

North Wales Dragonfly Newsletter No 40. 17 January 2010

Hi all,



I've now got the data back to produce up-to-date species plots for North Wales using Recorder 6. The current data distribution at tetrad scale is given in Figure 1. As usual open circles denote records prior to 2000 and filled-in circles later records.

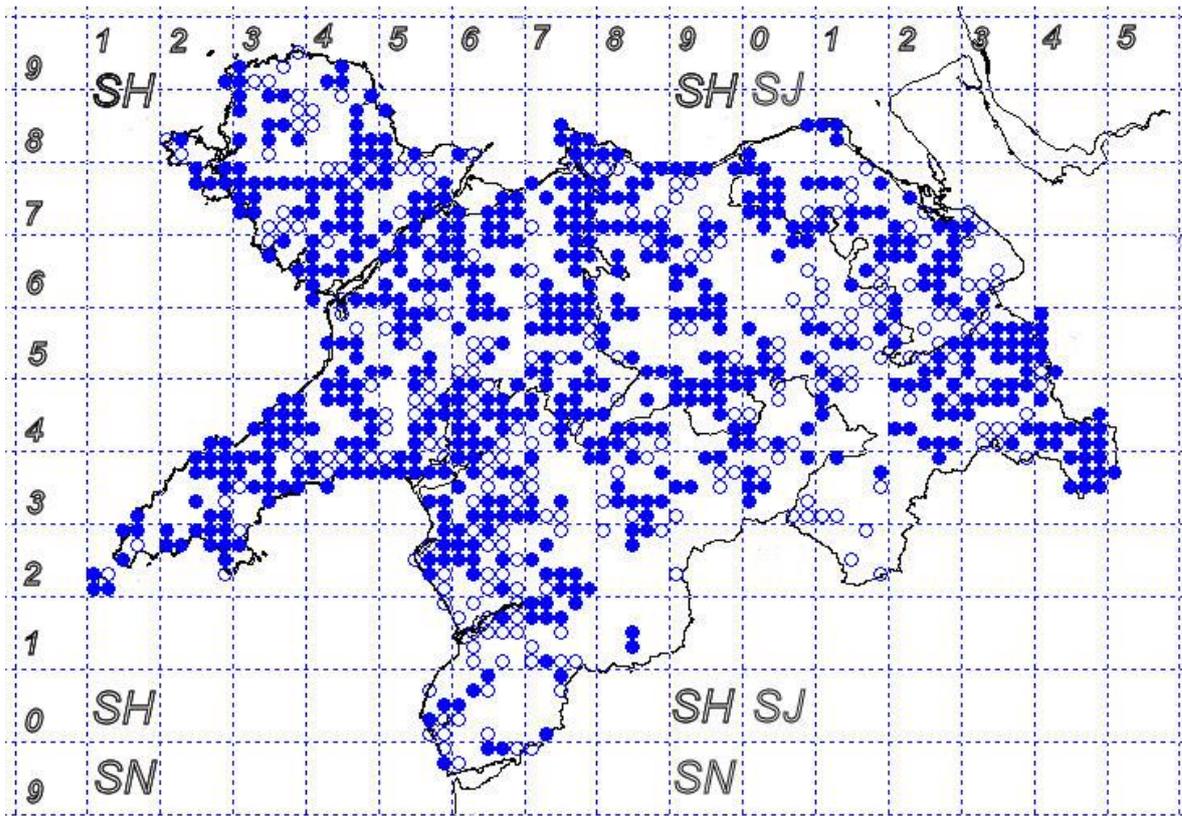


Figure 1. Distribution map of records of all species from all available data sets, January 2010.

Just to indicate that progress is being made the equivalent plot of January 2007 is given below for comparison (Figure 2). I hope you'll notice the increase in coverage in the three years and especially the number of tetrads which are now filled in indicating more recent records. Nevertheless there are still significant areas still waiting to be visited, like south Merionethshire, south and central Denbighshire, north and east Flintshire and north central Anglesey. These should be the focus of future recording but all records from anywhere across North Wales are welcome. Just because a tetrad is shown filled in doesn't mean that all the species present there have been recorded, far from it in fact.

Please remember that we probably have three more flight seasons left before the planned new British dragonfly atlas. For reasons which are obvious in the species

distribution plots below I would greatly welcome more information on breeding to be included with records sent in, i.e. whether you observe copulating adults (including tandem pairs), egg-layers, larvae, emerging adults or exuviae. Please denote how many, in the same way as numbers of adults, by A=1; B=2-5; C=6-20; D=21-100; E=101-500; F>500 if you get a chance.

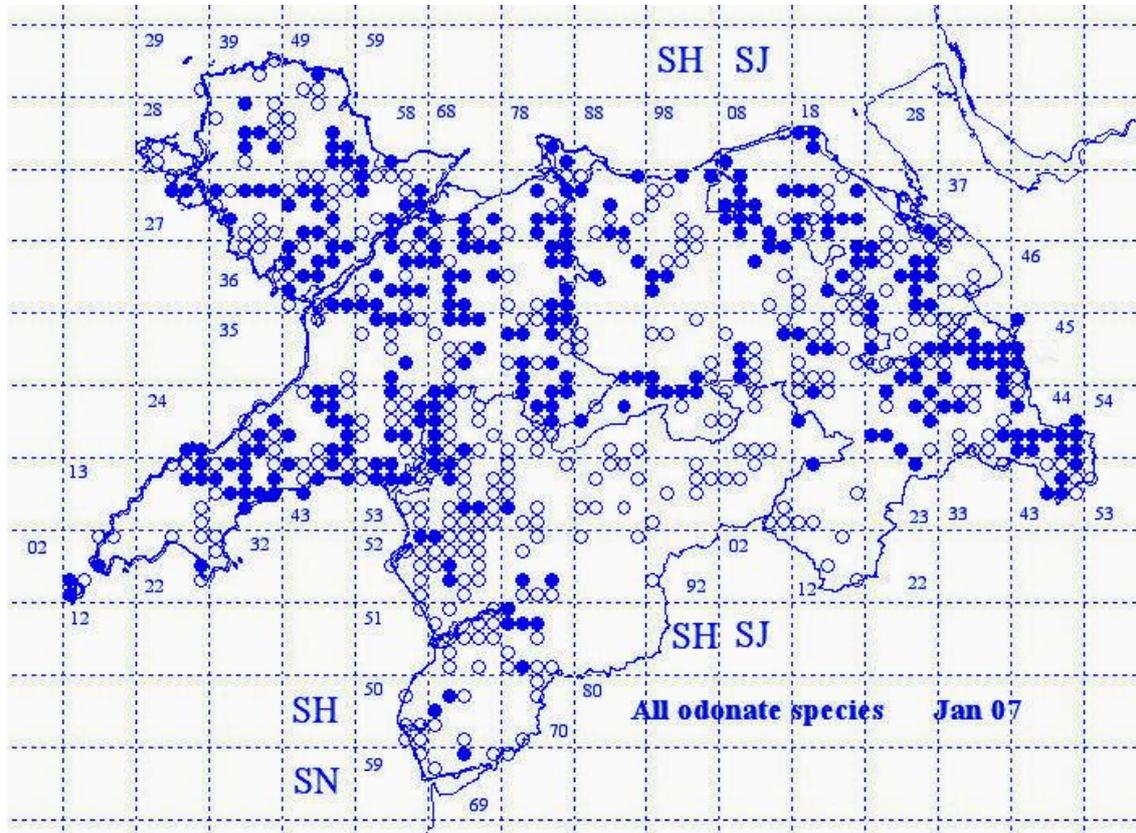


Figure 2. Distribution map of records of all species from all available data sets, January 2007.

Species plots

Below are some new distribution plots for selected species. For these plots blue indicates adults only seen; green denotes breeding activity present in the form of copulation, oviposition or larval stage; red shows the relatively few sites where successful breeding has been observed, i.e. emergent adults or discarded exuviae.

The first four species are those which have moved into North Wales since around 2000. The paucity of open circles shows that they haven't been around for very long and the few that occur relate to records in the late 1990s.

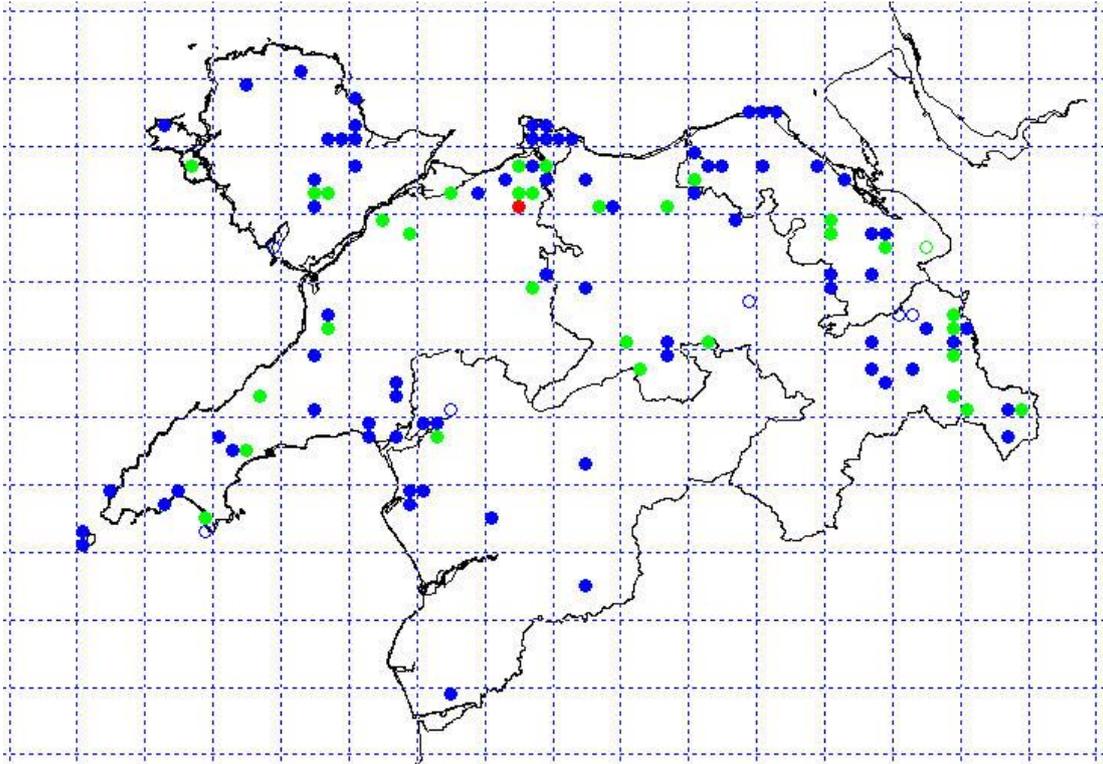


Figure 3. *Anax imperator* (Blue Emperor), January 2010.

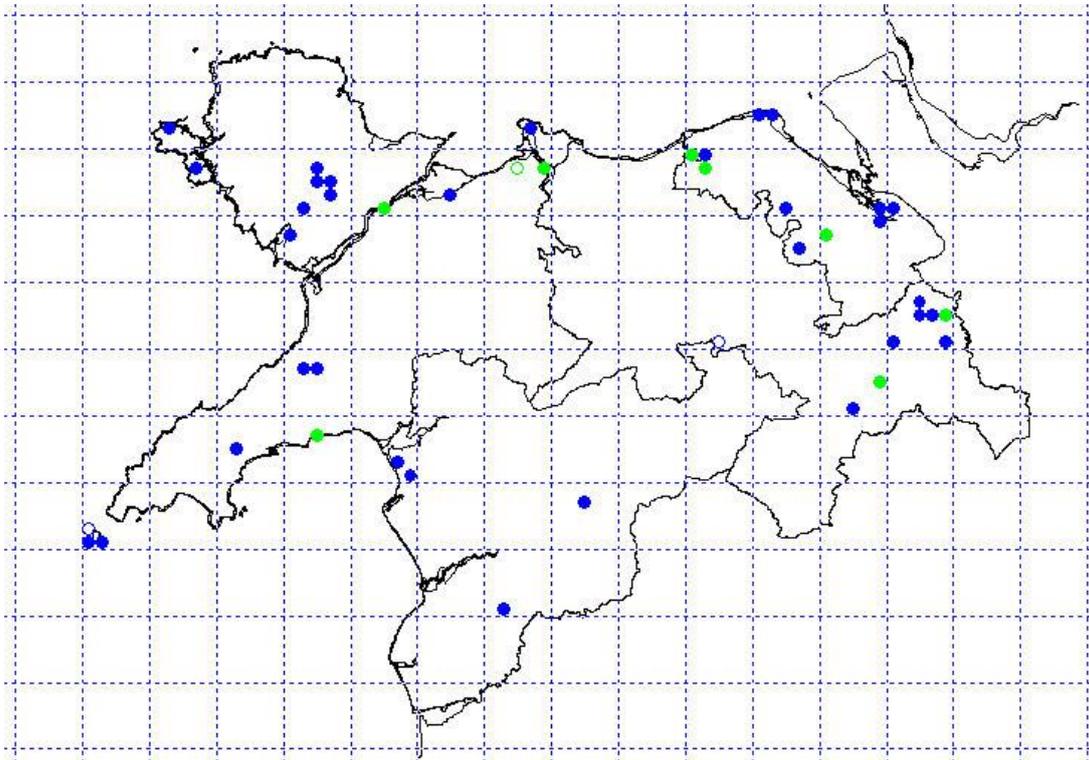


Figure 4. *Aeshna mixta* (Migrant Hawker), January 2010.

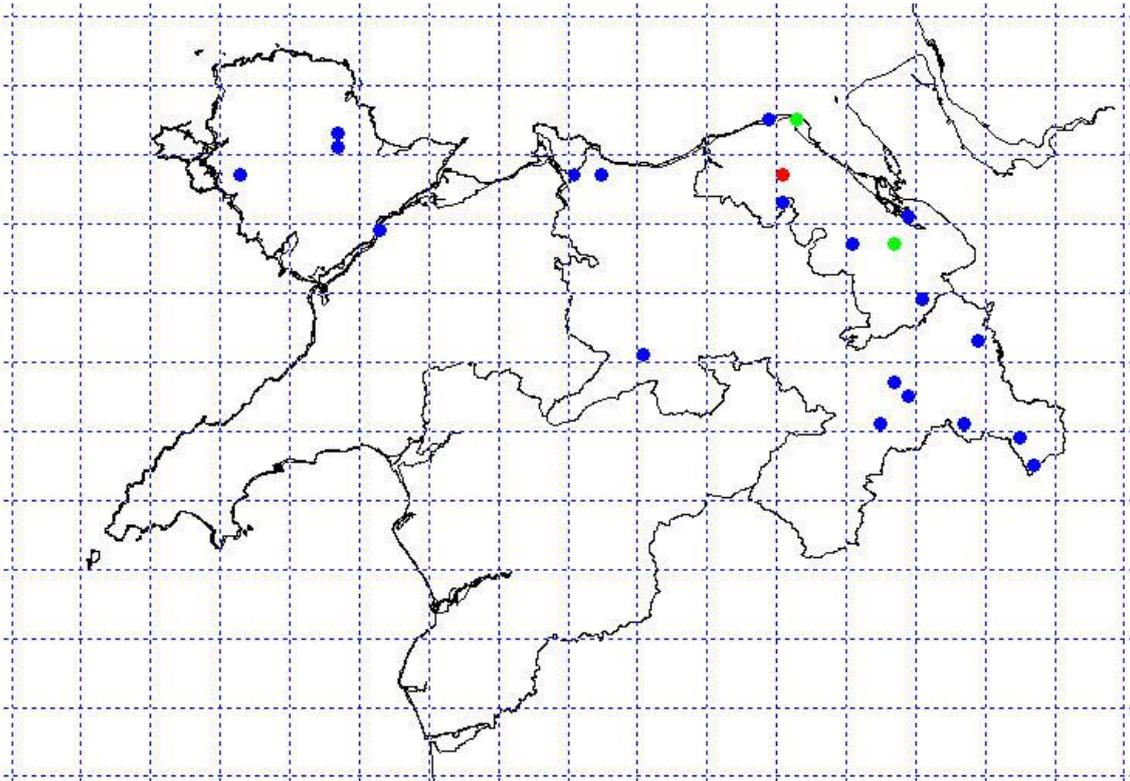


Figure 5. *Orthetrum cancellatum* (Black-tailed Skimmer), January 2010.

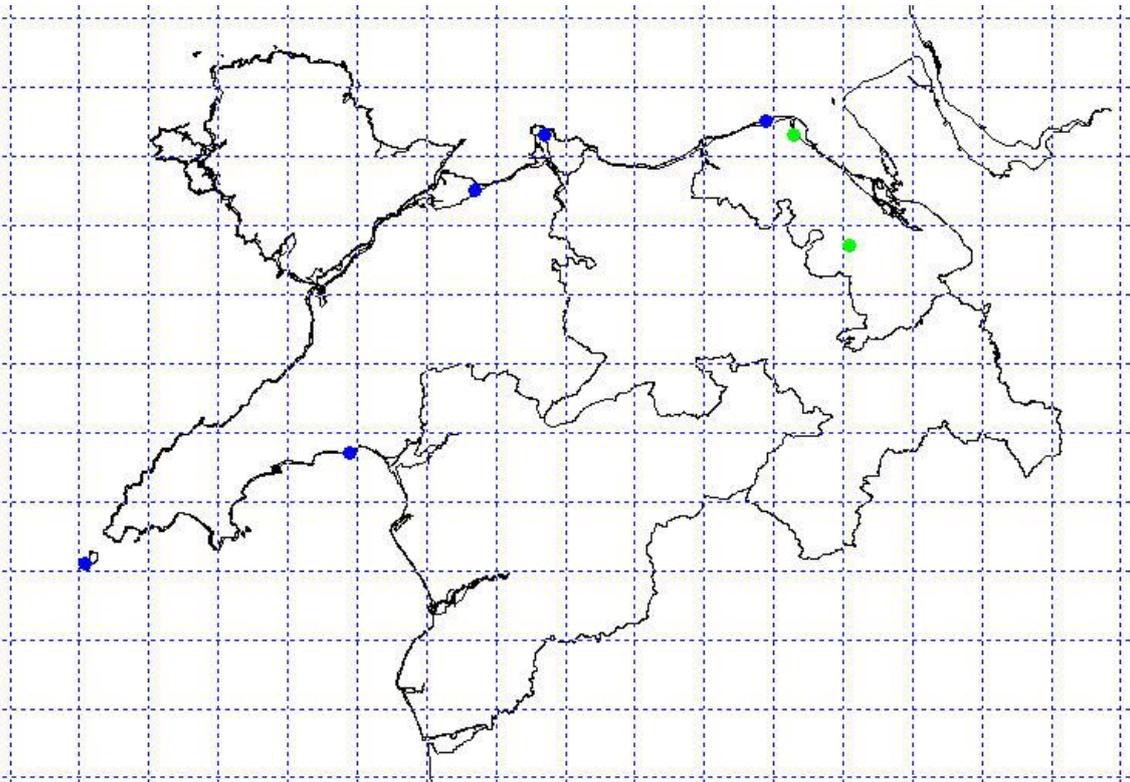


Figure 6. *Sympetrum fonscolombii* (Red-veined Darter), January 2010.

The next species appears to have extended its range significantly into Anglesey and Caernarvonshire in recent years.

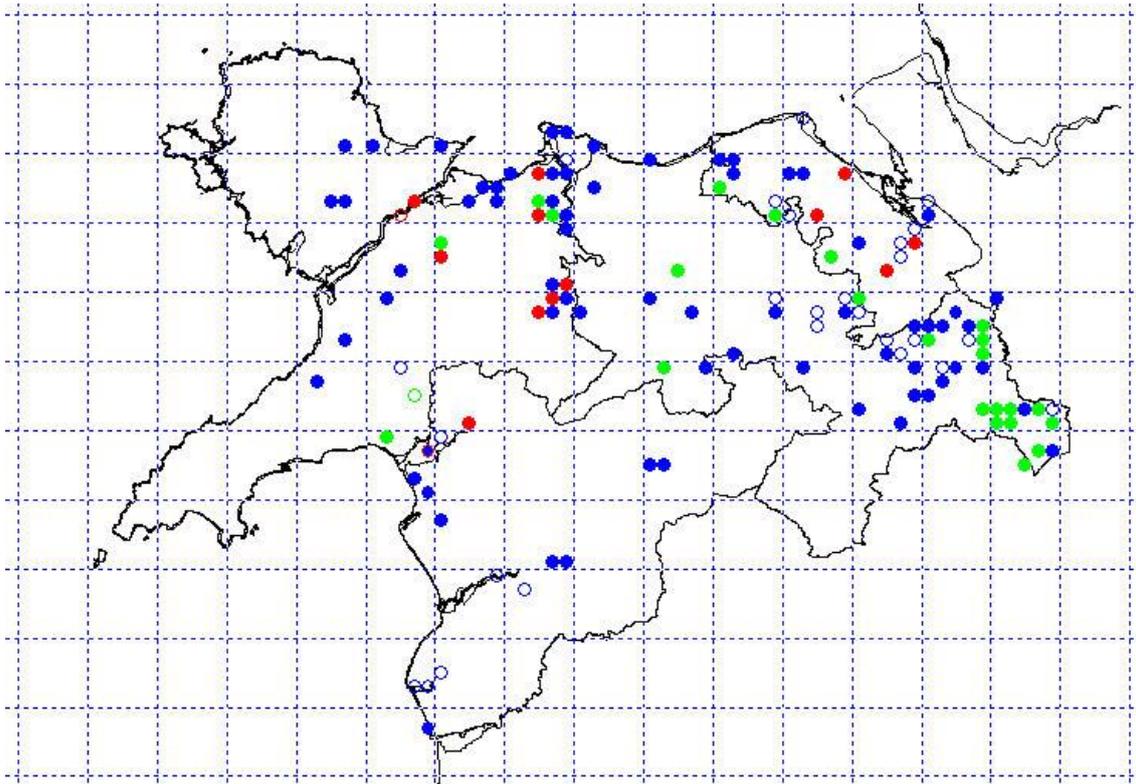


Figure 7. *Aeshna cyanea* (Southern Hawker), January 2010.

The next species has now been recorded as far east as the River Dee (the first Cheshire record was in 2009) and as far west as Bardsey.

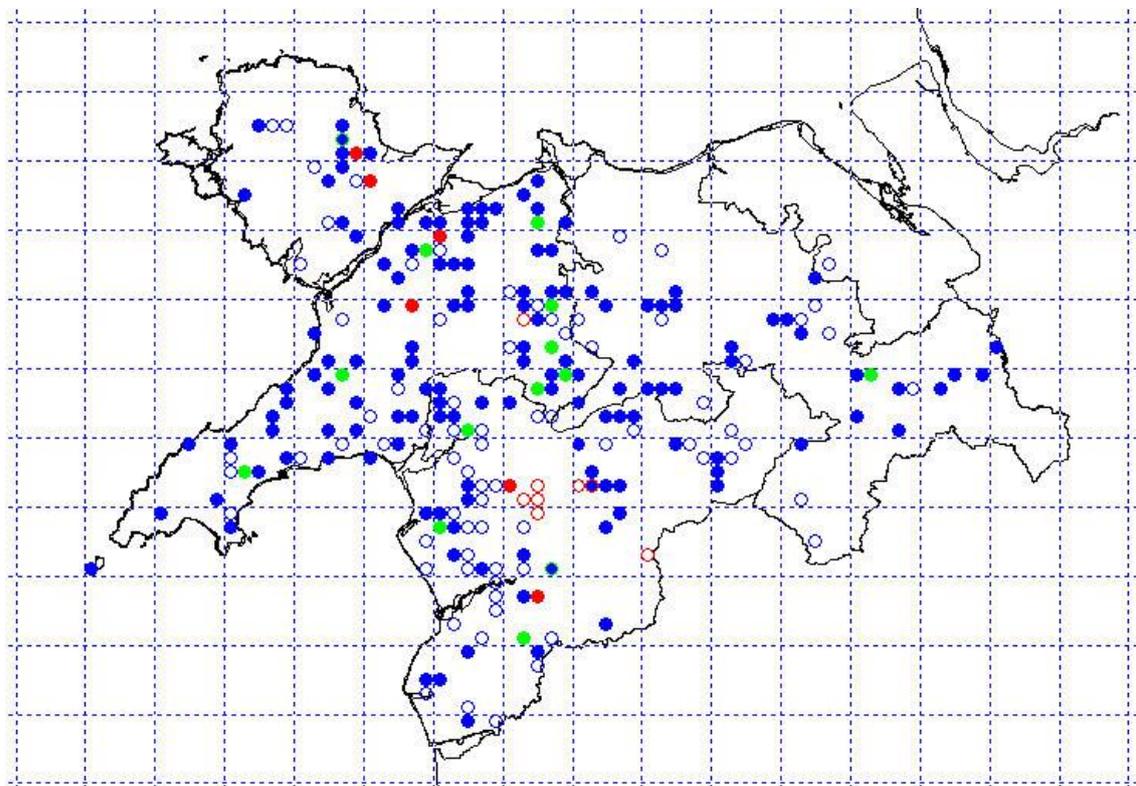


Figure 8. *Cordulegaster boltonii* (Common Goldenring), January 2010.

Finally, this species is being picked up at more and more sites but notice that it has not been relocated since 2000 at several sites in Anglesey and along the Lleyn.

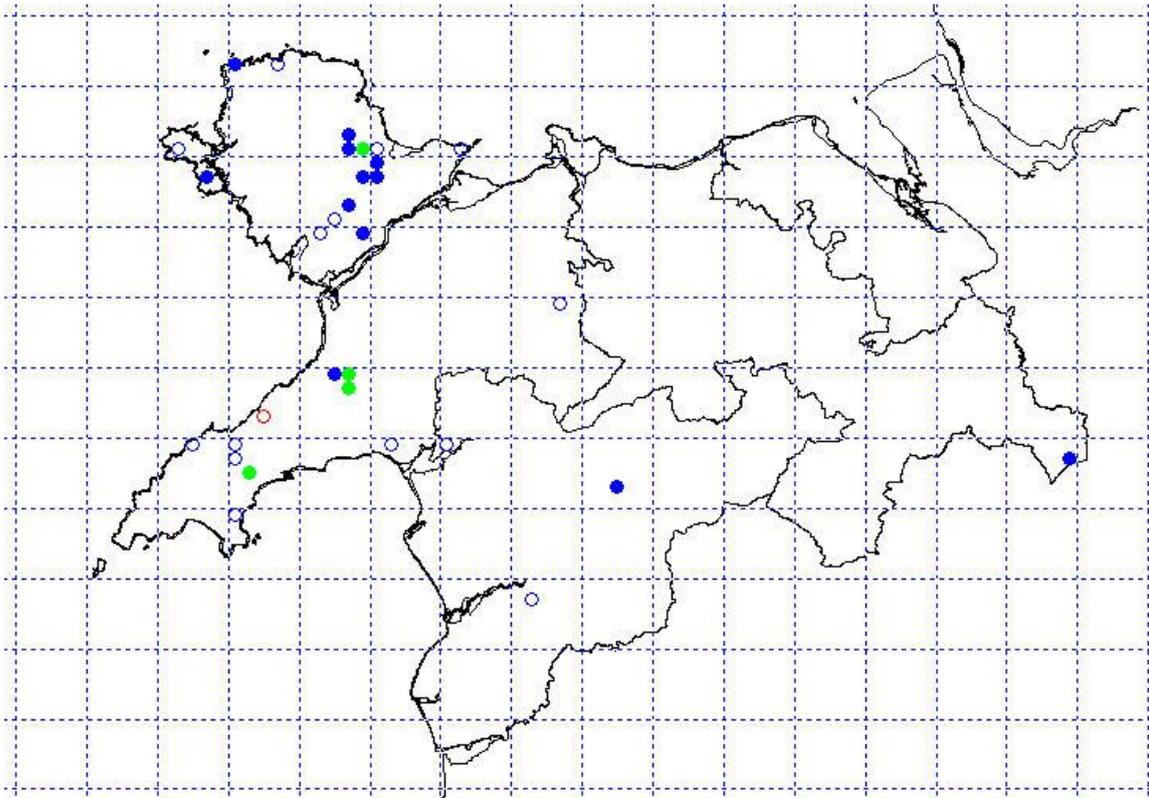


Figure 9. *Ischnura pumilio* (Small Bluetail or Scarce Blue-tailed Damsel), January 2010.

Dragonfly events in 2010

The only event known so far is a joint BDS/NWWT Arfon Branch field meeting on Sunday, 13 June 2010 to Llyn Tecwyn Isaf, Merionethshire and Cors Geirch NNR, Lleyn Peninsular. Leader/ contact: Allan Brandon (01492 651066; Allan@rowenconwy.wanadoo.co.uk). Kate Gibbs (NWWT) (01248 681936; geoffkate.gibbs@care4free.net). The aim is to observe some of the rarer species in North Wales including Down Emerald, Hairy Hawker, Scarce Blue-tailed Damsel and Small Red Damsel, as well as other species including Beautiful Demoiselle, Golden-ringed Dragon and Keeled Skimmer. Rendezvous at 10 am at the roadside car park [SH630372] along the lovely Llyn Tecwyn Isaf, above Cilfor village, south of Penrhyndeudraeth; then on to Cors Geirch NNR, Rhyd-y-clafdy [SH328349], Lleyn; finishing mid-afternoon. Bring a packed lunch and essential wellies; nets & close-focusing bins optional but no dogs. Shared transport from Conwy area on offer.

Did you know

That when dragonflies get too hot they are often seen pointing their abdomens to the sun to lessen the incidence of the sun's rays on their bodies. This is known as sun-pointing or the obelisk position. Three examples are shown:



Sympetrum striolatum Conwy Valley, August 2005



Onychothemis testacea cylanica Kerala, December 2008



Crocothemis sanguinolenta Cape, South Africa, December 2009

The longest migration

Charles Anderson talks about the amazing migration taken by *Pantala flavescens* in following the Monsoons between India and Africa. The migration is accompanied by migrating birds that feed on the dragonflies:

http://www.ted.com/talks/charles_anderson_discovers_dragonflies_that_cross_oceans.html



Pantala flavescens, Kerala, 2005

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