

# LOWER TAMAR VALLEY (Horsebridge to Gunnislake)

2007-2016: Confirmed Priority Site of Local Importance

## CURRENT STATUS UNCERTAIN

Confirmed breeding of White-legged Damselfly in the past, but no recent records.  
Formerly Orange-spotted Emerald, now extinct in Britain.

Last updated: 18/03/2025

Site: LOWER TAMAR VALLEY	1987-1996			1997-2006			2007-2016			2017-2026		
Grid ref.: SX4074-4371	Breeding		Other	Breeding		Other	Breeding		Other	Breeding		Other
	Succ	Poss		Succ	Poss		Succ	Poss		Succ	Poss	
<b><u>Damselflies</u></b>												
Beautiful Demoiselle			C			D	C		D			
Banded Demoiselle			D				+		C			
Emerald Damselfly		B	D									
<b>White-legged Damselfly</b>		<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>				<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>D</b>			
Large Red Damselfly			B			A			A			
Blue-tailed Damselfly			A									
<b>Scarce Blue-t Damselfly</b>												
Common Blue Damselfly												
<b>Southern Damselfly</b>												
Azure Damselfly	B		C									
<b>Red-eyed Damselfly</b>												
Small Red-eyed Damselfly												
<b>Small Red Damselfly</b>												
<b><u>Dragonflies</u></b>												
<b>Hairy Dragonfly</b>												
Common Hawker												
<b>Norfolk Hawker</b>												
Brown Hawker												
Southern Hawker			A			A			A			
Migrant Hawker												
Emperor Dragonfly									A			
Lesser Emperor												
Vagrant Emperor												
Golden-ringed Dragonfly			A			B						
<b>Downy Emerald</b>												
Broad-bodied Chaser			A			B			B			
<b>Scarce Chaser</b>												
Four-spotted Chaser												
Keeled Skimmer												
Black-tailed Skimmer												
Common Darter	A		C			A						
Red-veined Darter												
<b>Ruddy Darter</b>												
Black Darter												
Yellow-winged Darter												
Scarlet Darter												
<b>Total species in category:</b>	2	2	11	0	0	6	3	1	7	0	0	0

**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***

**White-legged Damselfly** – known from Luckett (and elsewhere in the Tamar Valley) in 1978; at least 5 (2 pairs in cop.) at Blanchdown Wood on 25/6/88; C (6-20) at Bedford United Mines (Gunnislake) and near Blanchdown in 2009; D (21-100) at Devon Great United Mine in 2011. No subsequent records.

### ***Other species of note***

**Orange-spotted Emerald** – Three specimens (two male) were taken at the River Tamar near Gunnislake by O. G. Watkins in July 1946. There have been no further records here, despite searches, although there is an unconfirmed record of one photographed in the 1960s. The river here, not far above its tidal limit, has calm sections and wooded margins such as those favoured by this species in France, but it is possible that the water quality has been affected by contamination from the old copper mines in the area.

### ***Habitat***

Mature river, often tree-lined, with weirs creating still water sections.

### ***Status***

National Landscape.

### ***Area***

c8 km.

***Local Authority:*** West Devon DC

### ***Owner/tenant***

Various.

### ***Threats***

- Pollution from mine waste/seepage.

### ***Management suggestions***

- ???





