

Shropshire (VC40) Dragonfly Newsletter



Spring 2022
Sue Rees Evans

Introduction

Well spring has sprung and finally the newsletter is here...just in the nick of time before the next flight season is upon us! Apologies for the delay but this is due largely to changes in how and when we analyse the records which I'll explain later along with some important information for anyone using **iNaturalist**.



Blue-tailed Damselfly keeping a low profile in early spring.
Photo: J. Almond

A big **THANK YOU** to all of you who went out and about in 2021 recording Shropshire dragonflies. We seem to be living through extraordinary times and like many others I have taken much solace in immersing myself in wildlife whenever possible. At time of writing I have received around 950 records from an ever increasing number of recorders who are using iRecord. These records have helped illustrate what a strange year we had weather wise too. A promising start with some early sightings then lead to a bit of a 'doldrums' when cold and wet conditions seemed to slow everything down. Some very hot days did finally arrive and with this warmth much activity was seen on the wing. This then extended further than ever into autumn breaking a number of Shropshire records!

The **Shropshire Dragonfly Watch** flight season blog was again adorned with many of your fabulous photographs enabling us all to stay informed of the comings and goings throughout the year. I have included a number in this newsletter as they offer such valuable glimpses of these insects and I for one appreciate the detail that can be seen in a still image rather than one flying at 36kmph! The **Shropshire Dragonflies Website** has just been updated with a good number of events for 2022 with more details to follow now that circumstances have eased. There is also a new species **Willow Emerald** on the 'coming soon' pages and you can read more about this potential newcomer and the progress of our most recent arrival **Small Red-eyed Damselfly** later in the newsletter.

Flight Season 2021

The Shropshire flight season began with **Large Red Damselfly** *Pyrhosoma nymphula* recorded on 15th April - a full week later than the earliest ever Shropshire record. Conversely a number of notably early sightings then followed. **Four-spotted**

Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata* was seen on April 22nd just 3 days later than the earliest Shropshire sighting made in 2019. **White-faced Darter** *Leucorrhinia dubia* was also reasonably early on 25th April, though not beating the earliest (and earliest



Female Variable Damselfly dark form
Photo: J. Almond

national record) made by Stephen Barlow on 21st April 2020. **Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura elegans*

interestingly was recorded on 26th April – only the second time this species has been recorded in April in Shropshire.

Elsewhere this species seemed to have an extraordinary start to the year too as not too far away in Nottingham it was recorded in a garden on 27th February! (Perrin, 2021). Back in Shropshire we did however see the earliest ever

Variable Damselfly *Coenagrion pulchellum* recorded on 26th April by Jim Almond.

Not in Shropshire, but worth a mention there were some unusual early sightings in our neighbouring county Cheshire.

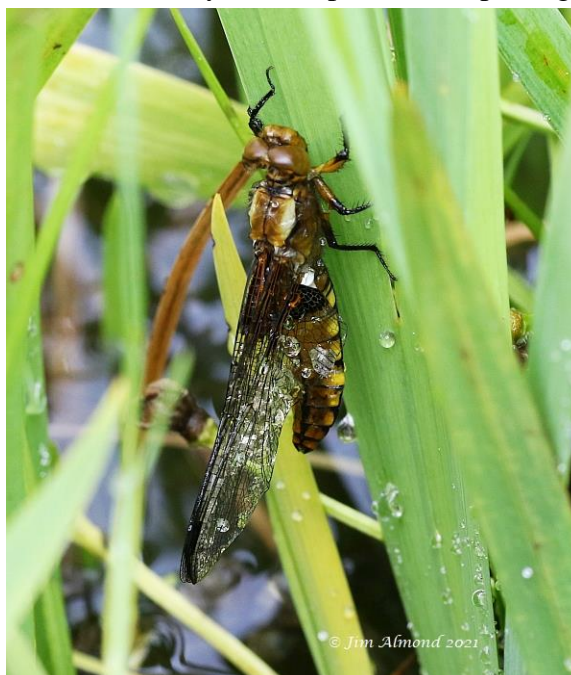
Six Common Blue Damselflies

Enallagma cyathigerum were recorded on 31st March and amazingly a

Demoiselle was seen on 7th January! (Perrin, 2021).

Despite the early start, prolonged cold and wet weather then lead to things slowing down and regular recorder Stephen Barlow failed to see fully mature **White-faced Darter** adults for sometime. Stephen frequently records at Whixall Moss which is usually ahead of other areas in Shropshire. Even on May 28th Stephen was reporting no sign at all of territorial displays, mating or ovipositing in any dragonfly or damselfly species whereas a more typical year would see such activity in **Four-spotted Chasers** and early damselflies before the end of April and mature White-faced Darters at the start of May. Jim Almond also witnessed the challenges of dreadful weather as he observed a female **Broad-bodied Chaser** *Libellula depressa* (pictured right) taking 6 long wet days to successfully emerge and against all the odds take flight!

Eventually however summer arrived and in stark contrast to the relative inactivity at Whixall Moss Stephen Barlow was now reporting ‘frenzied competitive behaviour’ as individuals sought to maximise the heatwave. Stephen reported no less



All good things... a Broad-bodied Chaser takes 6 days to emerge! Photo: J. Almond

than 5 males competing for a single female with resulting ‘chaos as a ball of dragonflies tumbled around with males grabbing males and general confusion!’



Chaos at Whixall Moss as a male White-faced Darter attempts to drag another male away from the female he is already paired with!

Photo: S. Barlow

At the other end of the flight season the prolonged mild autumn weather brought hopes of late records and we were not disappointed! Incredibly 4 species were recorded in November.

Migrant Hawker

Aeshna mixta was seen by John Martin at Venus Pool on 9th November just 3 days shy of the latest ever county sighting made by J. Cresswell on 12th November 2015. In addition three Shropshire

records were broken with the latest ever sightings of:

Common Hawker *Aeshna juncea* 14th November (prev. 31st October 2016)

Black Darter *Sympetrum danae* 22nd November (prev. 10th November 2019)

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum* 25th November (prev. 20th November 2015)

All these sightings were made by Stephen Barlow at Whixall Moss and the 2 Common Darters seen by Stephen on 25th November represent the **latest ever record of a Shropshire resident species**. This theme extended across the country with **Common Darter** being recorded in at least 8 counties in December 2021. The latest record was made in Suffolk on 16th December 2021, apparently only a day or 2 short of the latest all time record for Britain (Parr, 2022).



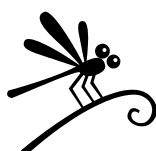
One of the 2 Common Darters seen on 25th November 2021

Photo: S. Barlow

The table below shows the first and last dates for those species recorded in Shropshire in 2021, but it is important to understand that these are directly influenced by recorder effort and the sites visited. **Red** = Shropshire record **Blue** = notably early/late, but not a county record

First and Last Recorded Sightings 2021

Species	Common Name	Date of first record	Date of last record
<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>	Banded Demoiselle	26 th May	8 th September
<i>Calopteryx virgo</i>	Beautiful Demoiselle	18 th May	4 th August
<i>Lestes sponsa</i>	Emerald Damselfly	14 th June	21 st September
<i>Coenagrion puella</i>	Azure Damselfly	14 th May	3 rd August
<i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i>	Variable Damselfly	26 th April	9 th June
<i>Erythromma najas</i>	Red-eyed Damselfly	14 th May	31 st August
<i>Erythromma viridulum</i>	Small Red-eyed Damselfly	4 th August	4 th August
<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i>	Large Red Damselfly	15 th April	4 th August
<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>	Common Blue Damselfly	27 th May	23 rd September
<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	Blue-tailed Damselfly	26 th April	8 th September
<i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>	White-legged Damselfly	27 th May	29 th August
<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	Southern Hawker	1 st July	6 th October
<i>Aeshna grandis</i>	Brown Hawker	16 th June	20 th September
<i>Aeshna juncea</i>	Common Hawker	24 th June	14 th November
<i>Aeshna mixta</i>	Migrant Hawker	26 th July	9 th November
<i>Anax imperator</i>	Emperor Dragonfly	31 st May	23 rd September
<i>Gomphus vulgatissimus</i>	Common Club-tail	19 th May	13 th June
<i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i>	Golden-ringed Dragonfly	16 th June	29 th July
<i>Cordulia aenea</i>	Downy Emerald	15 th May	9 th June
<i>Leucorrhinia dubia</i>	White-faced Darter	25 th April	21 st July
<i>Libellula depressa</i>	Broad-bodied chaser	11 th May	13 th August
<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	Four-spotted Chaser	22 nd April	3 rd August
<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	Black-tailed Skimmer	9 th June	28 th July
<i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	Keeled Skimmer	19 th July	21 st July
<i>Sympetrum danae</i>	Black Darter	22 nd June	22 nd November
<i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	Ruddy Darter	18 th July	19 th September
<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	Common Darter	13 th June	25 th November



Species Summary

A total of 27 species were recorded in 2021 comprising 16 dragonfly and 11 damselfly species. This falls short of the 34 species ever recorded in Shropshire, but it is the average number of species we would expect. All those unrecorded (listed in Missing in Action) are rare migrants, transient species or occasional rarities that cross our borders.



A fabulous striking photo of Ruddy Darter
Photo: A. Beech

Common and widespread species were as usual recorded more frequently with **Large Red Damselfly** producing the most damselfly records followed by **Azure Damselfly**. These both emerge early in the flight season and are regulars at garden ponds which undoubtedly boosts the numbers of records. With regards to dragonflies again it was two of our garden pond regulars that produced good numbers of records; **Southern Hawker** and **Common Darter**.

Interestingly **Black Darter** also had large numbers of records and is not a common and widespread species. This is particularly surprising given the recently published **State of Dragonflies Report in Britain and Ireland 2021** (Taylor et al, 2021) in which it was listed as a declining

species. This report was published on 7th September, 2021 and is based on 50 years of records dating back to 1970 and is a fabulous illustration of how all your records are put to good and important use. Records from 17,000 voluntary dragonfly recorders provided the data for analysis and the full report which is well worth a read can be downloaded from the British Dragonfly Society website (<https://british-dragonflies.org.uk/>).

Surprisingly 41% of species have increased in occupancy since 1970 and just 11% have shown a significant decline. The underlying causes are complex though climate change and habitat quality and quantity are important (Taylor et al, 2021). Species that appear to be doing particularly well include **Emperor Dragonfly**, **Migrant Hawker** and **Ruddy Darter**. From a local perspective this is interesting as my last full newsletter (Rees Evans, 2018) mentioned that ‘Emperors seemed to be everywhere’ and noted that Ruddy Darter had been increasing its Shropshire distribution in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

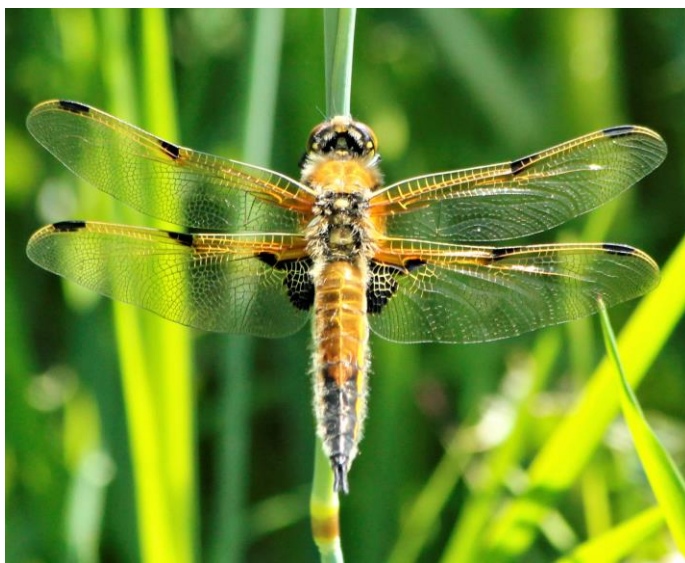
Of greater concern are those species found to be in steepest decline ; **Emerald Damselfly**, **Black Darter**, **Common Hawker** and to a lesser degree **Golden-ringed Dragonfly**. All of these species are recorded in upland areas of Shropshire and three of these species are highlighted shortly in the ‘Individual Species Reports’ due to recent unusual records at new and in some cases unsuitable sites. This may be coincidence or perhaps the early evidence of individuals seeking new waterbodies as current ones dry out or succumb to successional scrub encroachment.

Emerald Damselfly is particularly interesting as being common and widespread it breeds in both upland and lowland waters. Like **Black Darter** however it does favour shallow pools and both species have evolved rapidly developing larvae enabling emergence from temporary pools before they dry out. If however water bodies dry out even earlier due to climate change and associated extreme weather patterns then these species may not have sufficient time to complete the lifecycle. Temporary pools have the advantage of being fish free and generally less species rich and therefore less competitive environments. If Emerald Damselfly is forced to inhabit deeper more competitive waterbodies the larger overt larvae which actively hunt prey to feed an appetite synonymous with rapid development may simply not survive.



Male Emerald Damselfly with beautiful blue pruinescence. Photo: A. Warr

During 2021 a number of recorders again raised the lack of general abundance when visiting well known sites in good weather and seeing surprisingly little. This coupled with the recently documented declines (Taylor et al, 2021) mean it is increasingly important to record abundance when you make species records. Presence or absence data alone gives us no real idea how populations of species are faring. We could say for example that Shropshire has on average 27 Odonata species recorded each year. With an influx of rare migrants in some years this can increase with 34 species having been recorded at one time or another. With a warming climate these migrants are more likely and so a simple species list may give the impression that dragon and damselflies are thriving and mask a very real possibility that the overall numbers of each species are declining.



Four-spotted Chaser basking in the Shropshire sunshine. Photo: J. Shields

And just to finish this section on a positive note (!) there were also brighter moments in 2021 such as Jan Shields visiting Aston Locks and recording numerous dragon and damselflies including up to 100 Four-spotted Chasers!

Individual Species Reports



Small Red- eyed Damselfly *E. viridulum*

As soon as I stopped writing the newsletter (where I wrote of this species imminent arrival for 8 years!) Small Red-eyed Damselfly finally came to Shropshire in 2019. Spotted by Bob Pugh on 24th July 2019, then by Meurig Garbutt at Dudmaston and finally Mick Richardson at Green Pond near Albrighton. The following year we were keen to see if this species would persist and records were made again at Dudmaston and also Whixall Moss. In addition the Worcestershire County Dragonfly

Recorder Mike Averill saw 15 adults with copulating pairs and ovipositing at Wellfield fishing pools in southeast Shropshire near the Wyre Forest. 2021 also failed to disappoint with individuals being seen (conveniently on a course I was teaching!) at Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre. Two participants then popped over the A49 to Stokesay Castle after the course and amazingly recorded individuals there too...exactly where this species was first recorded in 2019.

The most noticeable feature is how much smaller and daintier in appearance they are compared to Red-eyed Damselfly and they all seem to have the tendency to tilt the ends of their abdomens upwards. Do please keep an eye out for this species from July onwards and we'll see how it progresses.



Male *E. viridulum* at Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre in 2021. Photo: G. Hall



Black Darter *S. danae*



Black Darter at Prees Heath. Photo: S. Lewis

During 2021 Black Darter was recorded in two new Shropshire locations. Firstly Stephen Lewis who is the warden at Prees Heath Common Reserve sent in this photo (left) taken on 1st August. The closest nearby location for this species is Brown Moss though recorded sightings date back to 1997. Stephen Barlow however has seen them more recently than this at Brown Moss. Being a regular observer of this species on Whixall Moss he has also observed small scale dispersal when the numbers are good, finding individuals at Dobson's Bridge- a distance from

Whixall Moss itself.

The second report came from Neil Nash who saw 10 individuals in a grassy clearing in woodland at Steel Heath on 18th August. Steel Heath is approximately 1.5km west of Prees Heath and as such is a similar distance from Brown Moss. It would seem likely that these individuals have dispersed locally from Brown Moss or possibly even Whixall Moss. Stephen Barlow also informs me that fish have somehow been introduced at Brown Moss so it is possible that this has led to adults dispersing. It will be fascinating to see how Black Darter fares this season particularly as mentioned earlier it has been highlighted as one of the species declining in the recent State of Dragonflies Report (Taylor et al, 2021).



Golden-ringed Dragonfly *C. boltonii*



Golden-ringed Dragonfly moving in in Longden.
Photo: T. Jones

This species produced some bizarre 'interior records' in 2021 being found inside properties, two of which were some distance from typical locations. It began with T. Jones walking into an individual in her living room in Longden, just south of Shrewsbury! It was clearly damaged but she managed to encourage it outside and took a photograph (see left). The dragonfly eventually took flight though a pair of wings were found shortly afterward indicating this was brief and final! G. Bennet then located an individual in her conservatory in Church Stretton (though sadly recently deceased) and finally on September 1st P. Cosgrove had an individual fly into his conservatory in Chapel Lawn which he carefully netted and released.

Golden-ringed Dragonfly is a river species typically found in Shropshire in parts of the Wyre Forest or on the Long Mynd or Clee Hills near upland fast flowing streams. So in summary these sightings are not 'usual' and this species has never been recorded near Chapel Lawn or Longden before. Interestingly this is not the first time this species has turned up unexpectedly. In 2016 we had unusual sightings at Shropshire Hills

Discovery Centre and Severn Valley Country Park and further afield in a conservatory in Oxford and on an estate garden in Norfolk (Perrin, 2016) so this species does seem prone to surprises!



Common Hawker *A. juncea*



Common Hawker unexpectedly basking in Shrewsbury sunshine. Photo: A. Jones

Though named a Common Hawker this species is far from common in garden habitats, more typically being found at acidic pools such as those on the Long Mynd or at Whixall Moss. A. Warr was visiting more usual Common Hawker habitat at Pole Cottage Pools on the Long Mynd when he spotted an unusual female blue form. Typically females are brown with yellow spots not pale blue as pictured here.

Our upland species seemed to be hogging the limelight last year as Common Hawker was also recorded unexpectedly; firstly in Craven Arms at the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre and then on 29th September near Copthorne, Shrewsbury. The latter sighting was made by A. Jones who observed a male Common Hawker over two days in his wildlife garden (pictured left).



The rare blue form of female Common Hawker. Photo: A. Warr



Downy Emerald *C. aenea*



Downy Emerald in flight at Ebury Hill in 2021. Photo: J. Almond

Returning to the role of County Recorder in 2021 I had the opportunity to return to some of the known locations for Downy Emerald. This was important as the only record since 2016 was an ad hoc sighting by T. Harwood on the Llangollen Canal at Ellesmere in 2020. I'm very pleased to report Downy Emeralds were flying at Shomere though none were seen at neighbouring Bomere. Jim Almond

also visited Ebury Hill on a few occasions where he saw a number of adults on the wing. This is good news as we did not know if the population had persisted here with an absence of records since 2016. Berrington Pool again failed to produce any sightings, an adult not seen at this location since 2011 and an exuvia found in 2012 (both recorded by John Balcombe). It should be noted that Bomere, Shomere and Berrington Pool are private sites though the latter can be accessed with permission- please contact me if interested. In addition the quarry at Ebury Hill forms part of Ebury Hill campsite and access is only available to those staying there.

Missing In Action...



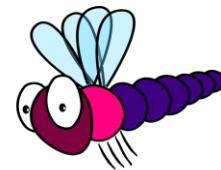
- ✈ **Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura pumilio*- though a rarity, this species used to be recorded each year at Titterstone Clee Hill. No Shropshire records however have been made since 2016 so definitely worth a good look this summer from mid June onwards.
- ✈ **Hairy dragonfly** *Brachytron pratense* –recorded in 2013 by B. Smith at Whixall Moss and then no records until 2020 when Richard Lamb saw 2 near Button Oak in the Wyre Forest. Very much a rarity in neighbouring Worcestershire it was surprisingly recorded 17 times in May/June 2020 at Ryall and Ripple and the Croome River (Averill, 2021). Though missing in Shropshire during 2021, emergent dragonflies were seen at Ripple Lakes in Worcestershire so with evidence of breeding there remains a good possibility it may be seen again in Shropshire. Typically the first hawker dragonfly on the wing in mid-May so be on the look-out in late spring/early summer.
- ✈ **Scarce Chaser** *Libellula fulva* –still living up to it's name in Shropshire where there remains only 1 Shropshire record ever made at Attingham Park in June 2008 by J. Balcombe. In contrast doing well in Worcestershire and even described as 'increasingly widespread' further south where it is turning up at garden ponds (Perrin, 2021). This species has a relatively early flight season emerging on mass in early May and is typically found on neutral or base-rich muddy slow flowing small rivers, dykes in floodplains and water meadows (Smallshire & Swash, 2018).
- ✈ **Vagrant Emperor** *Hemianax ephippiger* –following the first ever Shropshire record made by G. Hiatt on 23rd November at Muxton Marsh (SJ715132) in 2013 there have been no local reports of this incredibly rare migrant. Further afield there were over 30 records from early September to mid November 2021 and most recently an individual was recorded on the Isles of Scilly on 31st December (Parr, 2022). Though sightings are mainly from coastal areas of southern England and East Anglia individuals can turn up anywhere so this is always a species to be aware of if warm winds from the south are prevailing.
- ✈ **Lesser Emperor** *Anax Parthenope* - first recorded in Shropshire by P. Hope on 20th June 2016 near Fenemere then secondly in July 2019 by S.Barlow at Alderford Lake. No further sightings, but elsewhere in the UK there have been a good number of records including locations where previous sightings have

been made and where localised breeding is possible. These include Ripple Lakes in Worcestershire (Parr, 2022).

- ✈ **Red-veined Darter** *Sympetrum fonscolombii* – remains unrecorded since the 2012 sighting at Venus Pool. Several sightings elsewhere in Britain during 2021 though mostly in the south of England and mostly in the late spring/early summer (Parr, 2022). Definitely one to keep an eye out for!
- ✈ **Yellow-winged Darter** *Sympetrum flaveolum* - no Shropshire records since the mid 1990's. Always an outside chance they may revisit Shropshire if there is a large influx of migrants.

Recording Update


Species recording is evolving at quite a rate and we are certainly a long way from the days of receiving records on parchment in the post! That said, the post is still fine as is entering records on a spreadsheet and letting me have them at the end of the season. Whereas only a few recorders used to use iRecord this has now become the method most people use for entering records. What's more various other records and surveys get channelled into iRecord. The positive side of that is far more recorders putting in far more records so we have a better idea of how our dragonflies are faring. The negative side of that is managing the data and in some cases maintaining the quality of the records. To that end there are certain things you can do to ensure your records do get used.




🔍 **iNaturalist:** If you use **iNaturalist** your record is given a default license : CC BY-NC This means that **we cannot add it to the British Dragonfly Society data on the National Biodiversity Network**. This is because the BDS data is 'open' for people to view whereas CC BY-NC means you retain more control over the data and any media ie. attached photographs. iNaturalist records filter into iRecord and the upshot is I cannot verify and add these records to our data which is a great shame. I can see at a glance I currently have around 180 records mostly with attached photographs that I cannot do anything with. The best current solution **if you use iNaturalist is to please alter your own default licensing to CC-BY**. This is called a Creative Commons Attribution and it allows individuals, governments, not-for-profits and commercial organisations to use the data without having to ask permission.

🔍 **iRecord:** When using iRecord please use the specific **Dragonfly Recording Form** developed by the BDS as this allows you to specify the life stage. This form can be found by looking under Record

>Activities >search for British Dragonfly Society and click the gold star to add it to your activities. It is also better if you have an iRecord account and login before entering your records.

 **Record quality:** Please where possible use a real name attached to your record. It is also statistically useful if you can declare if the list is a **complete list** ie. all species visibly present at a location. This requires ticking a further box when entering records via iRecord and using the Dragonfly Recording Form. **If sending your own spreadsheet then please add a new 'complete list' column and tick where appropriate.** This allows the BDS to do more robust trend analysis which is important given the climatic changes we are seeing.

 **Timescales:** These have changed recently as we try to adapt to the volume of data continually coming in and how best to collate it and analyse it. Where possible please get your records sent in asap after the end of the flight season (the ideal deadline will be posted on website in autumn). This allows me to send them to our Records Officer at the BDS and gives him time to upload them to the NBN at which point I can then analyse them and hopefully get a newsletter out before anything takes to the wing in April! There are teething troubles with handling the data and if you see anything in the newsletter you disagree with or you think I've missed an important record then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Please rest assured that despite changes in how we record, the information is always gratefully received. The priority is to enjoy watching and recording the species you see and if you cannot get records in soon after the flight season we are still very happy to have them later rather than not at all.



The beautiful reflected wings of a female Brown Hawker. Photo: J. Shields

Coming to a Pond Near You.....

Willow Emerald Damselfly

Chalcolestes viridis

This species was first recorded as 'one-offs' in the UK in 1979 and 1992 in Sussex and Kent. A female was then recorded in Suffolk in 2007 followed by numerous records in 2009 from 35 sites in East Suffolk, North Essex and south Norfolk (Smallshire & Swash, 2018). Since then Willow Emerald has become firmly established and is rapidly expanding its range both north and westwards. Most recently an adult was seen at Staveley Nature Reserve, North Yorkshire on 8th October 2021 and the most westerly British record was made on 23rd September, 2021 at Smestow Valley Nature Reserve in western Wolverhampton (Parr, 2022).

Willow Emerald is seen from August onward found typically at sheltered standing water and slow flowing rivers with trees and shrubs overhanging the water from the banks. They egg lay into the overhanging twigs and branches (often but not exclusively willows) and this produces distinctive scars in the plant tissue.



Oviposition scars provide a record of species presence. Photo: © S. Cham



Male Willow Emerald Damselfly.
Photo: © S. Cham

The only similar species we have in Shropshire is the fairly common and widespread Emerald Damselfly. Both species belong to the family Lestidae and both rest with their wings held open at 45°. Willow Emerald however has a far longer abdomen and large pale pterostigma (narrow and dark in Emerald Damselfly). Noticeably Willow Emerald mature males have no powder blue pruinescence and the eyes remain dark (not blue as in Emerald Damselfly). There are

further differences in the anal appendages and the extent of a dark spur on the side of the thorax and the full identification details can be seen on the Shropshire Dragonflies website 'coming soon' page. Usefully we can look for evidence of this species during the winter months when the oviposition scars are easily visible. These scars are considered a positive record for this species so please get in touch even if you think you have seen such marks but no sign of the adults.

The Last Word..

Previous newsletters have usually ended by wishing you all much sunshine and a tropical summer. Well this time I thought I'd finish with a tropical damselfly! This is the "exotic" **Marsh Bluetail**, *Ischnura senegalensis*. This is a south-east Asian species and 2 of these were recorded in Shrewsbury in 2020! Migrant Dragonfly Project Officer Adrian Parr identified the species that does occasionally turn up in Britain, having accidentally been introduced with imported water-weed.



The exotic Marsh Bluetail of Shrewsbury!
Photo: L.O.Waldron

Sure enough the recorder Lauren Ollie Waldron had recently planted up a tropical fish tank. Both individuals were thought to be local species and were released out of the window though Adrian states no exotic dragonflies have ever become established in the UK...can't imagine why? According to Adrian the key ID features are the lack of any blue at all on the side of abdominal segment S7 (in front of the main blue tail-light), and the presence of a black saddle-like marking on segment S2 (our native Blue-tailed Damselfly just has a simple dark upper surface here).

Thank you again for all the records and photographs you sent in last year. I always enjoy pulling the information together and hopefully giving you an overview of what's happening. Without your input this would not be possible and it is your continued interest that ultimately provides us with vital information to help us conserve our fabulous Shropshire fliers!

I look forward to seeing some of you out and about enjoying the dragonflies in the sun-soaked Shropshire summer of 2022!



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