

Priority Site Assessment Instructions



Guidance on assessing the value of a site for Dragonflies

Sites can be identified as being of **National Importance**, for holding breeding populations of nationally-rare species, or of **Local Importance**, for holding breeding populations of either locally-important species or a diverse range of species. Many sites may already have conservation designations such as SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) or NNR (National Nature Reserve). The BDS views sites of National Importance for Dragonflies as being of potential SSSI status and Locally Important sites as meriting (County) Wildlife Site status.

Nationally Important Species

Azure Hawker <i>Aeshna caerulea</i>	Scarce Chaser <i>Libellula fulva</i>
Brilliant Emerald <i>Somatochlora metallica</i>	Scarce Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes dryas</i>
Common Clubtail <i>Gomphus vulgatissimus</i>	Southern Damselfly <i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i>
Northern Emerald <i>Somatochlora arctica</i>	Small Red Damselfly <i>Ceriagrion tenellum</i>
Norfolk Hawker <i>Aeshna isoceles</i>	Variable Damselfly <i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i>
Northern Damselfly <i>Coenagrion hastulatum</i>	White-faced Darter <i>Leucorrhinia dubia</i>
Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly <i>Ischnura pumilio</i>	

If the site holds one or more of the Nationally Important Species in the list above, or at least one of the Locally Important species for the area (see table below), follow the left-hand side of the assessment process chart (separate document). Use the chart separately for each important species in turn, starting with any that are Nationally Important, followed by any Locally Important species. The species that reaches the highest level of significance in the chart, denotes the current status of the site. Higher levels can be achieved over time by collecting more evidence of breeding and abundance.

There are two alternative ways to progress species through this 'Importance' side of the chart. If the important species is abundant (see definitions below), then there must also be recent* breeding evidence for that species for it to continue further through the assessment. If the species does not pass the abundance threshold, then it can still progress through the chart if it has bred in at least two recent years (i.e. has persistence at the site).

*recent is ideally the last 5-10 years, but may be up to 20 years for rarely visited, remote sites

If a site does not contain any important species, but instead has a diversity of other dragonfly species equal to or greater than the Diversity Threshold for the area (see table below), then assess the site using the right-hand side of the chart. You now have to assess all species collectively at each level going down through the chart. The Diversity Threshold must be met or exceeded at each stage to progress further. However, at the breeding level, the Diversity Threshold can be met by combining the number of species that have bred at least once in recent years and are abundant, with the number of species that have bred at least twice in recent years, but are not abundant.

In all cases, further progress towards the highest level of significance in the Species Diversity side of the chart can be made over time by collecting more evidence of abundance or breeding persistence at the site.

Abundance

Abundance relates to the maximum count of a species seen during one site visit. Counts of adults or larvae are both valid, as is a combination of these two from the same site visit. Please do not add together other life stages or the numbers seen on separate visits.

Different species have different count thresholds for abundance.

Damselfly species that need a count of ≥ 6

(abundance code C or above)

Scarce Emerald Damselfly *Lestes dryas*

Northern Damselfly *Coenagrion hastulatum*

Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura pumilio*

All other Damselflies need a count of ≥ 20

(abundance code D or above)

Dragonfly species that need a count of ≥ 20

(abundance code D or above)

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*

Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata*

Keeled Skimmer *Orthetrum coerulescens*

Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*

Black Darter *Sympetrum danae*

All other Dragonflies need a count of ≥ 6

(abundance code C or above)

Locally Important Species List and Diversity Thresholds

The Diversity Threshold is the minimum number of species that need to have viable breeding populations recorded within the site in recent years, for it to qualify.

VC	VC Name	Locally Important Species	Diversity Threshold
1	West Cornwall	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	16
2	East Cornwall	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	16
3	South Devon	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	16
4	North Devon	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	16
5	South Somerset	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16

6	North Somerset	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16
7	North Wiltshire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	18
8	South Wiltshire	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
9	Dorset	Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i>	18
10	Isle of Wight	Southern Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes barbarus</i> White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Four-spotted Chaser <i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i> Keel skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	11
11	South Hampshire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
12	North Hampshire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
13	West Sussex	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i> Red-veined Darter <i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>	18
14	East Sussex	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i> Red-veined Darter <i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>	18
15	East Kent	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Southern Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes barbarus</i> Dainty Damselfly <i>Coenagrion scitulum</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	18
16	West Kent	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Southern Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes barbarus</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	18
17	Surrey	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Emerald damselfly <i>Lestes sponsa</i>	18
18	South Essex	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Southern Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes barbarus</i> Scarce Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes dryas</i> White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	18
19	North Essex	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Scarce Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes dryas</i> White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	18
20	Hertfordshire	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
21	Middlesex	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes sponsa</i>	18

22	Berkshire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
23	Oxfordshire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	16
24	Buckinghamshire	Southern Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes barbarus</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	18
25	East Suffolk	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>	18
26	West Suffolk	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>	18
27	East Norfolk	Southern Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes barbarus</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Lesser Emperor <i>Anax parthenope</i>	18
28	West Norfolk	Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
29	Cambridgeshire	Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	18
30	Bedfordshire	Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes sponsa</i> Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	18
31	Huntingdonshire	Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	18
32	Northamptonshire	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	18
33	East Gloucestershire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Southern Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna affinis</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	18
34	West Gloucestershire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
35	Monmouthshire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	13
36	Herefordshire	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Four-spotted Chaser <i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16
37	Worcestershire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Four-spotted Chaser <i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	16
38	Warwickshire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16
39	Staffordshire	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	16
40	Shropshire	Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
41	Glamorganshire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	13
42	Breconshire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	16
43	Radnorshire	Banded Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx splendens</i> Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i>	16

		White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Black-tailed Skimmer <i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i> Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	
44	Carmarthenshire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16
45	Pembrokeshire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16
46	Cardiganshire	Banded Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx splendens</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Black-tailed Skimmer <i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	13
47	Montgomeryshire	Black-tailed Skimmer <i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	13
48	Merionethshire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i>	16
49	Caernarvonshire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i>	16
50	Denbighshire	White-legged Damselfly <i>Platycnemis pennipes</i> Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	16
51	Flintshire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	13
52	Anglesey	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i>	16
53	South Lincolnshire	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
54	North Lincolnshire	Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
55	Leicestershire	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i>	16
56	Nottinghamshire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Common Hawker <i>Aeshna juncea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16
57	Derbyshire	Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	16
58	Cheshire	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	18
59	South Lancashire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Red-veined Darter <i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	11
60	West Lancashire	Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Keeled Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Red-veined Darter <i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	11
61	South-east Yorkshire	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i>	14
62	North-east Yorkshire	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i>	14

		Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	
63	South-west Yorkshire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i>	14
64	Mid-west Yorkshire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i>	14
65	North-west Yorkshire	Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma najas</i> Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	14
66	County Durham	Small Red-eyed Damselfly <i>Erythromma viridulum</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	14
67	South Northumberland	Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i> Emperor Dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i> Broad-bodied Chaser <i>Libellula depressa</i> Four-spotted Chaser <i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	14
68	North Northumberland	Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i> Emperor Dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i> Broad-bodied Chaser <i>Libellula depressa</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	14
69	Westmorland	Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Black-tailed Skimmer <i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	11
70	Cumberland	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Black-tailed Skimmer <i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i> Ruddy Darter <i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	11
71	Isle of Man	Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes sponsa</i> Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Emperor Dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i> Black Darter <i>Sympetrum danae</i>	6
72 to 84	Dumfriesshire to West Lothian	Banded Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx splendens</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i> Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i> Emperor Dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i> Broad-bodied Chaser <i>Libellula depressa</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	11
85 to 95	Fife to Moray	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Emperor Dragonfly <i>Anax imperator</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i>	9
96 to 101 (not 100)	East Inverness-shire to Kintyre	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Hairy Dragonfly <i>Brachytron pratense</i> Downy Emerald <i>Cordulia aenea</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	11
100	Clyde Isles	Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	9
102 to 108	South Eubudes to West Sutherland	Beautiful Demoiselle <i>Calopteryx virgo</i> Keel Skimmer <i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	9
109 to 111	Caithness to Orkney	Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes sponsa</i> Golden-ringed Dragonfly <i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Four-spotted Chaser <i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	6
112	Shetland	n/a	-