

North Wales Dragonfly Newsletter No 37. 19th August 2009

Hi all,



Yet another site for Small Bluetail (*Ischnura pumilio*)

Rob Strachan visited a small spring-fed wetland site near Rhoscolyn, Anglesey on the 14th August and serendipitously discovered yet another site for the Small or Scarce bluetail (*Ischnura pumilio*). This comprises ditches and an adjoining cattle-poached pond [SH 27553 76477] that has only been in place a couple of years but is now very well vegetated. Nine males and at least three females were seen. Well done Rob!

As I've written several times before (for example in the last newsletter), I think this species is far more common in North Wales than is realised and a special effort next year to target cattle-trampled spring-fed ponds in the western areas of North Wales, including Snowdonia NP where Andrew Graham's recent Y Lordship pond discovery is our only record, should be very rewarding. It should be noted that though the species isn't confined to such disturbed sites most recently discoveries are.

Accompanied by Julian Weldrick I carried out my transects at Cors Geirch on the 11th August, an unusually warm and pleasantly sunny day, and failed to find a single Small Bluetail despite an extended search. The flight season there appeared to be over. We did get 80 Keeled Skimmers (*Orthetrum coerulescens*) and 6 Small Red Damsels (*Ceriagrion tenellum*). The solitary female below appears to be ovipositing on submerged *Potamogeton*.



Solitary ovipositing female *Ceriagrion tenellum*, Cors Geirch, 11th August 2009

Virtual dragonfly images

John C. Abbott, Curator of Entomology, Texas Natural Science Center, has posted 6 species in the new Virtual Odonata Image Library (<http://odonatacentral.org/index.php/GalleryAction.movies>) on Odonata Central. These are amazing 3-d virtual objects of the dragonflies that you can rotate, zoom, and pan either within the site or on your desktop. The plan is to add species to this library regularly and even eventually certain type specimens. They are well worth seeing just to see what can be done.

Dragonflies 'are facing extinction'

Joan Collins passed on this extract from the Daily Telegraph for Saturday, 25 Jul 2009. I make no comments.

'One in three dragonfly species in Britain is threatened with extinction, according to the National Trust. The loss of garden ponds, concreting over the countryside and intensive farming has caused three species to die out in the past 40 years and more are under threat. The insects are also extremely sensitive to the weather and will find it difficult to adapt to climate change. The National Trust is so concerned about the issue that it has opened Britain's first dragonfly centre at Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire to create wetland habitats where rare species can be protected. Chris Packham, the naturalist and BBC *Springwatch* presenter, said: "The loss of wetland habitat throughout the UK is having a massive impact on the long-term survival prospects for many dragonfly species".'

CCW free booklet 'Dragonflies and Damselflies in Wales'

A colourful booklet about some of Wales' most delicate insects has been published by the Countryside Council for Wales. To obtain your copy of the booklet phone 08451 306229 or e-mail enquiries@ccw.gov.uk



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