

## North Wales Dragonfly Newsletter No 39. 13 December 2009

Hi all,



The 2009 flying season didn't pass by without some notable recording achievements.

### **Influx of Red-veined Darters (*Sympetrum fonscolombii*)**

The highlight of the season has to be the great influx of Red-veined Darters that was picked up along our coasts in early June at Bardsey (Richard Brown, Richard Else) and Llanfairfechan (Paul Derbyshire) and in early July at Great Orme (Les Colley) and Gronant (Colin Davies). There must have been huge numbers of individuals involved though I'm sorry to say that I missed out myself despite making special trips to the coast. Well done to those who got sightings. There were no reports of second generation emergence in North Wales similar to the abundance of emerging individuals in South Wales. Perhaps the less well developed nymphs up here will get killed off by winter frosts.

### **New discoveries of Small Bluetail (*Ischnura pumilio*)**

The 2009 flight season was also remarkable for the number of new localities for the Small Bluetail or Scarce Blue-tailed Damsel in North Wales. Most came from Anglesey (Les Colley, Rob Strachan, Allan Brandon, James Robertson, Ian Hawkins) but also the first ever records from the Snowdonia NP (A N & Janet E Graham) and Fenn's Moss NNR (Estelle Hughes).

Most of these new localities are shallow, cattle-trodden, spring or seepage-fed waterholes in rough pasture, a habitat that may well have been overlooked in the past. Though the species is on the RUCN Red List (Near Threatened category) it is clearly more common in North Wales than current records indicate. A programme targeting this habitat would no doubt pick up many new sites for the species throughout Snowdonia, Merionethshire, Caernarvonshire, Anglesey and possibly Denbighshire.

### **Blue Featherlegs (*Platycnemis pennipes*) on the River Dee**

Neil Friswell picked up the Blue Featherlegs (White-legged Damsel) on the River Dee at Holt for the third year running. This year these were mainly teneral indicating breeding in the vicinity of the sightings.

### **Record inputting**

Prior to skipping off to South Africa for a month I caught up with the back log of records so all is now virtually up to date in that respect. If there any more records to be sent in please get around to it soon as I need to send them off in the next few weeks to get them on the NBN Gateway. We should have a new set of species distribution maps soon. Note that a copy of the updated 'North Wales Dragonflies' dataset will be sent to Cofnod as usual.

### **Acknowledgements**

I wish to thank the following recorders, listed in no particular order, who have contributed to the 'North Wales Dragonflies' dataset so far this year:

John Bratton, Julian Weldrick, Neil Friswell, Les Colley, Bryan Formstone, Ian Simms, Bryan Dickinson, Emma Broad, Peter Heywood, Andrew & Janet Graham, Richard Brown,

Steve Stansfield, Richard J. Else, Robert Letsche, Rhys Jones, Marc Hughes, Paul Derbyshire, Matt Latham, Ralph Swindlehurst, Ian Hawkins, Debbie Evans, John Harold, Barbara Owsianka, Margaret Thomas, Paul Triggs, Andrew Spottiswood, Neil Smith, Rob Strachan, Colin Davis, Joan Daniels, Geoff Gibbs, James Robertson, R A Owen, Simon Hughes, Bill & Mandi Taylor, Dafydd Roberts, Gloria Brandon, Bob Garret, Chris Lane, Ken Maurice, Sue Loose, Linda M Jones, Alan Burfitt, Janice Jones, Craig Smith, Paul D Shenton, Tom Whitchurch, Peter Bowyer.



Blue Emperor (*Anax imperator*) flying a few days ago,  
near Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa.

**A couple of silly French damsel videos** (one would be more than enough!):

[http://scienceblogs.com/grrlscientist/2009/11/minuscule\\_ladybug\\_bombs\\_dragon.php](http://scienceblogs.com/grrlscientist/2009/11/minuscule_ladybug_bombs_dragon.php)

[http://scienceblogs.com/grrlscientist/2009/11/minuscule\\_dragonflies\\_bully\\_ot.php](http://scienceblogs.com/grrlscientist/2009/11/minuscule_dragonflies_bully_ot.php)



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Happy Yuletide to all,

Allan

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