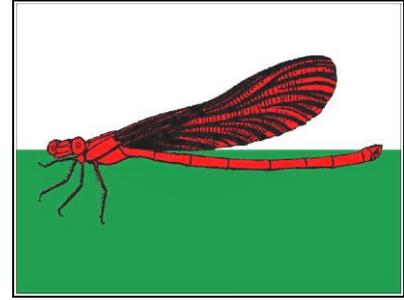


**Y Fursen**

**NORTH WALES  
DRAGONFLY  
NEWSLETTER  
No. 75**



*26<sup>th</sup> February 2014*

**Odonata news and events from across the vice counties of  
Anglesey, Merionethshire, Caernarvonshire, Denbighshire and Flintshire**



**Hi all,**

One would think that the torrential flow rates and overbank flooding brought on by one atmospheric depression after another must have wreaked havoc on the larval populations of those dragonflies that inhabit our streams and rivers, i.e. our two demoiselles, the Blue Featherlegs (White-legged Damselfly) and the Common Goldenring. It will be interesting to see what emerges in due course. Because of the mild winter at least the larvae won't have been affected yet by the wash from a liberal application of rock salt that inevitably follows icy conditions on our roads. It does look like we could be in for an early Spring emergence.

**Bewitched by Dragonflies**

If you missed the fabulous dragonfly programme in the Radio4 Nature series yesterday then there is a chance to hear it again on iplayer:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03w0gwb>

Ruary Mackenzie Dodds has been at the forefront of promoting dragonflies to the British public for a good number of years. He has an easy-to-listen-to style and his enthusiasm and passion for the little critters certainly comes through in this programme. Woven into the programme are also contributions by Robin Wootton on the flight dynamics and Milly Sharkey on how larvae see.

**Bewitched by Dragonflies**

**Series 8** Episode 4 of 7

Duration: 28 minutes

First broadcast: Tuesday 25 February 2014

“In 1985, a dragonfly landed on Ruary Mackenzie Dodds. Up until this time, he had never had much interest in insects, but so astonished and bewitched was he by "this beautiful" insect which had landed on his shirt, that he decided to find out more about dragonflies and in time that led to the founding of The Dragonfly Project to enthuse and educate people about dragonflies. In August 2013, Ruary

'handed over the baton' of the Dragonfly Project to The British Dragonfly Society who will continue this work alongside their own work to conserve dragonflies and their wetland habitats, but Ruary's eagerness to share his enthusiasm for these insects continues "I don't know what it is about dragonflies ... they absolutely electrify me ... I get so excited when I see them in the air". In this programme, Ruary searches for dragonflies and their larvae amongst the reeds and watery places of Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire and offers a fascinating insight into their lives. He's not disappointed there are common and ruddy darters, as well as brown and migrant hawkers darting, dashing and hovering over the reeds, or ovipositing their eggs in the water. Robin Wootton describes their extraordinary versatility; "They really have all the capabilities of a helicopter but they do it much quicker" and Milly Sharkey reveals how these insects can see colour and polarised light, even underwater in the larval stage; an advantage in a murky pond. Dragonflies can be traced back in the fossil record over 300 million years, and yet we still have much to learn about these 'Horse Stingers' and 'Devils Darning Needles' as they were once called, being falsely believed to sting or bite, when instead they are quite harmless. Just 'like a little piece of flying crystal' says Ruary." Radio 4.

## Allan

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