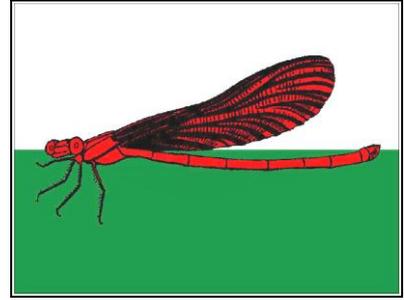


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**North Wales
Dragonfly
Newsletter
No. 82**

2nd Nov 2015



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



Hi all,

Records coming in are definitely down this year compared with previous years. The exceptionally fine weather is providing opportunities to see the last adults flying this season, mostly Common Darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*). A recent sighting on Bardsey, however, shows that there is still a chance to make some exciting discoveries.

Vagrant Emperor (*Anax ephippiger*) seen on Bardsey

Steve Stansfield photographed a lovely male Vagrant Emperor on Bardsey Island on the 1st November. The recent sighting has been reported on the Bardsey tweet (<https://twitter.com/bardseyobs>).



Male *Anax ephippiger* on Bardsey, 1st November 2015. Photo Steve Stansfield.

This is only the second sighting of the species for North Wales, the first also on Bardsey reported by Steve and Marion Holmes at Nant Pond on the 21st April 2011. They didn't manage to get conclusive evidence in the form of a photo but from their descriptions, and

it fitting in with a pattern of mass migration into NW Europe at the time, it was accepted by the Rarities Committee.

This relatively small dark emperor species does now seem to be a pretty regular migrant when conditions are right and, given the recent run of southerly winds, Adrian Parr, the BDS Migrants Officer, was half expecting one or more to turn up in the UK from southern Europe. Adrian reports that at least one individual has also been seen in Belgium in recent days. In the UK it is being seen in the cooler months with more frequency in recent years, when few or no other dragonflies are around, so it is worth looking out for, particularly around the coast. If you are planning a walk during this gorgeous weather we're having it might be best to head for the coast. The bright blue band around the top of the abdomen contrasts sharply with the remaining dark brown abdomen and the thorax. Note also its brown eyes – those of the similar Lesser Emperor (*Anax parthenope*), which breeds in the south of Britain, are green.

Malcolm Watling's melanistic bluet

Malcolm Watling photographed this somewhat melanistic form of the male Common Bluet (*Enallagma cyathigerum*) at Llyn-yr-Adar [SH656479], near Blennau Ffestiniog, at an altitude of 570m OD, on the 15th July 2015. Note the particularly large pair of black spots on the 8th abdominal segment, an extra pair on the 9th, and an extra large black dorsal spot in the centre of the 4th segment. The individual is reminiscent of quite a few individuals that turned up across the UK during the summer of 2012, the most noteworthy photographed by Ian Standen in the Gwydyr Forest (see North Wales Dragonfly Newsletter No. 63; also Dragonfly News No. 62, Autumn 2012, p.24). Such forms are more common in western Ireland and Scotland and a possible cause proposed at the time was that a particularly cold spring in an upland habitat had affected larval growth in some way.



Unusually melanistic male *Enallagma cyathigerum*, Llyn-yr-Adar, 15 July 2015. Photo Malcolm Watling.

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