

North Wales Dragonfly Newsletter No. 55. 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011.

Hi all,



### More species flying

I was out at the lake [SH612293] close to Dinas Farm above Harlech on 30<sup>th</sup> June when a synchronised mass emergence of *Lestes sponsa* (Common Spreadwing) was underway. Michael Foley also witnessed abundant *L. sponsa* on the 4<sup>th</sup> July at Llyn Tynmyydd where he also made the first *Sympetrum danae* (Black Darter) record for the year.



Female *Lestes sponsa* at Pen Llyn, Portmadoch, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011. Photo A. Brandon.

Several *Aeshna juncea* (Moorland or Common Hawker) and *Aeshna cyanea* (Blue or Southern Hawker) have emerged from my garden pond this morning.



Newly emerged adult *Aeshna cyanea* and its exuvia at the Y-Ddol Reserve. 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011. Photos Sue Loose.

#### **Small Red Damsel at Cors Bodeilio NNR**

Since writing about new *Ceriagrion* occurrences in the last newsletter and stating that the species was probably extinct in Anglesey, Adrian Fowles notified me that Kate

Slurry, CCW Mold, reported a single male from Cors Bodeilio NNR on the 13th May 2011. Well done Kate.

Also, another new site has turned up at the Dinas Farm lake above Harlech, Merionethshire where I saw five on the 30<sup>th</sup> June. This beautifully unspoiled rock basin lake has sphagnum mats with Marsh St. John's Wort similar to the other new sites.



Dinas Farm lake, south-east of Harlech, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011. Photo A. Brandon.

*Ceriagrion* is an Old World genus of the Family Coenagrionidae (Pond Damsels) and nearly all other members of the genus live in the African and Asian tropics and are brightly coloured, typically in orange, green or yellow. Our unusual red *C. tenellum* is western European in distribution and in North Wales is at the extreme northern limit of its range. It is not surprising therefore that it is found only along the western seaboard of Merionethshire, no doubt benefitting from the effects of the Gulf Stream. Also, unlike its tropical cousins the thorax is dark and quite hairy, both probable adaptations to living in more northern latitudes.



Top: male *C. tenellum*, Llyn Tecwyn Isaf, June 2005. Bottom: male *C. glabrum*, Swaziland, November 2009. Photos A. Brandon



Top: female *C. rubiae*, Kerala, November 2008. Bottom: Male *C. coromandelianum*, Kerala, December 2005. Photos A. Brandon.



Male *C. cerinorubellum*, November 2005, Kerala. Photo A. Brandon



Spotted Flycatcher with damsel, Bodfari. Photo Sue Loose. 2011.

### **Bird predation at garden ponds**



<i>Coenagrion puella</i>	Azure Bluet	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i>	Variable Bluet	X	X	X	X	X	x					
<i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i>	Common Goldenring	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X
<i>Cordulia aenea</i>	Downy Emerald										X	
<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>	Common Bluet	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	Common Bluetail	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Ischnura pumilio</i>	Scarce Bluetail	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
<i>Lestes sponsa</i>	Common Spreadwing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Leucorrhinia dubia</i>	Small Whiteface									X		
<i>Libellula depressa</i>	Broad-bodied Chaser	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	Four-spotted Chaser	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	Black-tailed Skimmer	X		X				X		X		
<i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	Keeled Skimmer	X	X				X	X	X		X	
<i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>	Blue Featherleg									X		
<i>Pyrrosoma nymphula</i>	Large Red Damselfly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Sympetrum danae</i>	Black Darter	X			x	x	X		X	X	x	X
<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	Common Darter	X	X	x	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

X = 2000 record. X = pre-2000 record only. All sites may include adjoining wetland.

**Cors Bodgynydd** includes Llyn Tyn-y-mynydd and Llyn Bodgynydd Bach.

**Valley wetlands** includes Cors Crigyll, Llyn Dinam, Llyn Penrhyn, Llyn Traffwll, Llyn Treflesga and Plas Bog.

**Fenns Moss** includes Bettisfield Moss records but not those of Whixall Moss.

To put these lists into a wider context, there are currently 54 species (21 damselflies and 33 dragonflies) on the British list of which 34 species (13 damselflies and 21 dragonflies) have been recorded from North Wales. These include the migrant *Sympetrum fonscolombii* (Red-veined Darter) whose larvae were found in North Wales in 2001 (by Ian Wallace) and 2007 (by Andy Harmer) although it is not actually known if breeding through to the adult stage was achieved. The other migrants, with no proof of breeding, are *Anax parthenope* (Lesser Emperor), *Anax ephippiger* (Vagrant Emperor), *Sympetrum flaveolum* (Yellow-winged Darter) and *Sympetrum vulgatum* (Vagrant or Moustached Darter). The site in Britain with the largest number of species recorded is Thursley Common near Guilford, a complex of lowland heath, lake and bog, with a tally of 28 species. My own small garden pond, which could be considered a fairly typical, lowland, garden wildlife pond in central North Wales, has a list of 13 species of which 10 have bred; only passing *Cordulegaster boltonii* (Common Goldenring), an occasional *Lestes sponsa* (Common Spreadwing) and a male *Sympetrum danae* (Black Darter) have not done so though the latter, after waiting patiently for several days, did eventually give up after attempting to mate with a female Common Darter!

A few more species may be picked up at some of the larger wetland reserves in the next few years as recording progresses, the most likely being those that have recently expanded their ranges northwards and westwards in response to Climate Change. The

Valley Wetlands, in particular, are under-recorded and there is even no entry for Common Darter after 2000. It will be seen that the Scarce Bluetail, the only species currently on the British red list, is recorded from all the other large reserves.

## **Allan**

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