set of Jersey stamps due in July. Having been involved in the production stages, I can already say they are simply stunning!

Other 30th Anniversary initiatives are the Dragonfly Walks for Beginners and a possible Art Competition later in the year for schools. You might also be lucky enough to get some BDS cake this year, if you visit Members' Day in November or some of our summer events. One thing that won't be happening just yet though is our 30th Anniversary Appeal. This was mentioned in the last Dragonfly News, but after recent changes in the BDS, this has been put on hold for now.

As we strive to move the BDS forward in these difficult times, we will be relying more and more heavily on our volunteers. If you feel you could join this happy band to further support the BDS, then please get in touch. The more volunteers we have, the less the burden on those already helping. In particular we need volunteers to assist visitors at the Dragonfly Centre at Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire and volunteers to help at regional events throughout the UK. It's not too late to put your name forward to lead a walk, give a talk or help man a BDS stand. Please take a look at the events in here and on our website to see where you might help or where you could fill in a gap in our coverage. Just get in touch with Claire, our Conservation Officer, if you feel you can help, and she will pass your details on to those concerned.

One million records!

When we launched the BDS Atlas project back in spring 2008, the Dragonfly Recording Network database held less than 600,000 records, so it is a stunning and magnificent achievement to have added over 400,000 new records in just five recording seasons. The Atlas Steering Group would like to sincerely thank all those who have contributed or collated records to achieve this fantastic total.

At first the map of the UK looked very

red and yellow, rather than the green we hoped for. Red 10km squares or hectads were those that were either unrecorded or ones that hadn't been visited since the year 2000. Yellow hectads did contain recent records, but less than the Vice County Diversity Threshold (VCDT) - a measure of species diversity based on the number of species you might expect to be recorded in that area. Green hectads had both recent and sufficient records to show a good species diversity. This was something we strived for across the UK.

Year on year our determined band of volunteer recorders targeted red and yellow hectads in their own counties and beyond. In Wales, Stephen and Anne Coker conquered Pembrokeshire almost single (sorry, double) handed, sending in over 16,000 records for the county in 2009. Elsewhere over 9,000 records came in from Yorkshire, 6,000 from Glamorgan and 4,000 each from Norfolk and Kent in the same year.

After three recording seasons, 2008-2010, the DRN database stood at 738,000 records and almost 80% of all hectads in Britain had been surveyed, at least partially. Of those areas that had been recorded since the year 2000, 43% now met the VCDT, whilst 35% still fell short of the mark. Twelve months later almost 100,000 more records had been added nationwide and the amount of unrecorded hectads had dropped to just 14%. For the first time over half of all hectads now met the VCDT for post 2000 records. The most noticeable improvement in coverage came from Scotland at about this time and special mention must be made of Pat Batty, Scotland Recorder, and her small group of very hardy recorders. As Pat herself will tell you, dragonfly recording in Scotland is difficult due to both weather and terrain.

The grand total of records achieved for 2011 was helped by two new advances in recording. In April the new BDS website and improved online recording system were launched and at around the same time dragonfly recording was added as an option in the BTO's Garden Birdwatch scheme. In 2012 a further boost to recording came from a similar addition of dragonflies to Birdtrack. From the mid-point of atlas recording, the work of Adrian Bicker with his Living Record system must also be thanked, for adding to the various ways in which records could be contributed to the atlas project.

Finally we reached the end of atlas recording with the close of the 2012 season. Records have been flooding in to the DRN database ever since then and the one millionth dragonfly record was added early in 2013. The recorder concerned was Ingrid Twissell, our VCR for Gloucestershire, with her record of Ruddy Darter from Tewkesbury on 9th August 2012. By the time you read this article, I hope to have been able to present Ingrid with a special certificate and gift at the 2013 BDS Recorders' Conference. **DN**

New BDS Shop Manager Required

Hi, would any one like a wonderful opportunity to help the British Dragonfly Society by taking over the running of the BDS shop?

The shop has a range of clothing, mugs, books and small miscellaneous items (see the back of this magazine for details) and generates significant extra income for the Society to use for conservation projects.

The main job is to send out items when members order them. Most orders come in through the web site, but we still get some via the post. You could also have the opportunity of increasing the value to the Society by expanding the range of items the shop sells.

This is a great opportunity to put your skills to good use, help promote the Society through increased merchandising and raise funds too!

For more information please contact me, Lynn Curry, current BDS shop manager.

Tel. [redacted] or e-mail [redacted]

Dragonfly News gets a make-over

You might have already noticed that Dragonfly News has been given a make-over. BDS member and professional magazine designer Jon Mees wrote in with some ideas to evolve the design of our magazine. I hope you like how it is moving forwards and I thank Jon for some great suggestions
- Ed



From the Conservation Officer



Claire Install

The BDS have a lot to celebrate this year, picking out 3; firstly the society has reached its 30th birthday, secondly we have over one million dragonfly and damselfly records in our database and thirdly, after many years of hard work and dedicated recording, the second National Atlas of Dragonflies is due to be published.

When I see dragonflies, it is easy to see why the BDS exists, they are stunning and impressive insects. Sitting next to a pond and watching dragonflies clashing, hovering and darting about, they are mesmerising to watch and creeping up to them and getting a glimpse of them whilst they are perched, perhaps to bask or eat prey caught on the wing, they are beautiful to see close-up. They are unmistakable when you see them and, compared to other orders, there are only a few species to learn and all are recognisable on the wing (or at least from a photograph!). It is plain to see why over 96% of our records are of adult dragonflies. These records are great and give us a good idea about dragonflies' distribution, they don't however show the conservational value of a site. Our Key Sites criteria are based upon evidence of breeding and the presence of an adult dragonfly does not allow us to determine whether eggs and larvae are likely to survive in a pond and reach maturity. An exuvia, the shed outer larval skin left behind after a dragonfly emerges, is proof that a full life cycle has been completed at a site.

An interesting study comparing larval, exuvial and adult surveys of dragonflies at farmland ponds was undertaken by Raebel *et al.* in 2010. The importance of exuvial and larval records was stressed; these records make up (in January

2013) just 2.4% and 1.5% of the BDS's records database respectively. One of the findings of the study was that adult surveys often overestimate the quality of a pond; adults will even oviposit at unsuitable ponds. Such ponds are described as 'ecological traps' where any eggs laid are doomed. Exuvial records in particular will highlight good quality waterbodies and these should be conserved, equally ponds that attract adults but do not support the full life cycle should be targeted to improve the quality of the waterbody.

This year, I would like to encourage you to send in larval and exuvial records. I know the thought of identifying larvae and exuviae sounds daunting at first, but with a bit of practice and detective work, it will be easier than you thought. This year is perfect to start because Steve Cham's 'Field Guide to the larvae and exuviae of British Dragonflies' was published in 2012 (and is available from the BDS shop), it contains excellent photos of all UK species as well as tips on what to look for. The popular Brooks and Lewington (1997 and 1999) and Smallshire and Swash (2010) dragonfly field guides also give information to help identify larvae and exuviae. By learning to identify larvae and exuviae, you are acquiring a new skill which will give the BDS knowledge of important dragonfly sites and, more importantly, help us to conserve them.

There are a few observations which will help you narrow down the species; the time of year, habitat and general shape of the larva or exuvia. For example, a large, torpedo-shaped exuvia found in late-April or May is most likely to be a Hairy Dragonfly – the earliest hawker to be found on the wing in Spring. An advantage to identifying exuviae is that you can take them home and identify them at your leisure. Exuviae can be found from between a couple of centimetres to a few metres from the waterbody. Look on plant stems, leaves, rocks, roots and sides of the waterbody. Always take care when collecting exuviae – watch out for unsteady banks and deep water. Some exuviae, especially damselflies will need to be studied with a hand lens or microscope to enable you to see some of the identification features. The newly emerged, or teneral, adult may still be on or near to the exuvia, wait

until it has flown away before collecting the exuvia. Finding the teneral dragonfly next to the exuvia confirms its identity but studying the exuvia will also give you a chance to become familiar with ID features. Once you know what to look for and can distinguish a few species, the rest will be easier to learn. So, in 2013, if you see an exuvia – why not take it home and see if you can identify it?! **DN**

References

Raebel E M, Merckx T, Riordan P, Macdonald D W & Thompson D J. (2010) The dragonfly delusion: why it is essential to sample exuviae to avoid biased surveys. *J Insect Conserv* 14: 523 – 533.

BDS Journals – free to a good home

We have had a spring clean and do not have enough space to store all of the back copy journals that we currently have. Rather than recycling them, we would feel happier giving them to our members for free (* plus the cost of p & p). If you would like copies of any of the Journals listed below, please contact me at the usual address. Journals will be given out on a first come first served basis.

Vol 1 No.5, Vol 2 No.2, Vol 3 No.2, Vol 6 No.1, Vol 7, No.1, Vol 7, No., Vol 8 No.1, Vol 8 No.2, Vol 9 No.1, Vol 9 No.2, Vol 10 No.1, Vol 10 No.2, Vol 11 No.1, Vol 11 No.2, Vol 12 No.2, Vol 13, No.1, Vol 13 No.2, Vol 14 No.2, Vol 15, No.1, Vol 16 No.1, Vol 17 No.2, Vol 18 Nos.1 & 2, Vol 19 Nos.1 & 2, Vol 20 No.2, Vol 21 No.1.

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InBox

The Editor welcomes your letters and e-mails.



Scientific Names [DN62]

In DN62, Roger Payne wrote requesting that scientific names be used following vernacular names in articles published in this magazine. I then threw this open to Members to write in with thoughts and comments. Here are edited versions of letters received - Ed

Against scientific names

...My advice to anyone wanting to promote dragonflies to the British public is to avoid using scientific names unless you are absolutely certain that all your audience is familiar with them.

So what about DN? In my view this is the sort of publication that BDS should be (and I hope is) using to distribute to a wide range of interested organisations and the interested general public. As such it needs to be user and reader friendly, which means keeping it as free as possible of technicalities, jargon, abbreviations and scientific names. I think that the approach you have outlined achieves this and that DN is exactly what BDS needs to both inform all its members and to capture the interest of those tempted to join or keen to support dragonfly conservation in general. **Len Campbell**

.....I must say that I really appreciate the use of 'standard names' for identification. Finding the identification an extremely tough task, I can only marvel how you experts manage it! If you were using scientific names continually, I would find the whole thing harder than it is! **Mark Ward**

.....In my opinion, the correct way to present the names of species is to use the vernacular names where these are agreed and in general use as they are in the UK, followed by the scientific name or, where there is no agreed vernacular name, just the scientific name.

However, I don't see any reason to use scientific names for UK species in DN as their names are well known, are listed at the end of the magazine and so far as I know none are in contention. **John Hancox**

....I'm strongly in favour of vernacular names only for UK species in Dragonfly News and also would favour them in the Journal as well. When I joined BDS as a relative beginner it drove me mad having to look up vernacular names at the back of the Journal! It may be OK for seasoned members but I'm sure it would put off a lot of potential members if only scientific names were used. **Neil Friswell**

....All I really want to say is that I am in total agreement with the views you offer as the preferred approach for the future. For British species I would suggest a large proportion of members and prospective members tend to use the names in common usage as opposed to latin names. Indeed I have had it said to me that any exclusive use of scientific names suggests a degree of pomposity which mitigates against an atmosphere of inclusivity we would surely all wish to encourage. **Chris Dobson**

For using scientific names

.....I would suggest that all reports, somewhere in the text, use the scientific name shown in italics followed in brackets by the most recognised common name in Roman.

I believe that this will encourage members to learn the scientific names and therefore reduce the occasions of mis-identification through the use of colloquial names.

I, for one, do not recognise Dragonfly News as being set apart as a mainstream publication. It is part of an educational package available to interested members. **Nick Elsey**

.....I wholly concur with what Roger Payne says, and would echo his question 'What's wrong with Latin anyway?'

Anyone remotely interested in plants or gardening routinely uses latinised names, for example Antirrhinum, Chrysanthemum, Crocus, Hibiscus, Hydrangea, etc., etc. The argument that because DN is a 'mainstream' publication its readers prefer the use of English names suggests to me we may be less competent linguistically and scientifically than the average gardener! **Mike Parr**

....I am wholeheartedly with Roger Payne, I vote for the Latin. I'd go further. I move that we abolish these vernacular English uncommon names altogether. **John Trueman**

....Reading the article my first reaction was: "Well, the BDS magazine – unlike the BDS Journal – is primarily a non-specialist product that happens to be accessible to specialists. Why not just leave the Sunday names at the back for reference?"

But then I began reading the article on migrant dragonflies by Adrian Parr (p11). It begins: 'After the unprecedented influxes of Vagrant Emperor ...' and I immediately realised I couldn't recall the Sunday name for this beast. Anax yes. But Anax what? Or perhaps not Anax at all? And that made me re-think my view.

So my conclusion is that I think it would be worth giving the Sunday name at least once in any given article. I realise there's a trade-off between precision on the one hand and readability/space on the other, but still. **Ruary Mackenzie Dodds**

....I think we should in articles of Dragonfly News use the common name followed by the international scientific name but only for the first mention of that species in the article. Following mentions of that species need then only have the common name. **Simon Davidson**

....As a relative newcomer to odonatology my preference would be for both, and the 'Darter Magazine - Missing Cheshire



Report' that follows Roger's letter gives an example of what I think works perfectly. For anybody trying to learn the scientific names and associate them with the vernacular ones what could be better than seeing them together in print on a regular basis? I quite understand that DN is not intended to be an academic journal, but the obvious advantages of associating the two namings in the mind of the reader seems to me to justify their mutual inclusion. **Geoff Lee**

It seems opinions are split exactly down the middle. My policy will therefore be to use English names only for UK species allowing readers to refer to the comprehensive listings on the internal back page. For non-UK species, I will use the accepted English name followed by the scientific name at first use only. Thanks to all for taking the time to write in - Ed.

Pruinescence in female Broad-bodied Chaser [JBDS Vol28 No.1]

Following my paper in JBDS Vol28, No.1, I would like to undertake further research on the occurrence of pruinescence in female Broad-bodied Chasers. I would welcome contact from anyone with appropriate records, including date, location and a photograph if possible. I will publish the results in a future edition of The Journal. Please contact me at the address given in my paper or via e-mail at the address below. Thanks.

John Horne

Dragonfly Haikus

Just after I'd completed my four-month dragonfly sabbatical at Ashton, Miriam Rothschild, our first patron, knowing my own dragonfly poems, sent me a selection of Japanese haiku. Here's one from the selection. **Ruary Mackenzie Dodds**

The dragon-flies

All flying in the same direction

In the rays of the setting sun

Rangai 1758 - 1831

Spring Species [JBDS Vol28 No.2]

I read Mark Tyrrell's paper "The impact of spring temperatures on emergence patterns in five 'spring' species" with interest, particularly as *Ischnura elegans* and *Enallagma cyathigerum* are listed as spring species.

Unfortunately, both of these zygopterans behave as summer species as defined by Corbet & Brooks (2008), and my own studies (Parr, M.J. 1969a, 1969b, 1970, 1973) show unequivocally they are summer species in Lancashire. *I. elegans* shows a cline in life cycles: it is semi-voltine in Benbecula, Outer Hebrides; mostly univoltine in the north of England; and bi-voltine/trivoltine in southern Europe, but nowhere does it show any tendency to be a spring species. Both of these zygopterans show extended emergence curves in England and certainly show no evidence of a winter diapause in the final instar. **Mike Parr**

References:

Corbet, P.S. & Brooks S. 2008. Dragonflies. New Naturalist, Collins. London.

Parr, M.J. 1969a. Comparative notes on the distribution, ecology and behaviour of some damselflies (Odonata). Entomologist, 102: 151-161.

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Parr, M.J. 1970. The life histories of *Ischnura elegans* (van der Linden) and *Coenagrion puella* (L.) in south Lancashire. Proc. R. ent. Soc. Lond.(A), 172-181.

Parr, M.J. 1973. Ecological studies of *Ischnura elegans* (van der Linden) (Zygoptera: Coenagrionidae). I. Age groups, emergence patterns and numbers. Odonatologica, 2(3): 139-157.

Mark Tyrrell replies: Corbet defines 'Spring' and 'Summer' species based on synchronicity of emergence and over-wintering instar stage. At my chosen study site in Northamptonshire, *E.cyathigerum* has two distinct emergence peaks per year, in May and early July. My long term studies at this site suggest that the emergence in May is well synchronised and is due to larvae behaving like Corbet's 'Spring' species. I am not sure that these individuals could be described as 'Summer' species. I am also not entirely sure that any Damselfly meets both criteria, even *Pyrrhosoma nymphula* has an extended emergence into June. In view of these results, perhaps we need to review the definition of 'Spring' species to account for these emergence patterns.

Mixed pairings and Lestids - Request for help

Recently I published a short note (Pickess 2012) about my sighting of a male Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa* in tandem with a female Large Red Damselfly *Pyrrhosoma nymphula* on 17 July 2012 (see also DN 62). On 12 September 2012 I saw a male Emerald Damselfly with a male Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*! Both observations were in Purbeck, Dorset.

A literature search suggested that mixed pairings between Lestid species was not unknown but not with non-Lestid species (Corbett 1999 and Miller & Fincke 2004). Whilst preparing my original note I was told of a more typical pairing that had been photographed at Winterton Dunes, Norfolk, on 8 September, 2012 between an Emerald Damselfly and a Southern Emerald Damselfly *Lestes barbarus* by Murray Smith (pers. com. M. Tunmore).

These three observations of mixed pairings raise the question of how frequently such pairings occur. I would be grateful if Odonata recorders could pay particular attention to paired Emerald Damselflies during the coming season and double check the sex and the species of the coupled pair. Between sympatric Lestids mistaken identity could be an explanation but between other species of Zygoptera is less easily explained. **Bryan Pickess**

References : Corbett, P.S., 1999. Dragonflies: Behaviour and Ecology of Odonata. Harley Books, Colchester.; Miller, M.N. & Fincke, O.M., 2004. Mistakes in sexual recognition among sympatric Zygoptera vary with time of day and color morphism (Odonata: Coenagrionidae). International Journal of Odonatology. 7: 471-491.; Pickess, B. P. (2012) Mixed Pairings: Are male Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa* Short-sighted or Desperate? Atropos 47: 76-77

Snowdonian blue damselfly [DN62]

Allan Brandon's article on unusual the colouration of blue damselflies in Wales prompted other members to write in with their observations and photos.

Although I see many Common Blues with unusual markings (usually males), I rarely see this on Northern Damselflies, despite seeing more of them in a season. This photo (right) was taken at Castle Fraser in Aberdeenshire in 13 July 2012.

I have also attach a photo of a female Common Blue (far right) that I saw in Glen Affric in June with short thoracic stripes. The colouration was still not fully developed which meant that it really caught my eye, despite an Azure Hawker flying around at the time!! **Juliette Dinning.**

Following Allan Brandon's article on unusual markings in blue damselflies, here's what I take to be an unusual Azure Damselfly photographed 8 August 2012 by a small pool on Llandefalle Hill SO 077372, north of Brecon. Also present were Azure, Common Blue and both Blue-tailed Damselflies, Emerald Damselflies, Emperor, Common Hawker, Four-spotted Chaser and Common Darter. **Keith Noble**

I wonder whether Allan Brandon's mystery blue damselfly might be an Irish Damselfly *C. lunulatum*; the marking on S2 is slightly spade-shaped, and the pairs of spots on S8 and S9 are suggestive of this species but are not normally present on the Common Blue. Ireland is not that far from Wales, and the damselfly could well have been blown across on the prevailing westerly wind. What ever it is, it is very melanistic, so anything is possible. I certainly would not rule out the Common Blue, as I have seen one at Paxton Pits, Hunts, where the antehumeral stripes had shrunk to a mere two dots each, at the two ends of the normal extent. In this case, the S2 lollipop was absolutely as normal, so there was no mistaking the species. **Tim Gosling**

In 2009 I wrote an article for DN55 entitled 'Identification, Traceability and an unexpected Discovery'. In this article I made a strong case for taking voucher specimens whenever scientific studies are being undertaken, or if the specimen looks different or abnormal, and not to rely only on photographs. DN62 contains a most interesting account of a curious



blue damselfly with strange black markings. The article discusses at length whether the insect was an aberrant melanistic male Variable Damselfly or Common Blue Damselfly. The shape and the markings of the pronotum certainly look much more like the Common Blue than a Variable Damselfly, but without the actual specimen we cannot be certain. What is extraordinary is the complete absence of any mention of the structural differences between the terminal appendages (or penes) of the two species in this account. A careful examination of these structures would surely have solved this fascinating case. **Mike Parr**

Allan Brandon replies: I'm glad that Mike Parr found my article interesting and he may be surprised to learn that I agree completely with his point of criticism of the published account, namely, the lack use of both voucher specimens to confirm ID. But what he seems to have failed to pick up is that this was completely out of my hands. Maybe I should



have emphasised that I was sent only photographs as no voucher specimen was collected. But surely Ian deserves praise for bringing the individual to our attention. I mentioned that I went to the site as soon as I could after receiving the images to try and find similar specimens to confirm the identification but I found none on that occasion or on several later visits. Despite the lack of a voucher specimen I still think the discovery of such a bizarre damselfly was worth bringing to a wider audience. It might be of interest to mention here that as the unusually wet summer unfolded, more blue damselflies (*Coenagrion hastulatum*, *C. puella* as well as *Enallagma cyathigerum*) were being found with more additional black markings than normal. It seems that the weather was having some influence and caused Adrian Parr to comment (by e-mail 12 August 2012) that maybe a delayed emergence this year might be producing an increase in dark pigmentation.



FIELD MEETINGS & OTHER EVENTS

Reports compiled by Mike Averill

Each year the Society runs field meetings around the British Isles. These are advertised in the Spring issue of Dragonfly News and most reports appear in the Autumn issue. If you would like to run a meeting in your area please contact Mike for guidelines.

Grand Western Canal, 6 June Dave Smallshire

Only three were present at the first viable Devon Group meeting of the year (the Stover meeting on 29 April was cancelled due to appalling weather!), largely as a result of predicted bad weather. In the event, it was indeed cool and damp with frequent showers. The usual common damselflies were found, plus a single Red-eyed venturing forth. A couple of recently emerged Scarce Chasers, however, saved the day!

Countess Wear & Exminster Marshes 17 June Dave Smallshire

At last, some sun for a Devon Group meeting! Fifteen people turned up at Countess Wear for a joint Exeter CC/BDS walk along the Exeter Canal. Damselflies dominated, with several Red-eyed and White-legged among the commoner species. Numbers were low, though, and dragonflies almost non-existent. An



Female Emperor eating an Ermine Moth in the Forest of Dean.

Emperor and a Hairy Dragonfly put in brief appearances, but the star was an immature male Scarce Chaser along the Alphin Brook, close to the site of Devon's first record there in 2003. A female Hairy Dragonfly settled for the photographers. Moving on to Exminster Marshes, a couple of adult male Scarce Chasers and two Hairy Dragonflies were found before the sun went in.

Forest of Dean 24 June 2012 Ingrid Twissell

On a dull summer morning 5 members met, for an 11 o'clock start, at the northern part of the Cinderford Linear Park, Forest of Dean, to explore some of the ponds present in the area. We walked around an established pond mainly surrounded by a variety of trees and saw 6 species of odonata including finding exuviae of two species – Aeshna cyanea and Libellula quadrimaculata. We then moved on to a nearby fairly newly dug

pond with little vegetation. Afterwards we walked along the main track to the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Laymoor Quag NR and beyond, to the complex of ponds dug in the Autumn of 2010 after clearance of trees from the area. This site was where a small colony of *Ischnura pumilio* was discovered in June 2011. After much searching we did spot two males, and added 7 species to our list of the morning including exuviae of *Lestes sponsa* and *Libellula depressa*, and just as we were leaving to return to the cars for lunch, a *Cordulia aenea* was spotted – one of my favourite dragonflies! Following our lunch break, we drove the short distance to GWT Woorgreens NR to visit a complex of adjoining ponds that were dug in the Autumn of 2011, which are behind the main lake within a heathland restoration area. These ponds were still too new to yield many species of Odonata – maybe if the weather had been kinder we would have seen more, as only two species were present. We planned on walking back to the cars along a wet grassy track, but chose to stay on a main woodland track, which also, unfortunately, turned out to be

equally as wet and muddy. (The Forestry Commission have recently carried out a lot of work removing trees, and because of the wet summer, many of the tracks were churned up.) The track we chose ended up being a lot farther than the path we had planned on taking, and after a while an iPhone with GPS and maps was consulted to try to find out whether we were going in the right direction to the cars – we were! – but “route march” comes to mind as we stoically trudged on. We were eventually rewarded with adding another species to the list at Blackpool Brook Lagoon, which has become quite overgrown. Nearby Mike photographed *Anax imperator* eating a moth after catching it in flight. We returned wearily to the cars at 4 pm, after seeing a total of 14 species of Odonata – 7 damselflies and 7 dragonflies, including the species for which the meeting was primarily held.

Odonata recorded: *Lestes sponsa*, *Pyrrhosoma nymphula*, *Coenagrion puella*, *Enallagma cyathigerum*, *Ischnura elegans*, *Ischnura pumilio*, *Platycnemis pennipes*, *Aeshna cyanea*, *Anax imperator*, *Orthetrum cancellatum*, *Libellula quadrimaculata*, *Libellula depressa*, *Cordulia aenea*, *Sympetrum striolatum*.

Other taxa seen on the day included: a male adder sitting on a grassy stump, 2 lizards, froglets and 4 fallow deer, as well as other invertebrates – 2 Banded Longhorn beetle *Rhagium bifasciatum*, 2 Green Tiger beetle *Cicindela campestris* which seem to be readily seen on the site, and a Black-headed Cardinal beetle *Pyrochroa coccinea*.

Smallhanger **29 July** **Dave Smallshire**

Soon after ten of us gathered at Smallhanger for the last Devon Group meeting of the season, the heavens opened – surprise, surprise! Despite a few cooling heavy showers, we did manage to find 14 species, including five Scarce Blue-tails (one nice *aurantiaca* female), several Small Reds, Keeled Skimmers and Black Darters, plus single Common Hawker and Broad-bodied and Four-spotted Chasers. The numbers of dragonflies reflected those at sites in Devon generally this year:

Spring 2013

Dragonflies... and birds of Extremadura

8 - 14 June 2013

with Andy McGeeney & John Muddeman



Western Demoiselle, Copper Demoiselle, Migrant Spreadwing, Iberian Bluetail, Dainty Bluet, Blue-eye, Orange Featherleg, White Featherleg, Lesser Emperor, Western Spectre, Pronged Clubtail, Western Clubtail, Large Pincertail, Small Pincertail, Faded Pincertail, Green Hooktail, Orange-spotted Emerald, Splendid Cruiser, Epaulete Skimmer, Southern Skimmer, Long Skimmer, Violet Dropwing, Orange-winged Dropwing, Northern Banded Groundling...

For more tour details please visit our web site:

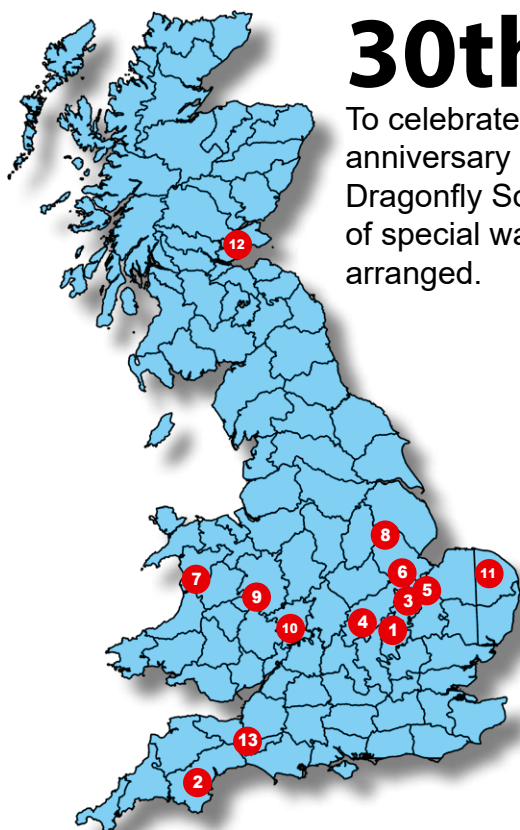
www.spainbirds.com

Andy McGeeney ✉ andymcgeeney@talktalk.net

Spainbirds Nature Tours ✉ info@spainbirds.com

pathetic! A quick look at the Fairy Shrimp ponds revealed that those occupied the previous weekend had dried up – rather ironic considering the wet summer.





30th Anniversary Walks

To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the British Dragonfly Society, a series of special walks have been arranged.

1
Date: Wednesday 12th June 2013
Time: 10.30am
Place: The River Ouse at Sharnbrook
Arrangements: Meet at the Sharnbrook Theatre Car Park at TL011591.
Aims: Looking for Scarce Chasers and other dragonflies.
General: Bring lunch if staying for the afternoon. Open to all.
Access by permission of Bedfordia Estates
Contact: David & Karen Anderson for more details. Email: [redacted]
Please wear suitable footwear for waterside habitat, damp rough grass & uneven ground; Children need to be accompanied by an adult
A joint meetings of the british dragonfly society (BDS) & the Bedfordshire Natural History Society (BNHS).

3
Date: Saturday 22 June 2013
Place: Woodwalton Fen
Aim: To see as many dragonflies as possible on this site.
Meet: Jacksons Bridge at 11.00 am. OS Map 142. Grid ref TL235848. Parking along Great Ravely Drain.
Requirements: Bring pack lunch, binoculars, insect repellent and wear appropriate clothing and footwear in case of inclement weather. No toilet facilities on site.
Visitors and non experts welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult.
Contact/leader: Mick and Sue Parfitt. Tel: [redacted]
Mobile: 07745241061

13
Date: Tues 11 June 2013
Time: 10:30am
Place: Thorney Lakes Caravan Park, Thorney, Somerset.
Arrangements: Meet at the caravan park which is about 3 miles south of Langport.
Aims: We will be visiting the ponds of John Leach and Richard England. John Leach's pond and surrounding woodland is a conservation area, whereas Richard England's ponds are commercial fishing areas, which means they are very different in character. Relatively recent arrivals to this part of the Levels are the Brown Hawker and the Scarce Chaser. We would expect to see many Variable Damselflies too.
General Instructions: Please bring lunch. Toilets and shelter are available. If time (and weather) allow we could also visit other nearby parts of the Levels
Contact: Please ring Mike Parr if you would like to join this meeting on [redacted]

2
Date: Sunday 15th June 2013
Time: 9:30am
Place: Stover Country Park, Devon
Arrangements: Meet at the visitor centre (SX833751; entrance off A382 to Newton Abbot, 300m from A38, 10 miles from M5) finishing by 4:00 p.m.
Aims: An introduction to dragonflies at one of their prime sites in Devon, with a walk in the morning and pond-dipping after lunch. In conjunction with a British Ecological Society centenary event.
General Instructions: Bring lunch. Close-focus binoculars and wellies useful. Pay and display car park. Advance booking not necessary.
Contact: Dave Smallshire [redacted] email [redacted]

4
Date: Saturday 22 June 2013
Time: 1030 am
Place: Yardley Chase SSSI, Northamptonshire.
Arrangements: This is a private site with no public access. A maximum 12 are people are allowed, so booking is essential. Meeting instructions will be provided.
Aims: To celebrate the BDS 30th anniversary at the only site in Northants with Downy Emerald. Also, many other species including Hairy Dragonfly and Broad-bodied Chaser.
General Instructions: Bring lunch. BDS birthday cake will be provided. Please wear stout shoes or wellies.
Contact: Mark Tyrrell Tel: [redacted]
email: [redacted]

5
Date: Saturday 29 June 2013
Place: Kings Dyke, Whittlesey, Nr Peterborough
Aim: To see as many dragonflies as possible on this site.
Meet: Car Park Kings Dyke Nature Reserve at 11.00 am.
OS Map 142. Grid ref TL246973. (A605 heading towards Whittlesey, just after railway crossing, on the left signposted Kings Dyke Nature Reserve).
Requirements: Bring pack lunch, binoculars, insect repellent and wear appropriate clothing and footwear in case of inclement weather. No toilet facilities on site.
Visitors and non experts welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult.
Contact/leader: Henry Curry. Tel: [redacted] Mobile: 07742606076

6
Date Sunday 7 July 2013
Time 2:00pm – 4:00pm
Place: Deeping Lakes Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve. We will meet in the car park. Grid Ref TF182077
Driving Instructions: On the B 1166 road from Deeping St James to Crowland. Go over the railway level crossing at Deeping St James and at the sharp left hand bend as you approach the River Welland, turn right into the reserve at the bend. The car park is approx. 400 metres along the entrance track on the right.
General instructions: This walk is free. Wear stout footwear as the ground is uneven. Bring hot weather items if appropriate plus drink. Any children must be accompanied by an adult.
Contact: Dave Mainwaring on [redacted] or mobile 07711 944305 or [redacted]



1
 Date: Sunday 7 July 2013
 Time: 10.30am
 Place: Felmersham NR & Felmersham Meadow
 Arrangements: Meet in the reserve carpark at SP986582
 Aims: Looking for possible Norfolk Hawkers and other dragonflies & Butterflies in the meadow.
 General Instructions: Bring lunch if staying for the afternoon.
 Open to all
 Contact: David & Karen Anderson for more details. Email: [redacted]

Please wear suitable footwear for waterside habitat, damp rough grass & uneven ground; Children need to be accompanied by an adult
 A joint meetings of the British Dragonfly Society (BDS) & the Bedfordshire Natural History Society (BNHS).

8
 Date: Friday 12th and Saturday 13th July 2013
 Time: From 10:00hrs.
 Place: Whisby Nature Park, SW of Lincoln, Lincolnshire.
 Aim: This large site will be hosting a Bioblitz event put together by the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. The habitat comprises flooded gravel pits, ponds and ditches. On the Friday evening there will also be a moth and bat recording session from 9:00pm.
 Meet: The Education Centre (not the main visitor centre). Park in the main car park (£1 fee applicable) which is located at SK911662.
 Requirements: Café and toilets on site in the main visitor centre. All paths are level but sometimes muddy after rain. Binoculars and camera useful.
 Contact: Brian Hedley [redacted] (07989 665794)

9
 Date: Sunday 21st July, 2013. 1:00-3:00pm
 Place: Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9RS.
 Join Sue McLamb of the British Dragonfly Society on a wonderful walk introducing absolute beginners to the fantastic world of dragonflies.
 Meet: Please report to reception at Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre (SO4382). For further directions see <http://www.Shropshire.gov.uk/shropshirehills.nsf/open/1EB8B5C45D770839802576CB00405CF7>
 Requirements: Wellies/walking shoes suitable for walking to the ponds and a waterproof just in case! Total walking will be no more than 1km.
 Contact: Booking essential via Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre Tel: [redacted]
 Cost: Free

11
 Saturday 20th July 2013
 Place: NWT Upton Fen, Norfolk
 Leader / contact: Dr Pam Taylor [redacted] E-mail: [redacted]

Aim: Afternoon walk to introduce you to the delights of Norfolk's dragonflies. Target species will include Norfolk Hawker and Variable Damselfly.
 Meet: 2:00pm at Upton Fen car park, TG379136. Postcode NR13 6EQ (Low Road), From Acle, Norwich or Wroxham head towards South Walsham, then follow signs for Pilsdon Green.
 Requirements: Booking essential, preferably by email stating 'afternoon'. Numbers strictly limited. Wellies or boots, insect repellent.

7
 Date: Saturday 15th June 2013
 Time: 10:00 a.m.
 Place: Machynlleth, Wales
 Arrangements: Meet in Free Car Park at The Plas, Machynlleth SH 745005
 Aims: A 9-mile, moderately difficult, circular walk in the Machynlleth area of Mid Wales. This free walk will be part of the Cambrian Mountain Society walks programme and will be in conjunction with the Aberystwyth Ramblers.
 General Instructions: Booking is not necessary but Chris or Bob would appreciate a call a day or two before the walk to gauge likely numbers. Waterproof footwear (boots) necessary.
 Bring food and drinks. Strictly no dogs. Any children must be accompanied by a family adult - preferably a parent.
 Contact: Bob Dennison [redacted] and Chris Hodgson [redacted]

1
 Date: Saturday 20th JULY 2013
 Time: 10:30am
 Place: Kimpston Mill Flood Meadows
 Arrangements: meet in the car park at kimpston mill at TL023476. Take the King William road next to the William 4th public house and follow the road left into river view way and right towards the river
 Aims: looking for the general dragonflies of the area
 General instructions: bring lunch if staying for the afternoon. Open to all.
 Contact: David & Karen Anderson for more details. Email: [redacted]
 Please wear suitable footwear for waterside habitat, damp rough grass & uneven ground; Children need to be accompanied by an adult
 A joint meetings of the British Dragonfly Society (BDS) & the Bedfordshire Natural History Society (BNHS).

10
 Date: Saturday 17th August 2013
 Time: 11:30 AM
 Place: Croome Park, near Severn Stoke, Worcestershire
 Arrangements: Meet at the National trust visitor centre (off a minor road between Severn Stoke and Besford SO888452.
 Sat Nav: WR8 9OW
 Aims: A walk to see a range of dragonflies including the Small Red-eyed damselfly.
 General Instructions: There will be a charge of £5.90 for non members of the National Trust. Why not come for the day and explore the whole park. Café on site
 Contact: Mike Averill (07758 702349) email mike. [redacted]

12
 Date: Saturday, 3 August 2013
 Time: 2:15pm. An hour and a half
 Place: Vane Farm RSPB Nature Reserve, Loch Leven, KY13 9LX.
 Arrangements: Follow the brown signs from Junction 5 on M90. Grid reference NT160990.
 Aims: 'The Double-Lives of Dragonflies'. A chance for beginners to find out about these amazing insects, both above and below water. Wear stout footwear. There are steps (to and from the underpass). Indoor activities are available in the event of bad weather.
 General Instructions: Booking essential. There will be a charge for this event. Kids must have an adult with them.
 Contact: Caroline Rance at RSPB Vane Farm. caroline. [redacted] Tel: [redacted]



BDS Field Trips 2013

Saturday 25th May 2013
 River Avon, Marlcliff, W
 Contact: Peter Reeve [redacted] email: peter@reeve60.org.uk.
 Only on the day of the event: 07980064079.
 Aim: The first occurrence in the county of Scarce Chaser was in 2010 and last year, 2012, they were seen in tens - both mating and egg laying. We will look for them this year and hope to find proof of breeding. Also, there is an established breeding colony at the site of the Club-tailed Dragonflies but records have been very sparse for the last two years. We hope to find it in greater numbers this year.
 Meet: There is a small car park on the river bank at Marlcliff approached down a track from the village (SP093505). Meet there for a 10.30am start. For a map see the meetings page on: www.warwickshire-dragonflies.org.uk.
 Requirements: Bring strong footwear and a packed lunch

Sunday May 26th, 2013
 Grand Western Canal, Devon
 Leader / contact: Dave Smallshire [redacted] email [redacted]
 Aim: To look for Scarce Chaser, Red-eyed Damselfly and Hairy Dragonfly, in the light of a breach in one section of the canal last year, and to celebrate the BDS 30th Anniversary with cake!
 Meet: At 10.00 a.m. at Ebear Bridge, Westleigh (ST060163): take A361 from M5 at junction 27; in 500m take slip road (signpost Tiverton Parkway); turn right at first and right at second roundabouts; follow minor road for 2 miles until alongside straight section with canal on left; park before canal bridge. The meeting will end at lunchtime.
 Requirements: Close-focus binoculars will be helpful. Booking not necessary.

Sunday 16th June 2013
 Countess Wear and Exminster Marsh
 Leader / contact: Dave Smallshire [redacted] email [redacted]
 Aim: An introduction to the dragonflies and damselflies of the still and flowing waters in the area, in conjunction with Exeter City Council. Chances of seeing Red-eyed Damselfly, White-legged Damselfly, Banded Demoiselle, Hairy Dragonfly, Emperor, Black-tailed Skimmer and Scarce Chaser.
 Meet: At 10.00 a.m. in the rowing club car park at SX941894 (turn left off the A379 westbound, immediately before the swing bridge) moving to Exminster Marshes (SX 950880) after lunch; finish by 4 p.m.
 Requirements: Bring lunch if staying for the afternoon. Binoculars will be helpful. Booking not necessary.

Sunday 16th June 2013
 Brandon Marsh Nature
 Contact: Peter Reeve [redacted] email: peter@reeve60.org.uk. Contact number on the day only: 07980064079.
 Aim: Adult identification workshop, indoor and outdoor sessions to be held at the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Nature Centre. There is a charge of £15.00 per person payable to Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to cover costs and to contribute to equipment for recording. Refreshments are included but not lunch.
 Meet: 10.30am start in the Barn at the Nature Centre. (SP385758). For a map see the meetings page on: www.warwickshire-dragonflies.org.uk.
 Requirements: Bring strong footwear, lunch or eat at the Nature Centre café.

Sunday 23rd June 2013
 Venn Ottery DWT Reserve, Devon
 Leaders / contacts: Dave Smallshire [redacted] email [redacted] and Lesley Kerry [redacted] email [redacted]
 Aim: A return visit to this special site, now a Shropshire Wildlife Trust reserve, where the target species are the Golden-ringed Dragonfly and the Keeled Skimmer.
 Meet: 10:00 a.m. at SY06639155. From the A3052 Exeter-Sidmouth road, turn north at Halfway Inn onto B3180; in 1 mile turn right, signposted Venn Ottery; bear left at fork and car park is 500m on left.
 Requirements: Wellies essential. Bring lunch. Booking not necessary.

Saturday 6th July 2013
 Catherton Common, Sh
 Contact: Peter Reeve [redacted] email: peter@reeve60.org.uk. Contact number on the day only: 07980064079.
 Aim: A return visit to this special site, now a Shropshire Wildlife Trust reserve, where the target species are the Golden-ringed Dragonfly and the Keeled Skimmer. It is an excellent site for these species. There is much else of interest on the Common including a good population of Bog Bush Cricket.
 See also www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk Catherton Common page. Do not go to the location pinpointed on this page but to the one below!
 Meet: 11.00am start on the Common at SO640790 close to the cattle grid where the unfenced road leaves the common land.
 For a map see the meetings page on: www.warwickshire-dragonflies.org.uk.
 Requirements: Bring lunch, strong footwear. There is about a 2km round walk over rough ground to visit the prime part of the site.

Saturday 20th July 2013
 NWT Upton Fen, Norfolk
 Leader / contact: Dr Pam Taylor [redacted] Email: [redacted]
 Aim: Morning walk to look for a broad range of dragonfly species, including Norfolk Hawker and Variable Damselfly.
 Meet: 10.00am at Upton Fen car park, TG379136. Postcode NR13 6EQ (Low Road), From Acle, Norwich or Wroxham head towards South Walsham, then follow signs for Pilson Green.
 Requirements: Booking essential, preferably by email stating 'morning'. Numbers strictly limited. Wellies or boots, insect repellent. Packed lunch if staying on site (unguided) for the afternoon.

Saturday 20th July 2013
 The Moors, Merstham, nr Redhill, Surrey
 Leader/contact: on the day: Steve Bolton, Surrey Wildlife Trust (07799 894148) / Catherine Burton, HSBG & Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre (07919 664233)
 Aim: to visit the recently created Surrey WT wetland reserve in former sand quarry, comprising open water lagoons, marsh, grassland and river banks. Also good for birds. An open meeting of the Hants, Surrey, Berks Group.
 Meet: 10:30 am at TQ29455174 - car park off Nutfield Road between Mercers County Park and Holmethorpe Lagoons.
 Directions: From Nutfield take the first right just after the Car Wash down Church Hill past the Country Park with Aqua Sports on the right. Carry on until there is a width restriction in the road and a brick bridge. The car park is now IMMEDIATELY on your left before the sign to Watercolour New houses. The car park is set back on the left and rather easy to miss. From the west on the A25 turn left down Cornmongers Lane.
 ** Limited room so alt. parking at Mercers Park (TQ30025175) or the Inn on the Pond (TQ30195145) if lunching there.
 Requirements: lunch, wellies

Saturday 27th July 2013
 Chudleigh Knighton Heath and Little Bradley Ponds, Devon
 Leader / contact: Dave Smallshire [redacted] email [redacted]
 Aim: A joint meeting with Devon Wildlife Trust (Bovey Tracey Group) to see a range of late summer species, including Emerald Damselfly, hawkers and darters at two DWT reserves.
 Meet: At 09.30 a.m. at Dunley Crossroads in the middle of Chudleigh Knighton Heath (SX837775). From A38 westbound, turn right on B3344 at Chudleigh; in ½ mile turn right through Chudleigh Knighton and right again after another ½ mile towards Bovey Tracey; turn left in a further ½ mile at crossroads and park on roadside.
 From A38 eastbound, take exit left to Chudleigh Knighton, 1½ miles after A382 (Stover) junction; park before crossroads in ½ mile.
 Requirements: Bring lunch if staying for Little Bradley Ponds in the afternoon. Wellies and binoculars will be helpful. Booking not necessary.



Saturday 27th July 2013
 Blythe Valley Business Park, B90 8AA, Warwickshire
 Contact: Peter Reeve [redacted] email: peter@reeve60.org.uk. Contact number on the day only: 07980064079.
 Aim: Set in a country park with a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme, there are a number of water bodies that can and do sustain dragonfly populations. The aim of the day is to survey as much of the site as possible to record what species are present and to estimate their numbers. More details about the Business Park are available by following the link: www.blythevalleypark.co.uk
 Meet: Meet for a 10.30am start. Call at security on entering the park to get a permit and directions to the car park. For navigation use the post code B90 8AA, grid ref. SP143755. For a map see the meetings page on: www.warwickshire-dragonflies.org.uk.
 Requirements: Good paths but bring strong footwear and a packed lunch.

Sunday 1st September 2012
 Ryton Pools Country Park, Warwickshire
 Contact: Ben Coleman, Education Ranger, Ryton Pools Country Park on 02476 305 592, email: [redacted] Web site: countryparks.warwickshire.gov.uk
 Aim: To join in an open Discover Dragonflies event organised by the park rangers. The aim is to find Hawkers and other late fliers including Small Red-eyed Damselflies - which have been recorded at the site. In the afternoon the ranger will lead a guided walk for which a small charge is made - very suitable for children.
 Meet: We will meet for a 10.30am start in the car park by the café and interpretive centre (SP370724). Note, there is a charge for car parking at Ryton (currently £2.50). For a map see the meetings page on: www.warwickshire-dragonflies.org.uk and countryparks.warwickshire.gov.uk
 Requirements: Good paths but bring strong footwear and a packed lunch.

Other Events

Friday evening 19th to Monday afternoon 22nd July, 2013
 Slapton Field Centre, Slapton, South Devon
 Tutor: Dave Smallshire
 Aims: A long weekend for those seeking an introduction to the dragonflies and damselflies of southwest England, with visits to Dartmoor, the Bovey Basin and the Exe Marshes. Emphasis will be placed on the identification of adult stages in the field; some 20 species might be seen. Other topics to be covered include the identification of larvae and exuviae, habitat preferences, conservation and management for dragonflies and photography.
 Fees and booking: Shared room: £305; sole occupancy room: £335; non-resident: [redacted] king with [redacted] mail, phone, email or online (address: Slapton Ley Field Centre, Slapton, Kingsbridge, TQ7 2QP; tel: [redacted] email: [redacted] website: www.field-studies-council.org/slaptonley/).

Saturday 20th April, 2013
 Preston Montford Field Centre, Shropshire
 Aim: Dragonfly Larvae Workshop with County Recorder Sue McLamb. Aimed at beginners this course will commence with an introduction to dragonfly larvae and the part they play in the dragonfly lifecycle. Indoor practical sessions will then focus on the identification of exuviae. After lunch the afternoon will be spent out and about at Preston Montford dipping in a number of ponds and practising some hands on identification.
 Meet: Please report to reception at Preston Montford Field Centre (SJ433143). Coffee available from 10.15am and workshop will start at 10.30am and finish at 3.30pm.
 For further directions see <http://www.field-studies-council.org/centres/prestonmontford/location.aspx>
 Requirements: Packed lunch essential (tea and coffee provided but there is no café available). Wellies/walking boots and waterproofs as we will be venturing out!
 Total walking will be no more than 1km. Larva [redacted] n guides a [redacted]
 Contact: Booking essential via Sue McLamb [redacted] or email [redacted]
 NB: For those who wish, the 'Field Guide to the larvae and exuviae of British Dragonflies' by Steve Cham will be available for purchase at £12 (cash/cheque only).

Tuesday 7th May, Tuesday 25th June and Tuesday 20th August, 2013
 National Trust Carding Mill Valley, Shropshire
 Aim: Discovering Dragonflies- a series of 3 dragonfly identification workshops with County Recorder Sue McLamb. Aimed at beginners this series will enable people to identify a range of species that occupy different flight periods throughout the season. Classroom inputs during the morning will focus on identification of 'seasonal species' and an understanding of the natural history of these fantastic insects. Participants will also learn how the life cycle is adapted for species emerging at different times of the year. Following a brief lunch the afternoons will be spent outside at 3 different locations on the Long Mynd putting identification skills to the test in a variety of habitats.
 Meet: Please report to the National Trust's chalet pavilion at Carding Mill Valley, Church Stretton, Shropshire, SY6 6JG. The workshop will start at 10am and finish at 2pm. For further directions see <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/carding-mill-valley-and-shropshire-hills/how-to-get-here/>
 Requirements: Packed lunch essential. Wellies/walking boots and waterproofs as we will be venturing out! Total walking will be no more than 1km. Identification guides and hand lens if owned.
 Contact: Booking essential via Emily Knight [redacted] or email [redacted] Cost £10 per session
 NB: Weather permitting 2 afternoons will be spent at pools on top of the Long Mynd so some participants will need to drive and car sharing will be very much appreciated.

Saturday 18th May - 10am to 5pm
 Wild about the Wensum at Pensthorpe, Norfolk
 Details: Visit the BDS stand at this event that promotes environmental and community charities along the River Wensum Valley. Further details via <http://www.pensthorpe.com>. Admission to Pensthorpe on the day is free, but a car park charge will raise money for conservation projects.

Friday 31st May to Sunday 2nd June - 10am to 6pm (5pm Sunday)
 Gardening Scotland at the Royal Highland Centre, Edinburgh
 Details: Visit the BDS stand in the Living Garden section of this comprehensive gardening show. The BDS Team will be offering advice on how to make gardens dragonfly-friendly and launching the new Large Red Damselfly citizen science postcard survey for 2013.

Sunday 28th July
 Dragonfly Day at Wicken Fen National Trust nature reserve, Lode Lane, Wicken, Cambs
 Details: Lots of activities on offer from the BDS, Dragonfly Project and National Trust throughout the day including walks, larva feeding demonstrations, making model dragonflies, pond dipping and lots more. Join us from 10am onwards in the Dragonfly Centre and out on the reserve.
 Charges may apply for the reserve and some activities.

Friday 16th to Sunday 18th August - 9am to 5.30pm
 The British Birdwatching Fair at Rutland Water
 Details: Come and visit us on the joint British Dragonfly Society and Dragonfly Project stand at this hugely popular event. You will need a whole day, if not more, to visit all the marquees. Various wildlife talks and other events take place on site throughout the entire weekend. For more details please see the official Birdfair website at <http://www.birdfair.org.uk/>

Saturday 12th October - 10am to 4pm
 Wild about Norfolk at Easton College, Norwich, Norfolk
 Details: Come and visit us on the BDS stand at this Wildlife Conservation Fair. The 2012 event had over 2,000 visitors and 50 exhibitors, including information stands, environmental games and lots of activities for old and young alike. Admission free.

Naturetrek dragonfly tours in 2013
 Dragonflies of La Brenne & Vienne, France: 19th to 26th June (Nick Ransdale)
 Bulgaria's Dragonflies: 29th June to 7th July (Dave Smallshire)
 Dragonflies and Birds of the Camargue: 10th to 17th July (Dave Smallshire)
 Sardinia's Dragonflies: 5th to 12th June (Gerald Broddelez)
 For further details of these and other Naturetrek tours, see www.naturetrek.co.uk or ring Naturetrek on [redacted]



Last Dates for 2013

Adrian Parr rounds up the last recorded dates for each of the common UK species.

For much of Britain, the weather during summer 2012 was frequently cool, dull and wet, with autumn being rather similar though subject to more regional variation. In many people's experience the main dragonfly season was a slightly disappointing one. On a national scale, late dates reported for most species were, however, to be surprisingly typical of the last few years, though one or two exceptions did occur. Some of the commoner damselflies (e.g. Red-eyed Damselfly and Common Blue Damselfly) thus apparently finished flying a couple of weeks earlier than normal. Perhaps population levels were rather depressed, so that fewer 'late season stragglers' were encountered. By contrast, Black-tailed Skimmer and both species of Demoiselle were to be last seen on unusually late dates, and there was also an interesting record of a freshly emerged Four-spotted Chaser seen in Norfolk on 9 September. [DN](#)

| SPECIES | LAST DATE | PLACE | OBSERVER |
|------------------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Banded Demoiselle | 9-Oct-12 | Lincolnshire | R. Bennett |
| Beautiful Demoiselle | 30-Oct-12 | Cornwall | P. Clarke |
| Scarce Emerald Damselfly | 3-Sep-12 | Essex | C. Jupp |
| Emerald Damselfly | 7-Oct-12* | East Yorkshire | P. Ashton |
| Willow Emerald Damselfly | 13-Oct-12 | Suffolk | T. Caroen |
| Southern Damselfly | 15-Sep-12 | Hampshire | D. Jenkins |
| Azure Damselfly | 4-Sep-12 | Kent | J. & G. Brook |
| Variable Damselfly | 25-Jul-12 | Suffolk | M. Piotrowski |
| Red-eyed Damselfly | 17-Sep-12 | Bedfordshire | R. Henry |
| Small Red-eyed Damselfly | 18-Sep-12 | Bedfordshire | A. Whitney |
| Large Red Damselfly | 19-Aug-12 | Berkshire | J. Ward-Smith |
| Common Blue Damselfly | 7-Oct-12 | Cambridgeshire | H. Venables |
| Blue-tailed Damselfly | 27-Sep-12 | Bedfordshire | R. Morrissey |
| Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly | 8-Sep-12 | Hampshire/Norfolk | P. Winter/A. Riley |
| Small Red Damselfly | 16-Sep-12 | Berkshire | J. Ward-Smith |
| White-legged Damselfly | 12-Sep-12 | Kent | T. Dove |
| Southern Hawker | 25-Nov-12 | Bedfordshire | C. Carpenter |
| Brown Hawker | 9-Oct-12 | Norfolk | T. Needham |
| Norfolk Hawker | 16-Aug-12 | Norfolk | T. Needham |
| Common Hawker | 15-Oct-12* | Hampshire | P. Winter |
| Migrant Hawker | 18-Nov-12 | Norfolk | M. Gough/L. Caudwell |
| Emperor Dragonfly | 12-Oct-12 | Warwickshire | J. Roberts |
| Hairy Dragonfly | 30-Jul-12 | Leicestershire | L. Ellison |
| Golden-ringed Dragonfly | 20-Oct-12 | Devon | S. Murgatroyd |
| Downy Emerald | 9-Aug-12 | Berkshire | J. Ward-Smith |
| Brilliant Emerald | 15-Jul-12 | Kent | J. & G. Brook |
| Broad-bodied Chaser | 7-Sep-12 | Norfolk | J. Mee |
| Scarce Chaser | 11-Jul-12 | Suffolk | P. Smith |
| Four-spotted Chaser | 9-Sep-12 | Norfolk | R. Fairhead |
| Black-tailed Skimmer | 2-Oct-12 | Essex | T. Caroen |
| Keeled Skimmer | 15-Sep-12 | Berkshire/Hampshire | J. Ward-Smith/D. Jenkins |
| Black Darter | 11-Nov-12 | Shropshire | Anon. |
| Ruddy Darter | 17-Oct-12 | Bedfordshire | R. Dazley |
| Common Darter | 8-Dec-12 | Norfolk | R. Fay |

* Later dates reported from Ireland



Migrant Dragonflies

Adrian Parr reports on the activities of migrant dragonflies from late summer and early autumn 2012.

Despite often indifferent weather during the course of the year, the second half of the 2012 dragonfly season turned out to have a number of significant highlights as far as migrant and new colonist species were concerned. Substantial arrivals of Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii* had been seen during the early summer, and from mid-August onwards emergences of a locally-bred second generation were noted at several sites in southern England. These included Windmill Farm in Cornwall, Maxey Pits near Peterborough, Crookham Common in Berkshire, Badminton in Hampshire, Plaitford Common in Wiltshire, a brownfield site near Severn Beach in South Gloucestershire and probably also at Felbrigg in Norfolk. Despite large numbers of progeny being produced, e.g. over 250 exuviae were discovered at Crookham Common, no mature adults were to be seen at any of these sites later in the season. This is now known to be quite typical – autumn immatures rapidly leave their natal area, never to return. Quite where they go remains unclear, but there is some circumstantial evidence that they may migrate south.

As far as our other 'regular' migrant species, the Lesser Emperor *Anax parthenope*, is concerned, numbers reported during the early part of the year had been relatively low, but further arrivals took place later in the summer. By the end of the season the species had been recorded from some 20 sites, mainly in southern or south-eastern coastal counties, but extending as far north as Cheshire. Ovipositing pairs were seen in Surrey, at Blashford Lakes in Hampshire and at West Langney Level in East Sussex, and it will be interesting to see whether local emergences occur there (or indeed elsewhere) over the

next 1-2 years, to complement recent records of breeding in Kent. Although good numbers of immigrant Lesser Emperors have been seen each year in Britain for the last decade or more, reports of successful breeding have been curiously few (although it can admittedly sometimes be difficult to confirm breeding by this species, which may frequent quite large water-bodies).

In addition to the above species, the Southern Migrant Hawker *Aeshna affinis* also had an eventful year during 2012. After early-season records of immatures of 'probably' this species seen at Hadleigh County Park, Essex, mature adults were later to be noted in good numbers at several nearby sites. These included Wat Tyler Country Park, West Canvey Marsh, Vange Marshes and Rainham Marshes in southern Essex, and Cliffe and the Isle of Sheppey in northern Kent. Given the very similar distribution of records to that observed during the influx year of 2010, and the absence of any dramatic activity on the near Continent, it seems likely that these records reflect a local breeding population. The sheer number of sightings is however somewhat unexpected given the low level of activity noted during 2011. Perhaps the life-cycle of many individuals in our region may take two years, rather than the one reported elsewhere? Away from the Thames Estuary area, there was also to be a sighting of a male at Strumpshaw Fen in Norfolk on 8 September; the provenance of this individual is unclear.

As well as the highlights described above, several other events of note also took place during the second half of 2012. During early September an arrival of Southern Emerald Damselflies *Lestes barbarus* occurred at Winterton Dunes in Norfolk, and with oviposition being noted maybe a new breeding colony will become established at the site. Intriguingly, the Southern Emeralds were also accompanied by small numbers of Scarce Blue-tailed Damselflies *Ischnura pumilio*, providing perhaps only the second-ever county record for this species. It will be interesting to see whether this species may also succeed in breeding. Turning now to new colonist species, the first Welsh record of Small Red-eyed Damselfly – seen at Penclacwydd WWT Reserve,

Carmarthenshire, on 19 August – shows that the range expansion of this relatively new colonist still continues, though it has slowed in recent years. There was also a suggestion of important range expansion by the even more recent new colonist, the Willow Emerald Damselfly *Lestes viridis*. A female was photographed during August at Culford Lake, Suffolk, not too far from the Suffolk/Cambridgeshire border. There was also to be an unverified sighting from Sutton Gault in Cambridgeshire during the month, as well as a report of a 'probable' from Biggleswade in Bedfordshire. Recorders in the region are eagerly awaiting the 2013 season in order to confirm whether the species did in fact make a significant westerly push at this time, though with Willow Emerald Damselfly typically being the last UK species to emerge, they may have to wait some while!

If anyone has any as yet un-submitted records of migrants or new colonists, the BDS would be more than pleased to receive them. **DN**



To Intervene or Not?

Terry and Judy Wood take a particular interest in the Odonata in and around their garden ponds, so when an emerging Darter was threatened by heavy rain and winds, they wrestled with a dilemma.

As it was a dull, cool late August morning in north Northants with rain forecast, I did not expect to see much when I stopped to check for exuviae at our two small wildlife ponds on the way back from depositing the kitchen scraps on the compost heap. I was therefore surprised to see our fifth emergent Common Darter of the year. We are lucky to have four breeding species: Azure Damselfly, Large Red Damselfly, Southern Hawker and Common Darter. The darter was in the early stages of emerging from its exuvia and we had not managed to photograph the whole process before so I hurried in for the camera and took the first photo of many for the day. The time was 0925hrs and I returned an hour later for the next shot, and was surprised by the progress considering it was so cool. I should have left the washing up and other chores to check the Darter more often!

By noon the darter was making good progress, but we were not happy with the way the weather was looking. In early July 2011 we photographed a Southern Hawker that had emerged from a formal pond at Penrhyn Castle in North Wales which was unlikely to fly after wind and/or rain damage to its wings. We did not relish the same fate for "our" darter.

Inevitably (for summer 2012) it started to rain but it looked as though it would be just a passing shower. I rushed in for an umbrella thinking that I could provide a temporary shelter, but I was ill prepared for the deluge that followed. Not only did it start to pour but the wind rose, I had chosen the wrong umbrella and I had not told my wife what I was doing. The darter had not thought about the problem either,

as it had emerged towards the centre of the pond. So there I was leaning over the pond trying to protect it but with my back getting soaked – maybe I should have chosen the large "golfing" umbrella! Luckily my wife missed me and had looked outside to see an apparition bending over the pond. She came out with another umbrella and after a short discussion in the pouring rain we decided to cut off the stem, complete with the darter and exuvia to take it indoors. We placed the stem in a vase in the utility room and checked progress throughout the afternoon. By 1500hrs the darter was looking more flight-worthy with what appeared to be fully dried wings and increased body colour. By 1730hrs it was looking ready for take-off. Sure enough when we checked just after 1800hrs he was in the window trying to get out. Luckily the rain had stopped and the sun had come out although it was still rather breezy. We placed the darter on a sheltered shrub in the sun and after a few minutes he flew off strongly much to our satisfaction.

It is often discussed as to whether humans should intervene to help wildlife when situations become difficult. Perhaps wildlife deserves all the help we can provide especially when one considers the problems caused by human activity. In this case we felt that it



would have been a pity to waste all the larval development time in one torrential downpour and our actions also gave us a privileged view of the final stages of development. As for the darter, his expression just before he flew away said it all! **DN**

Top: Emerging just before the rain, at 0925hrs.

Bottom: The darter, fully emerged in doors at 1730hrs.

Stamp Issue Celebrating the BDS 30th Anniversary



Artwork by Lizzie Harper

Later on this year, Jersey Post will issue six stamps to celebrate 30 years of the British Dragonfly Society. The Jersey Philatelic Bureau enjoys a worldwide reputation not only for quality but also for the in-depth nature of the research behind each set of stamps. The issue, entitled 'Dragonflies and Damselflies' is no exception and the researchers were assisted locally by the late Margaret Long, long-time member of the Société Jersiaise, as well as by Peter Mill of the British Dragonfly Society. The stamps have been painted by natural history artist Lizzie Harper and feature: Beautiful Demoiselle *Calopteryx virgo*, Golden-ringed Dragonfly *Cordulegaster boltonii*, Dainty Damselfly *Coenagrion scitulum*, Large Red Damselfly *Pyrhosoma nymphula*, Willow Emerald Damselfly *Lestes viridis* and Scarlet Darter *Crocothemis erythraea*.

The Society's Patron, Sir David Attenborough, said: "I am delighted that Jersey Post is celebrating the 30th anniversary of the British Dragonfly Society with this set of handsome stamps" and has written an introductory paragraph which will appear on the First Day Cover envelope and Presentation Pack which will accompany the issue.

The issue date for the stamps is yet to be confirmed and is currently planned for July 2013. All the products will be available to pre-order a month in advance, either online at: www.jerseystamps.com or by contacting the Jersey Philatelic Bureau by phone: [redacted] or email: [redacted]

An unusual colour variant of the male Southern Hawker

Responding to Mike Averill's article in DN61, the images attached seem to add a further dimension to the situation. I was sent them by Keith Walton who took the pictures at Bowness Nature Reserve on the Solway coast, Cumbria on 10th August. Their appearance at first almost suggested an exotic species, but from the general pattern of the markings, the individual is a Southern Hawker, and clearly a male. The abdomen colour is very dark, with the larger paired abdominal spots quite a strong blue (instead of the expected yellowish-green). The 'upper lip' (labrum) is also blue. The black suture lines on the sides of the thorax are noticeably heavy and the thorax sides show no greenish colouration. Eye colour can be a useful indicator of maturity in *normal males*, but it is not clear whether the lack of colour in this instance reflects the state of maturation or whether the eyes were simply going to develop typical

female brownish colouration.

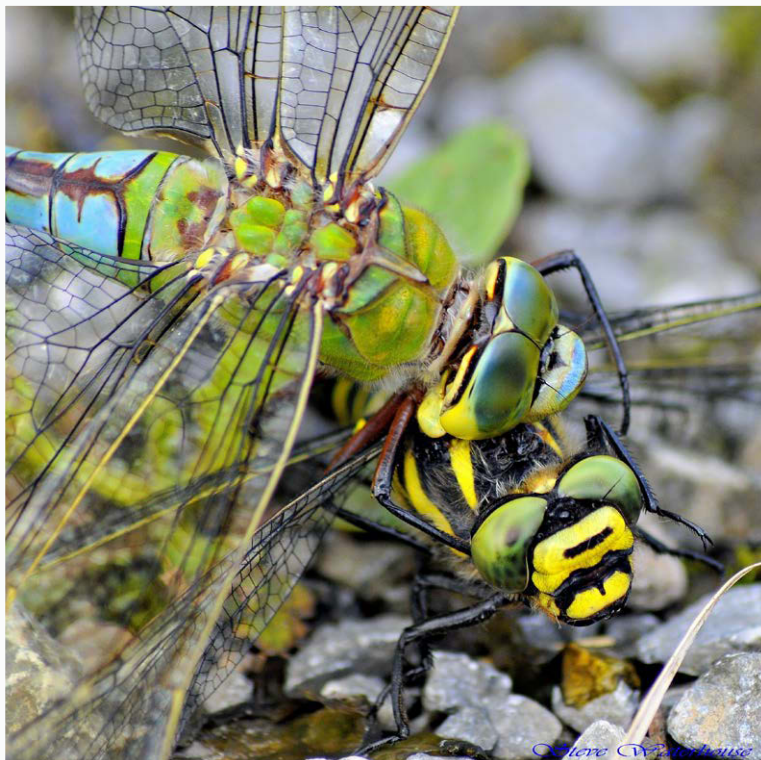
Though the wings were fully hardened, with dark pterostigmas, as Pam Taylor has suggested, the depth of colour of the paired yellow spots on the top of the thorax is perhaps an indicator that full maturity had not quite been attained. Very immature male Southern Hawkers often have *pale*, 'washed out' blue abdominal spots before these turn yellow-green, but this individual seemed beyond this stage. The photos were taken on one of the drier days of late summer 2012. The photographer informs me that the images were taken 'between 10.35 and 11.00 am; the temperature would be about 18°C, but the basking temperature would be perhaps 25°C'. Variants such as this are rarely seen and interpretations are awaited with interest!

David Clarke



Notes & Observations

Compiled by Mark Tyrrell



This Emperor attacked the Golden-ringed Dragonfly in flight, about 0.6m from me. They landed on the ground where upon the Emperor proceeded to eat wing muscles of the Golden-ringed, rendering it flightless.

It was an unusual thing to see and the Golden ringed Dragonfly made several attempts to fly away, but was totally disabled.

I do wonder if this was not a feeding thing but just territorial event ?

Steve Waterhouse





These photos show Blue-tailed Damselflies eating Common Blue Damselflies.

With the size difference, one would expect the predator-prey relationship to be the other way round!

Chris Lloyd-Rogers & trevor goodfellow



Here is a photo of a Golden-ringed Dragonfly eating a Large Red Damselfly, taken at the Beinn Eighe Visitor Centre on 18/6/12.

juliette dinning



A summer holiday provided *Peter Hunt* with one of his favourite days spotting some of the dragonfly species of a Greek island.

Living on an island much of my dragonfly watching is done locally and at locations on the Isle of Wight. So when it is time for our annual holiday to a Greek island, I always look forward to some new sites and species. Being a family holiday my choice is always limited to close to our accommodation.

The timing of the holiday too has a say in what I might see, as we normally take our trip in August. As the Mediterranean summers are invariably hot and dry, areas of odonata activity can be greatly restricted and therefore unlikely to be near to where we are staying.

In 2012 we headed for the island of Thassos in the north Aegean just 8 kilometres off the coast of mainland Greece. Our stay was at Golden Beach named locally as Chrysi Ammoudia, with three kilometres of sandy beach enclosing a shallow bay. With hills and mountains surrounding the beach several streams flow into the bay although in summer they are reduced to a trickle. The streams are flanked by lush reeds and the land behind is flat and fertile.

Unfortunately for the naturalist, quite a bit of development has taken place in the last few years and it has become a popular tourist destination. Despite that, pockets of reeds and scrub remain scattered around and here is where I hoped I would find some dragonflies.

A wander along the scrub still backing on to the sand dunes yielded my first species, a female Scarlet Darter *Crocothemis erythrea*, and very accommodating it was as she returned to the same perch after each foray. A further walk into the dunes and I seemed to be amongst a large gathering of male and female Red-veined Darters *Sympetrum fonscolombii* each with their own piece of territory and lookout posts. In fact this species was common all along the dunes.

A short distance away was a stream now enclosed in part by low walls dividing a posh hotel down the middle. In places over the stream are two small foot bridges which are managed it seems to form some open water. To my utter joy as I looked down from the wall it was a hive of activity with male Scarlet Darters whirring about shooing off rivals. What a colourful darter this is, all decked out in bright red. The males would return to the same perch after their flight ready to protect their bit of the pond. Here too was the inevitable Emperor *Anax imperator* patrolling the open water. A look into the



reeds and I saw the female ovipositing and I noticed that she was not ovipositing in the normal fashion, horizontally, but in the vertical position which I had not seen before. Some of the stream was clogged with reed and here a lot of male Southern Skimmers *Orthetrum brunneum* could be seen waiting for females. Several males had found their partner and were mating on the reeds.

On the edge of the reed bed I spied a small damselfly and after taking its photo, considered later that it was a female Scarce Blue-tailed *Ischnura pumilio* in

transition phase. An unexpected bonus to a few hours dragonfly watching.

A final highlight was on the balcony of our first floor studio when we were visited by a female Willow Emerald Damselfly *Lestes viridis* which spent some time on the wall in the late afternoon. **DN**

Opposite: Southern Skimmer in cop. Above, top: Female Red-veined Darter. Above, bottom: Male Scarlet Darter.





On the trail of the Orange- spotted Emerald

Damian Pinguey travels to Portugal in search of the elusive Orange-spotted Emerald, now extinct in the UK.

The Orange-spotted Emerald *Oxygastra curtisii* is of special significance to any British Dragonfly enthusiast, as it is the only dragonfly species to have been discovered in the UK (by J. C. Dale at Parley Heath near Bournemouth on the 29th June 1820). Initially it was thought to be endemic to Britain, but by the 1830's it had also been discovered in France. It was always extremely rare in the UK, only ever having been observed on the Moors River in Hampshire and the River Tamar in Devon. Unfortunately it hasn't been seen in the UK since 1963.

According to Dijkstra (2006) it's current range extends from Northern Europe (mainly France, but also small populations in Germany and Belgium) into Italy in the East and Morocco in the west. There are also significant populations in both Spain and Portugal. I had been aware of the recording work taking place in Portugal by Albano Soares and was particularly interested in the fact that he had published several



fine photographs of this species on the photo sharing web-site 'Flickr'. I contacted him and he confirmed that the Orange-spotted Emerald occurred in good numbers in the region and that if I timed my visit to the last week in June / first week of July I was pretty much guaranteed to see one.

All the literature I had read about the Orange-spotted Emerald suggested that it's preferred habitat was slow flowing tree lined rivers, this in fact is the habitat that was described for both the Moors and Tamar rivers in the UK. Therefore you can imagine my surprise when we arrived at the site chosen by Albano to be the best place to see them!

On arrival, I thought that Albano had made a mistake with the species I was looking for, because the habitat was far more reminiscent of a boulder strewn mountain lake in Wales or the Peak district. As can be seen from the photograph, the lake is not tree-lined and there is little in the way of bank-side vegetation; there are no water lilies or

“
***Very soon there
where males
pretty much
everywhere along
the lake shore.***
”

Opposite page: Male Orange-spotted Emerald.

Above: Damned mountain river in northern Portugal.

floating pond plants of any kind.

It was early morning and heavily overcast when we arrived and no dragons were yet flying, so Albano hopped into the lake and managed to collect eight *Oxygastra exuviae* in the space of about 10 meters. Just after midday it started to brighten up and sure enough the first dragon we saw on the wing was a male of our target species.

Very soon there where males pretty much everywhere along the lake shore, their flight pattern immediately reminded me of the Downy Emeralds I was used to observing on the ponds and lakes of West Sussex, although the Orange-spotted Emerald is much less robust. Flying close to the shore-line at a height of about one half to one metre above the water, they held short territories of about 10 metres or so. I observed both the straight and zigzag flight that most authors have described. Interestingly though, unlike the Downy Emerald, I never saw them stop and hover, thus making in-flight photography very much





more difficult.

You would never believe it from the photo, but I recorded 20 species of dragonfly on this small lake in the two days of my visit, including perhaps Europe's rarest and most spectacular dragonfly, the Splendid Cruiser *Macromia splendens*. Endemic to South-western Europe, it is protected by law across all its range. I was fortunate enough to see up to five males holding territory at any one time. Also present were four species of Gomphid (including Pronged Clubtail *Gomphus graslinii* and Large Pincertail *Onychogomphus uncatus*), three species of Calopteryx (Copper Demoiselle *Calopteryx haemorrhoidalis*, Beautiful Demoiselle *C. virgo* and Western Demoiselle *C. xanthostoma*), two species of Platynemis with White Featherleg *Platynemis latipes* and Orange Featherleg *P. acutipennis* and the Iberian Bluetail *Ischnura graellsii*.

On my last day after lunch, I decided to leave the lakeside and head into the

dense woodland behind and immediately I realised why the area was so rich in dragonfly species. The woodland was criss-crossed with wide rides. I suspect these were created as fire breaks, providing superb hunting habitat for both newly emerged and fully adult dragons wishing to feed. It was here that I found the perched adults shown in the photos.

I am still amazed at how different the habitat for the Orange-spotted Emerald is in Northern Portugal to that described for the Rivers of France and Germany. It would also be interesting to observe this species in both Italy and Morocco. But if you wish to see this species in good numbers, I can certainly recommend Portugal. **DN**

References:

Dijkstra, K-J, & Lewington, R. 2006. *Field Guide to the Dragonflies of Britain & Europe*. British Wildlife Publishing.

Chelmick, D. Species Review 5: The Orange-spotted Emerald Dragonfly. *Journal of the British Dragonfly Society*, Volume 25, No 2, 2009.

Above: Female Orange-spotted Emerald.



**BDS Treasurer
Brian Walker
writes about
how two weeks
in August 2012
revitalised
his recording
in what was
otherwise a
poor season.**

I was having the worst year ever for dragonflies in 2012 until we came to August. Things then started to improve a little with better weather and, mid-month, the Berkshire forum carried a report from Adrian Hickman of Red-veined Darters emerging at Crookham Common. I decided to pay a visit to see if I could find them. Crookham Common is the eastern end of the old Greenham Common Airbase, the subject of protest camps in the 1980s when it was an American Air force base housing cruise missiles. It is now owned by the local council and is being turned back into heath land. I do visit the western end from time to time but had only visited the eastern end once before and was not very familiar with the layout.

On arrival I headed for the extensive area of ponds that were visible from the entry gate, intending to walk around the edge to see what I could find. I had barely started my walk when I saw a Small Red Damselfly down among scrubby bushes at the water's edge. It seemed an unusual species to see here (I later learned that this was the first record) and I thought it would be worth trying to get a photograph. It was well down in the vegetation and not easy to get a decent angle on it. As I eased back and studied the situation I noticed a small damselfly with bright red eyes on a floating leaf,

Red-eyed Damselfly I thought initially, but it looked rather delicate and then I realised that the blue at the end of the abdomen was more extensive. It was a Small Red-eyed Damselfly. I glanced back at the Small Red Damselfly, now torn between two targets for photography, but it had disappeared so I concentrated on the Small Red-eyed.

It was about a metre out from the edge and not easy to line up in my camera because of the scrubby bushes but I managed it at the expense of few scratches and getting a bit wet. It flew up a couple of times but always came back to one of the group of leaves. With a little patience I achieved my first reasonable picture of this species. I then tried to find the Small Red again but without any luck. Walking on, I soon found a pair of Small Red-eyes in bushes but they flew off almost as I saw them. I found one or two Darters but they were Common Darters. There were sufficient damselflies to keep me alert but they were mostly Common Blues with a small number of Emeralds and Blue-tailed until I was almost back where I had started when I started to

Above: Red-veined Darter emergence pond near the Control Tower car Park at Greenham Common.





see more Red-eyes, this time a mix of the two species. All were reasonably well out from the edge and too far for photography but there were a number of pairs of both species.

Back where I started I saw my first Emperor of the day and then a dark hawk with a pale blue patch at the top of the abdomen flew by, a Lesser Emperor. I lost it in flight and then waited sometime to see if it would return. I am not the most patient person and decided to have a look at the small pond just to the east of the larger one I had walked around. There were a few Common Darters flying around and then the Lesser Emperor flew across and disappeared again. It flew across a few more times but never very close. I wanted to try to get a picture as a record and eventually decided that I would have to see what I could get at a distance. I only had a macro lens with me and the insect seemed determined to stay at a distance. I could barely see it in the viewfinder, it was so far away, and could not focus with accuracy but I took a couple of pictures in the hope I might achieve something. The result was a poor picture of a male Lesser Emperor but sufficient to confirm

the record. It was about 20m away and the picture was taken with a 150mm lens. This image is a very small part of the original.

It had been a very good day, even if I did not find any Red-veined Darters. The Small Red-eyed Damselfly pictures were not bad, for me, and the Lesser Emperor shots turned out to show enough to confirm the identification, even if they are terrible as photographs. It shows the abilities of modern digital cameras that it is possible to get a recognisable image by magnifying an out of focus image by an extreme amount.

Further postings on the Berks Dragonfly forum made it obvious I had not visited the right pond for the Red-veined Darters. They were further over and two days later I visited again, found the pond and several teneral Red-veined Darters. They were surprisingly easy to pick out being a pale lemony yellow and noticeably larger than Common Darters. The blue colouration of the lower part of the eye clinched it.

Having had a good view of my first I found that I could pick them out with a fair degree of confidence before I put my binoculars on them. I could only find

them in the vicinity of the one pond. Further afield I could only find Common Darters. I am not great at finding exuvia but I did find and collect one that was several inches up a fairly isolated juncus stem and checked that it was a Red-veined by examining it against Steve Cham's book when I got home. Amazingly I found what I assumed was the same male Small Red Damselfly within a metre of where I had seen it on my first visit. This time I took a record shot regardless of the perfect angle as I now knew it was a first for the site.

Four days later I returned again and saw a few more Red-veined Darters. However, there were now a lot of Common Darters around and over the emergence pond with several pairs ovipositing there. There had been very few on the previous visit. My success, relatively speaking, with the Lesser Emperor tempted me to take a few pictures of them flying; after all there is no cost with digital if I eventually deleted them all. I did delete quite a few but I also got a number that were quite

Brian Walker



reasonable by my standards.

The Small Red-eyed Damselflies were still around, fewer in number, but perched on small scrubby bushes at the water's edge or on stalks in the water not too far out. They were very active but I did manage to get good pictures of several.

The Berks Dragonfly forum had speculated about Red-veined being seen at the pools around the Control Tower Car Park and so I also had a look at this area. There were few dragonflies of any species to the west of the car park, usually very productive, but I found a Red-veined Darter almost immediately to the east and then a couple more in the same area. I scanned the pond here to try to see exuvia without success. I posted this observation on the forum and Adrian visited later that evening and, embarrassing for me, he found 106 exuvia. I bumped into him by this pond a few days later when he had found yet more exuvia and he showed me a couple of dragonflies emerging very low in a tangle of stems. I had not been looking at this type of site having found my first exuvia in clear view on a stem and I felt slightly less embarrassed at having not found them initially. I will know to search a little more carefully another time.

In all I paid five visits to Greenham Common over the last two weeks of August and saw Red-veined Darters on all but the first, but sadly never a fully mature adult male. Did they all emerge or might there be some individuals that had not reached the right stage of development and may

emerge next spring? The two ponds where they emerged were fast drying out subsequently but the rains returned just in time to prevent them disappearing. It seems that no mature males were seen at any location where they bred in 2012. We clearly still have things to find out about this species.

A really successful two weeks; not only did I have good views of the Red-veined Darters but also my first good views and reasonable photographs of Small Red-eyed Damselfly, one of which figured in the BDS advert in BBC Wildlife in September 2012. This was not because of the species or any special merit in the photograph but because it was taken against a plain background that allowed text to be added and clearly read and it was fresh in my mind having been taken the day before the opportunity for the advert arose, with a very short deadline.

I had found a Lesser Emperor and was somewhat surprised to get a recognisable in flight image and as a result experimented with flight shots in a new way with some results that I was very pleased with.

The fortnight at the end of August retrieved my dragonfly year and added to my knowledge. **DN**

Opposite page: Small Red-eyed Damselfly. Inset: Female Emperor.

Above: Teneral male Red-veined Darter

Review

Dragonflies and Damselflies (DVD, ACS Wildlife, Price £12.00 +p&p from our shop - see back page).
Review by Henry Curry

The sub-title on this DVD states "Most of the species found in the UK" and indeed that is what is on offer in this nicely presented work. There is some very good videography and attractive close-up shots, and I am sure the disc will find a place in the library of all those who are interested in Odonata in the UK.

There are some oddities about the presentation which, depending on your personal taste may or may not bother you. I found the lack of a commentary rather unusual, and this was compounded by the recording of the natural background sounds which jumped from bird song, to absolute hush, and back to birdsong in a rather off-putting way. More importantly I found it hard to keep up with which species I was looking at – the title only held for the initial screen, after which 'Male' or 'Female' might be displayed but that was all. Without a commentary it would have been helpful to have arrows pointing out the distinguishing identification features for a species, or to show the species which could be confused alongside one another for comparison, but sadly these useful aids are missing as well. So I can't recommend this as much help in identification, especially if you are a beginner. Other things that rather detracted for me were the lack of the female Common Clubtail, the title for 'Golden Ringed' (Golden Ringed what? and where was a separate view of the female?), and the hard-to-follow shots of male Banded Demoiselles dashing about in a rather dizzying way.

All in all, this is a reasonably priced look at most of the species of UK dragonflies and damselflies and is attractively filmed and packaged. For me it could have been better presented with some more professional elements such as more detailed captions and a commentary.



members' gallery

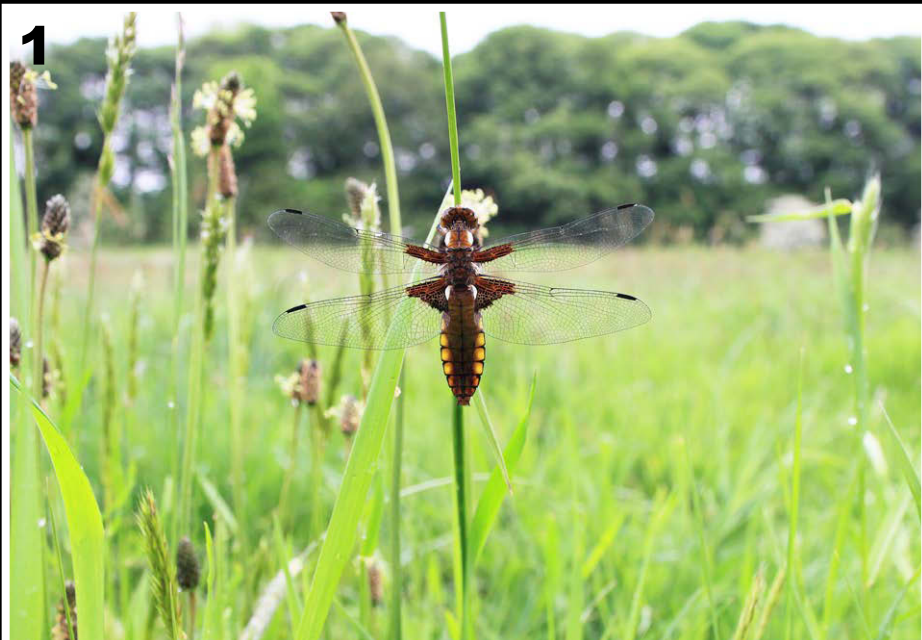
BDS member Mat Bingham is trying to get started as a professional wildlife photographer. The first three of his photos show signs of a distinct style developing and I wish Mat well with his future plans.

1) I deliberately used a wide-angle lens for this shot of a recently emerged female Broad-bodied Chaser to emphasise the surrounding habitat.

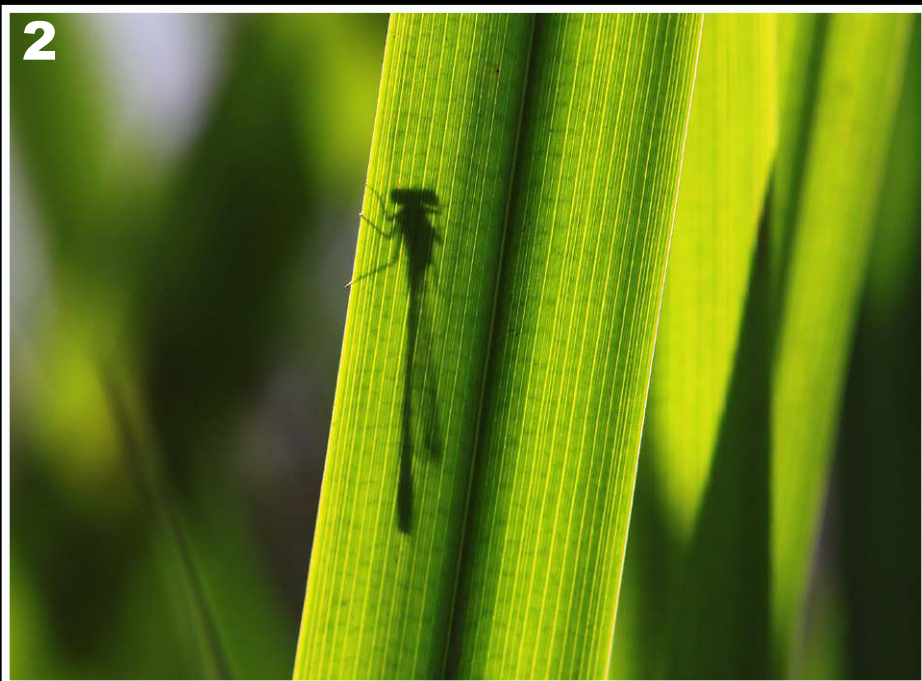
2) I had this photo in mind for some time and eventually after a number of years found the opportunity, and caught this Blue-tailed Damselfly in silhouette.

3) This Four-spotted Chaser was one of my first digital photos. It was taken early in the morning when the pond was quite misty. I love the dew drops on its wings, glistening in the early morning light.

1



2



3



4

4) This Common Club-tail was taken on the River Dee in 2011, on a walk with David Kitching who has a wonderful website called Dragonflies of Cheshire.

5) I managed to take this photo on a very still day which allowed me to use a slow shutter speed to get them these Blue-tailed Damselflies with just enough depth of field to allow the background to stay out of focus.

6) Brown Hawkers are my favourite dragonflies. This ovipositing female was so preoccupied, she allowed me to get quite close to take this photo.

DN

5**6**

Do you know your Dragonflies?

Identifying dragonflies and damselflies when we see them in full adult colouration is relatively straight forward, with plenty of field guides available to help us. What is more difficult is identifying them in their teneral or emergent stage, where full colouration has not yet developed and many species can be confused. Can you match these teneral or emergents to their English name?

a) Four-spotted Chaser; b) Azure Damselfly; c) Broad-bodied Chaser; d) Scarce Chaser; e) White-legged Damselfly; f) Common Blue Damselfly.



Picture credits:

1, 2, 3, 5 & 6 Mark Tyrrell; 4 Tim Careon



International Congress of Odonatology

Bill Wain reports from the recent congress in Odawara, Japan, 28 July to 6 August 2012.

Eighty delegates and accompanying partners from 16 countries assembled in Odawara, Japan for the first Congress supported by both the World Dragonfly Association (WDA) and the Societas Internationalis Odonatologica (SIO). Combined sponsorship of international congresses is very helpful for global dragonfly enthusiasts to meet for mutual benefit.

Four days of plenary sessions, presentations and poster sessions were split by a one-day field trip to the National Park at the foot of Mount Fuji. The weather was hot and dry and the field trip allowed (unusually) excellent

views of Mount Fuji. The serious business of dragonfly hunting was interspersed with a visit to the Lalique Museum of Japan (where else?) and a do-it-yourself barbecue (inside) at the Asahi brewery near Odawara.

The conference was followed by four days touring southern Honshu for a range of habitats and species. Although there were only 6 UK attendees at the Congress, they all stayed on for the post Congress field trip to take to opportunity to see a range of dragonflies new to many of us. Highlight of the field trip was *Nannophya pygmaea*, the smallest dragonfly in the world

The Congress in Japan had been delayed by one year because of the dreadful tsunami in February 2011. As a consequence, the next biannual Congress will be in 2013 (these take some planning by the local organisers) and part of this report of my time in Japan is to encourage some members of the BDS to attend the next meeting in Freising, near Munich, Germany on 17th to 21st June 2013.

The Worldwide Dragonfly Association was launched in 1997 with great support from many BDS members. Time has

passed, and unfortunately some of those members have passed away, and the impact of WDA in the UK is no longer what it was; (neither is it for SIO!). WDA is a British-based charity and seeks to boost its UK membership. A trip to Germany next summer to meet like-minded enthusiasts at a meeting sponsored by both international bodies is an event not to miss. If you would like more details of WDA membership, please contact Keith Wilson [redacted] in the UK. You may of course choose to join SIO as the other international body and you may contact Peter Mill (gpmill@supanet.com). Either (or both!) groups would welcome you and anyway, make a date in your diary for Freising in 2013 in Germany and meet new friends with similar interests. By the way, Freising is closer than Odawara or Tokyo too! **DN**

Above: Female *Nannophya pygmaea*, known under several English names - Scarlet Dwarf, Northern Pygmyfly or Tiny Dragonfly. It is a member of the family Libellulidae.

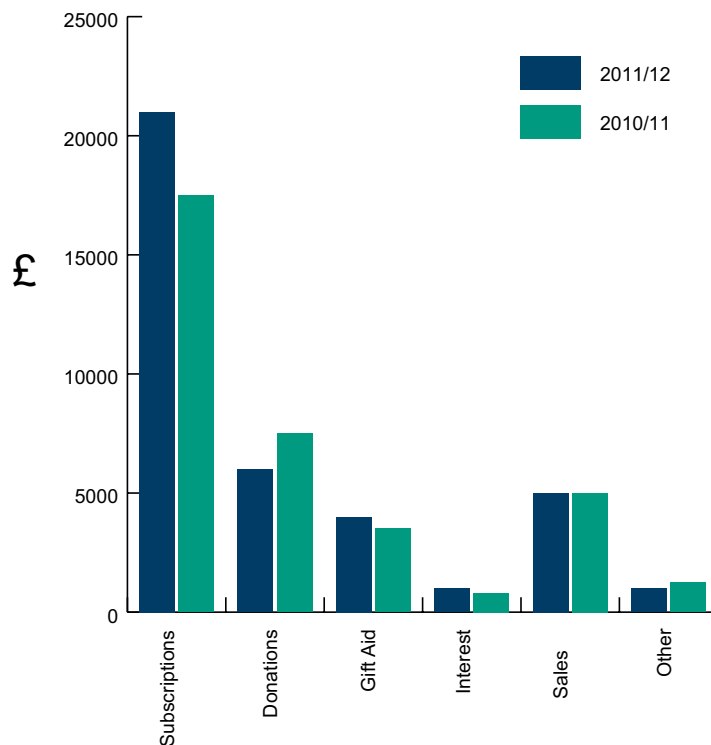


BDS Treasurer *Brian Walker* summarises the BDS accounts.

Our accounts are split into two parts; the BDS account covers our general activities and the CONSOFF account relates to restricted funds provided for specific purposes.

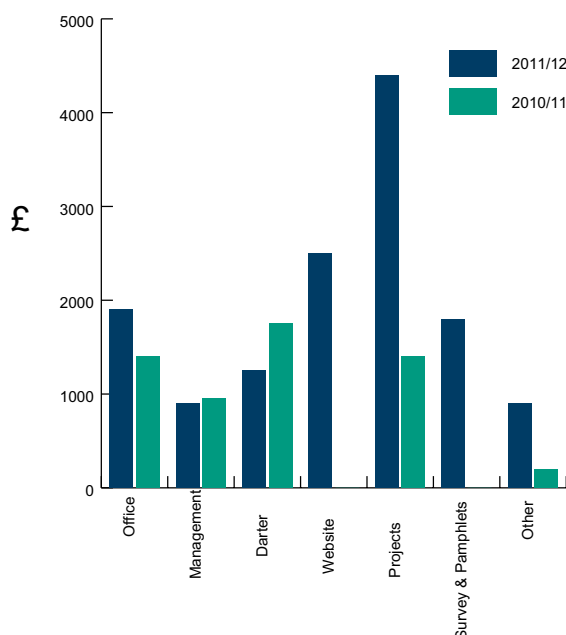
BDS Income

The BDS Account is derived mainly from subscriptions and donations and the associated tax rebates via Gift Aid. We gain further income from interest on our reserves and from shop sales. The graph, to the right, shows a reasonable growth in subscription income resulting from a modest growth in membership. The impact of the subscription rise will not be seen until 2012/13. Donations were slightly down and the tax refund was slightly higher. A large proportion of members have signed up for Gift Aid which, as can be seen, provides a very useful boost to our income. Shop sales and interest are similar to last year and the apparent fall in other income is not significant as this was a grant for others that passed through our books in 2010/11.

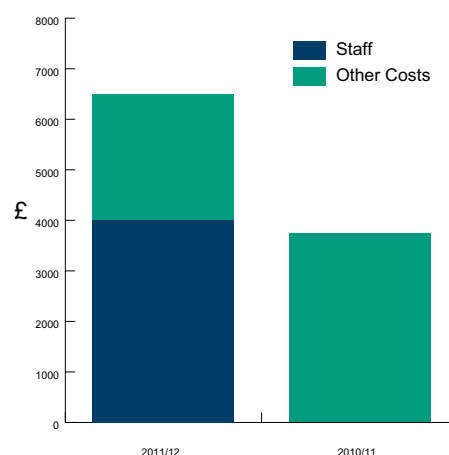


BDS Expenditure

The graphs below show expenditure, excluding the costs of employing a Chief Executive and our total costs including staff related costs. General expenditure was similar to last year (and previous years) with no exceptional items this year. Our largest expenditure (apart from staff) is the publication and distribution of the Journal and Dragonfly News. Total expenditure has been very significantly increased and exceeds income by £26.6k. While it was always expected that we would have to fund our Chief Executive from reserves for a period it has proved to be more difficult than expected to develop new income streams.

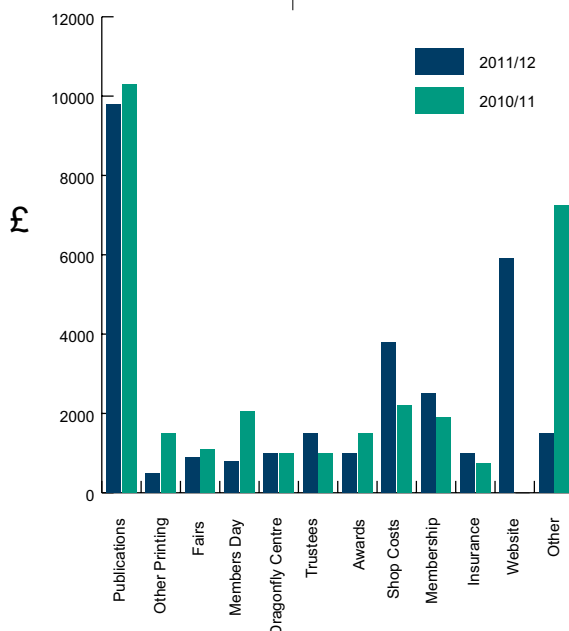
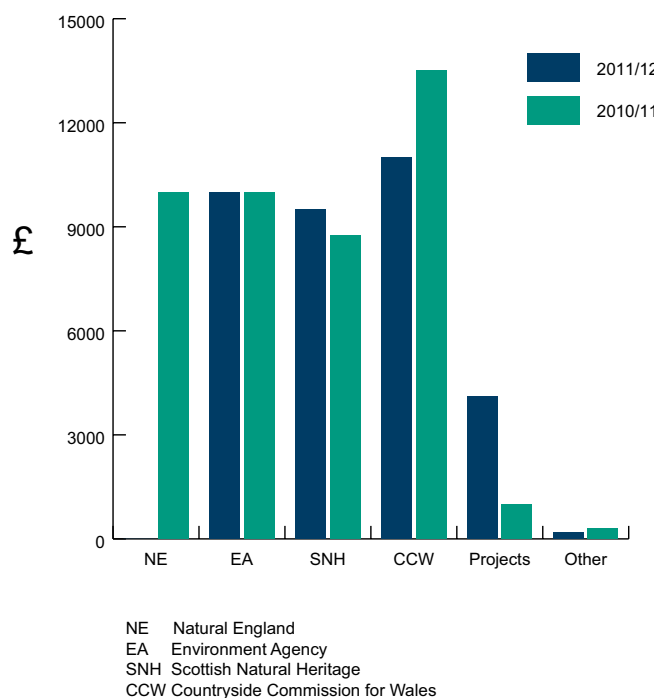


Left: BDS Expenditure (Excluding staff).
Below: BDS Total Expenditure



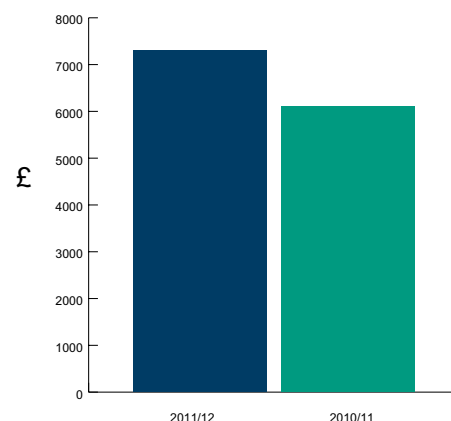
Restricted Income

Income for our conservation activities came from our previous funders although Natural England were unable to provide cash funding this year but continue to offer very valuable support through hosting our staff in their offices in Telford. Funding for specific projects in relation to Southern Damselfly in Wales was a new development for us. Staff costs are the main expenses against our CONSOFF (restricted) funds. Costs were higher this year, partly because the Southern Damselfly projects included some habitat creation carried out by a contractor and partly because we carried out further development on our on-line recording system. Staff costs also increased, largely in line with inflation.



Left: CONSOFF Expenditure (Excluding staff).

Below: Total CONSOFF Expenditure



A Note from the Membership Office

Hi, I hope you are all well and are looking forward to the new dragonfly season. It is the time of year for you to renew your membership of the BDS, (the membership year runs from the 1st April to the 31st March each year).

There are now 3 ways that you can pay your membership fee: 1) On our web site using credit / debit card or PayPal. Just follow the link for membership renewal, please remember to quote your membership number if possible; 2) By cheque. If you pay annually by cheque please could you complete and return the enclosed membership renewal form to me, together with your membership fee; 3) If you pay by standing order you need to take no action (but you could pass the form on to a friend who may wish to join the society!).

If you are unsure whether you already have a standing order in place, please contact me before you send any money and I will check your details. If you would like to set up a standing order, please could you complete all of the enclosed membership renewal form and return it to me. Please remember to quote your membership number if possible. Please also remember to keep me informed of change of postal or e-mail address. If you have any membership queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

In the unlikely event of your wishing to leave the society, please let me know. This will prevent the extra expense of sending you an unnecessary reminder letter.

Thank you - Lynn

Notice is hereby given that the 26th Annual General Meeting of the British Dragonfly Society will be held at the University of Oxford Natural History Museum on 16 November 2013. See page 36 for more information.



Minutes of the 25th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the British Dragonfly Society

Notice of Meeting

Notice of the meeting was published in Dragonfly News 61

Appointment of Minutes Recorder and Adoption of agenda

Lynn Curry was appointed Minutes Recorder, proposed by Henry Curry, seconded by Sue Parfitt

David Goddard proposed adoption of the Agenda, seconded by David Mainwaring

Adoption of the Minutes of the 24th AGM

Mark Tyrrell proposed adoption of the Minutes of the 24th AGM, seconded by Tom Hubball

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Beynon, Dr Florian Weihrauch, David Hepper, Bill & Chris Wain, Peter & Cindy Allen, Mike Turton, Simon Davidson, Ingrid Twissell, Jerry Hoare, Richard Baker, Kari de Koenigswarter, Jill Lucas

Deceased members

The meeting observed one minute's silence in memory of Mr M Walpole, Mr D S Blakeley, Mr Graham Ackers, Mr John Thorp

Elections and Nominations to the Board

Dr Dorothy Gennard completes her term as Vice-Chairman on 31st December. There were no nominations for this post. Mark Tyrrell completes his term as Ordinary Trustee on 31st December and the Board has nominated Mick Parfitt as his successor from 1st January 2013. This nominee was elected unopposed.

Greetings

The Secretary wished to offer greetings to our Patron Sir David Attenborough and

Honorary Members. This was proposed by Lynn Curry and seconded by Mick Parfitt

Chairman's Report

The past 12 months have been particularly challenging for the BDS. We have so far failed to attract sufficient new funding to develop the Society as we had planned. We still have good relationships and support of Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Environment Agency and the Countryside Council for Wales, but their ability to fund our core staffing needs does not cover our expenses. We urgently need new sustainable sources of income to avoid cutting back on our work. The Chairman urged all to consider if there is a company that could be persuaded to become a Corporate Member of the BDS. Do you know of any businesses that would sponsor part of our BDS work or have any links with Charitable Trusts or grant schemes that we could ask for funds?

The next annual Recorders' Day will be held in Wallingford, Oxfordshire, on Saturday 16th March. Details and booking instructions for this event will be sent to Vice County Recorders early in the New Year and posted on our website shortly after.

There was a plea regarding Benefactor Membership. Whether you pay annually or are a Life Member, for a minimum extra donation of just £20 a year, your money will go directly to supporting the conservation work of the Society. Similarly, if you could persuade just one other person to become a BDS member, that would greatly assist our membership figures.

For our 30th anniversary year in 2013 we are moving Dragonfly Week into July so that people throughout the UK can take part. The dates are Saturday 20th to Sunday 28th July, as usual taking two full weekends into the week. We are still looking for a suitable dragonfly site to launch Dragonfly Week, so if you know of an area rich in dragonflies, that also has a Visitors Centre or Education Centre we could use, please let me know.

Members' Day next year will be on Saturday 16th November. We will be going back to the Natural History Museum in Oxford, which is a splendid venue for our anniversary celebrations.

The Dragonfly Centre at Wicken Fen has now run for its third full season and this year's openings included a special Dragonfly Day in July. It was so successful, that we'll be running another next year on 28th July, to coincide with the end of Dragonfly Week. I am grateful to all those who have helped out over the season, but we still need more people on the rota. If you would like to get involved, please speak to Ruary Mackenzie Dodds.

BDS Shop Manager Lynn Curry feels she can no longer give enough time to the role with all her other BDS commitments. If you would like to consider the role of Shop Manager, I'm sure Lynn would be happy to chat to you.

Over half the species texts for the new dragonfly atlas have been drafted and the rest have authors assigned to them. We are now starting to collect habitat texts and photographs, so if you would like to help with this, please let me know and I'll make sure we contact you again after this weekend.

Recording for the atlas has been assisted by some sterling efforts from our dedicated Vice County Recorders as well as our partnerships with Birdtrack and the BTO's Garden Birdwatch scheme. Sincere thanks to all who have provided records – and it's not too late if you get them in to us soon!

Both Dragonfly News and our BDS Journal need a constant stream of articles. Please share your enthusiasm, favourite dragonfly spots and other findings with the rest of us. If you'd rather do things than write about them, consider leading a BDS walk. In addition to our normal field meetings, we're hoping to run at least 30 dragonfly walks for beginners next summer. Mike Averill and Dave Mainwaring are coordinating these events, their details can be found in Dragonfly News.

Our Vice-Chair, Dorothy Gennard, has decided to step down. She first joined Trustees back in 2006 when she replaced Peter Allen as Vice-Chair and she has subsequently served a full term of her own. As I'm sure you'll agree, she has organised yet another superb and varied programme of speakers for us today, so I'm delighted to present her with a few gifts on behalf of the Society.

Secretary's Report

Henry Curry said that membership numbers are slightly down, there are currently a total of 1485, of which 308 are Life members. However, there are still 225 members who have not yet paid.

Treasurer's Report

[The Treasurer's report is summarised separately on pages 32 and 33.]

Mick Parfitt proposed adoption of the Accounts, seconded by George Mahoney

Notice of the 26th AGM

Henry Curry announced that notice of the 26th AGM would be published in Dragonfly News 63, together with a copy of the Minutes from the 25th AGM

Any Other Business

Steve Cham displayed a collection of twigs from various trees and spoke briefly about looking for the oviposition marks of Willow Emerald Damselflies. He encouraged members to search over the winter in likely locations and surrounding areas where this migrant species has been recorded.

Adjournment

There being no other business, David Goddard proposed that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Ruary MacKenzie Dodds.

Constitution and By-Laws

Changes proposed in DN62

Twenty-six changes to the Constitution and By-Laws were proposed by the Board of Trustees and detailed in DN62. A voting slip was included as part of the Autumn mailing, and the results are as follows :

Total voting papers returned = 65 (approximately 4.4% of the membership)

Those voting 'YES' to all 26 amendments = 63

Those voting 'NO' to one or more of the amendments = 1

Those abstaining from voting on one or more of the amendments = 1

Therefore all the amendments will now take effect and an updated 'Constitution and By-Laws' document will be published. My huge thanks, and those of the Trustees, to all those who took the time and trouble to return their voting slip.

Additional Change

As a result of recent guidance received from the Charity Commission concerning the minimum number of Trustees constituting a Quorum, the Trustees propose an addition to the By-Laws, Article 1 (f). "The minimum number of Trustees necessary to provide a quorum for voting shall be 4 "

Please indicate in writing to register your approval or otherwise for this change. This must be received by the Secretary within one calendar month of receipt of this notice.

Large Red Damselfly postcard competition

Here is the winning image from our Large Red Damselfly photographic competition. It is a stunning shot by Martin Černý from the Czech Republic. The photo was everything that we asked for, a sharp shot of the damselfly with an unfussy background that clearly shows the identification features. The photograph will feature on the front of our citizen science postcard which will be distributed in Scotland. It will be used to promote awareness of dragonflies in Scotland, help people to identify this species and encourage people to submit records of their sightings through our online recording system. Some of the other entries can be viewed on our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/2151651@N22/discuss/72157632570227140/> – there were lots of great shots, thanks to everyone for entering.



Checklist of the Damselflies & Dragonflies of Britain & Ireland

Last Revision: Completely revised into three tables, Spring 2009

Table 1. Category A: resident and/or migrant species recorded since 1970

This category comprises species with well-established breeding populations and migrant species that have been recorded regularly since 1970, the latter often attempting to establish temporary breeding populations.

| ZYGOPTERA | Damselflies | ANISOPTERA (cont'd) | Dragonflies (cont'd) |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Calopterygidae | Demoiselles | <i>Aeshna juncea</i> | Common Hawker |
| <i>Calopteryx splendens</i> | Banded Demoiselle | <i>Aeshna mixta</i> | Migrant Hawker |
| <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> | Beautiful Demoiselle | <i>Anax imperator</i> | Emperor Dragonfly |
| Lestidae | Emerald Damselflies | <i>Anax parthenope</i> | Lesser Emperor |
| <i>Lestes dryas</i> | Scarce Emerald Damselfly | <i>Brachytron pratense</i> | Hairy Dragonfly |
| <i>Lestes sponsa</i> | Emerald Damselfly | Gomphidae | |
| Coenagrionidae | | <i>Gomphus vulgatissimus</i> | Common Club-tail |
| <i>Coenagrion hastulatum</i> | Northern Damselfly | Cordulegastridae | |
| <i>Coenagrion lunulatum</i> | Irish Damselfly | <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> | Golden-ringed Dragonfly |
| <i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i> | Southern Damselfly | Corduliidae | Emeralds |
| <i>Coenagrion puella</i> | Azure Damselfly | <i>Cordulia aenea</i> | Downy Emerald |
| <i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i> | Variable Damselfly | <i>Somatochlora arctica</i> | Northern Emerald |
| <i>Erythromma najas</i> | Red-eyed Damselfly | <i>Somatochlora metallica</i> | Brilliant Emerald |
| <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> | Small Red-eyed Damselfly | Libellulidae | Darters, Chasers, Skimmers |
| <i>Pyrrosoma nymphula</i> | Large Red Damselfly | <i>Leucorrhinia dubia</i> | White-faced Darter |
| <i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i> | Common Blue Damselfly | <i>Libellula depressa</i> | Broad-bodied Chaser |
| <i>Ischnura elegans</i> | Blue-tailed Damselfly | <i>Libellula fulva</i> | Scarce Chaser |
| <i>Ischnura pumilio</i> | Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly | <i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i> | Four-spotted Chaser |
| <i>Ceragrion tenellum</i> | Small Red Damselfly | <i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i> | Black-tailed Skimmer |
| Platycnemididae | | <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> | Keeled Skimmer |
| <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> | White-legged Damselfly | <i>Sympetrum danae</i> | Black Darter |
| ANISOPTERA | Dragonflies | <i>Sympetrum flaveolum</i> | Yellow-winged Darter |
| Aeshnidae | Hawkers | <i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i> | Red-veined Darter |
| <i>Aeshna caerulea</i> | Azure Hawker | <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i> | Ruddy Darter |
| <i>Aeshna cyanea</i> | Southern Hawker | <i>Sympetrum striolatum</i> * | Common Darter |
| <i>Aeshna grandis</i> | Brown Hawker | | |
| <i>Aeshna isosceles</i> | Norfolk Hawker | | |

* - includes dark specimens in the north-west, formerly treated as a separate species *Sympetrum nigrescens* **Highland Darter**

Table 2. Category B: vagrant species

Since 1998 records of these species have been assessed by the Odonata Records Committee.

| ZYGOPTERA | Damselflies | ANISOPTERA (cont'd) | Dragonflies (cont'd) |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lestidae | Emerald Damselflies | Gomphidae | |
| <i>Lestes barbarus</i> ** | Southern Emerald Damselfly | <i>Gomphus flavipes</i> | Yellow-legged Club-tail |
| <i>Lestes viridis</i> ** | Willow Emerald Damselfly | Libellulidae | Darters, Chasers, Skimmers |
| <i>Sympecma fusca</i> | Winter Damselfly | <i>Leucorrhinia pectoralis</i> | Large White-faced Darter |
| Coenagrionidae | | | |
| <i>Coenagrion scitulum</i> ** | Dainty Damselfly | <i>Crocothemis erythraea</i> † | Scarlet Darter |
| ANISOPTERA | Dragonflies | <i>Sympetrum pedemontanum</i> | Banded Darter |
| Aeshnidae | Hawkers | <i>Sympetrum vulgatum</i> | Vagrant Darter |
| <i>Aeshna affinis</i> | Southern Migrant Hawker | <i>Pantala flavescens</i> | Wandering Glider |
| <i>Anax ephippiger</i> | Vagrant Emperor | | |
| <i>Anax junius</i> | Green Darner | | |

** - has bred. † - has bred in the Channel Islands.

Table 3. Category C: former breeding species not recorded since 1970

Any further records of these species will be assessed by the Odonata Records Committee.

| ZYGOPTERA | Damselflies | ANISOPTERA | Dragonflies |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Coenagrionidae | | Corduliidae | Emeralds |
| <i>Coenagrion armatum</i> | Norfolk Damselfly | <i>Oxygastra curtisii</i> | Orange-spotted Emerald |

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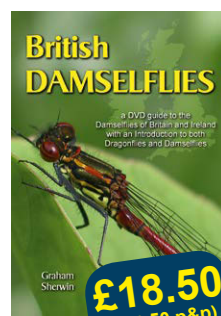
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