

BRAUNTON MARSH

2017-2026: Confirmed Priority Site of National Importance

Successful breeding of Scarce Chaser, first detected in 2022; presence of Hairy Dragonfly.

Last updated: 28/03/2025

Site: BRAUNTON MARSH	1987-1996			1997-2006			2007-2016			2017-2026		
Grid ref.: SS4734; SS4834	Breeding		Other	Breeding		Other	Breeding		Other	Breeding		Other
	Succ	Poss		Succ	Poss		Succ	Poss		Succ	Poss	
<u>Damselflies</u>												
Beautiful Demoiselle												
Banded Demoiselle												
Emerald Damselfly						C						
White-legged Damselfly												
Large Red Damselfly												A
Blue-tailed Damselfly			+		B	C				+	+	D
Scarce Blue-t Damselfly												
Common Blue Damselfly						C						
Southern Damselfly												
Azure Damselfly			+	A	C	D				+	+	D
Red-eyed Damselfly												
Small Red-eyed Damselfly												
Small Red Damselfly												
<u>Dragonflies</u>												
Hairy Dragonfly												B
Common Hawker												
Norfolk Hawker												
Brown Hawker												
Southern Hawker												
Migrant Hawker												
Emperor Dragonfly				A		C				A		C
Lesser Emperor												
Vagrant Emperor												
Golden-ringed Dragonfly												
Downy Emerald												
Broad-bodied Chaser						A						
Scarce Chaser										A	B	C
Four-spotted Chaser				C	A	C						A
Keeled Skimmer												
Black-tailed Skimmer												
Common Darter						C						
Red-veined Darter												
Ruddy Darter	B		B									
Black Darter												
Yellow-winged Darter												
Scarlet Darter												
Total species in category:	1	0	3	3	3	8	0	0	0	4	3	7

Bold underlined = nationally important species **Bold black = important species**

Succ = Successful breeding (exuvia(e) and/or larva(e) and/or pre-flight emergent and/or oviposition);

Poss = Possible breeding (copulating pair); Other = Adult(s) or unspecified.

Abundance codes: A=1; B=2-5; C=6-20; D=21-100; E=101-500; F=>500; + = no count.

Priority Species History

Hairy Dragonfly – 2 on 11/5/24.

Scarce Chaser – 1 at SS47513404 on 27/5/22 and C (6-20) on 3/6/22, with B in cop., at SS48183482; these are roadside locations, suggesting that the species may be more widespread in suitable ditches. (4 'females' in willow scrub on the edge of Branton Burrows on 2/6/23 had possibly dispersed from Branton Marsh.) Six, including 1 egg-laying, on 4/7/24.

Ruddy Darter – B (2-5) larvae found on 12/9/96. (Warning: this species is extremely difficult to differentiate from the larva of Common Darter).

Habitat

Ditches in coastal grazing marsh (site of Branton Great Field, a rare example of extant open field system).

Status

Historic Environment Register

Area

142 ha

Local Authority: North Devon DC

Owner/tenant

Various?

Threats

- Inappropriate ditch management

Management suggestions

- Retain areas of emergent vegetation, at least in ditches where Scarce Chaser has been found.

