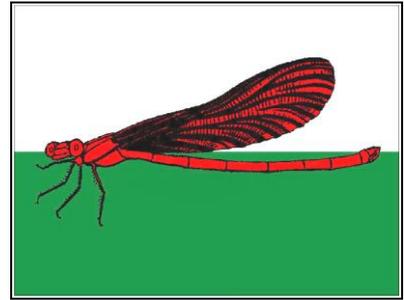


Y Fursen

North Wales
Dragonfly
Newsletter
No. 92

20th July 2017



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



Hi all,

Well, I hope nobody was out recording yesterday afternoon in the rain! It has given me a chance to catch up with a few things and complete this newsletter at least.

Another Scarce Bluetail site near Wrexham discovered

Following on from her amazing discovery of *Ischnura pumilio* at the old Minera limestone quarry last year (*see* newsletters 87 and 88) Sue Loose has located another site for the species some 8km to the south-east. On the 21st June, during a Wrexham NWWT Branch meeting at Bonc Yr Hafod Country Park, Johnstown, she fortuitously found several individuals at a shallow scrape. She reports water of different sizes and depths and will revisit when she has the opportunity.



Male *Ischnura pumilio*, Bonc Yr Hafod, 21st June 2017. Photo Sue Loose.

Altogether she came across 6 adults [SJ30824647 & SJ31044643]. There could be other sites for this species in the general area.

Red-veined Darters visit South Stack's ponds

Rhys Jones sent me photos of *Sympetrum foncolombii* that he and Simon Hugheston - Roberts came across whilst visiting the two bog lakes above South Stac, Holyhead Mountain, on the 25th June. They saw two at the smaller pond [SH20768237] and one at the larger pond [SH20938244]. Also reported were *Lestes sponsa*, *Enallagma cyathigerum*, *Ischnura elegans*, and a couple each of *Anax imperator* and *Libellula quadrimaculata*.



Male *Sympetrum foncolombii* at a South Stack bog pond, 25th June 2017. Photo Rhys Jones

Sending in your records

When submitting records, the minimum information required is your name, your contact details, the name of the site (connected with the name of the water body if possible), a grid reference (6 figure minimum and 8 figure ideal), and the date when the observations occurred. Please remember that it is important to record as many life stages of dragonflies and damselflies that you see at a particular water body. **The most important of these are the exuviae (ex; vacated larval skins) and/or pre-flight emergent adults (em).** These two observations require that the species seen is actually breeding successfully in that water and therefore provides information on water quality. Other life stages are adults (ad), copulation (co; including couples in tandem), oviposition or egg laying (ov), and larvae (la). Numbers seen of each would be ideal. It is also possible to use assessments as: A = 1; B = 2-5; C = 6-20; D = 21-100; E = 101-500; F = >500.

In order that your observations can be made useful to others across the nation I would urge you to make sure they are submitted in one of several ways. Whichever way is

chosen I will eventually verify the records as Vice County Recorder for the five North Wales VCs. There are three main ways to submit your records:

1. Cofnod. By far the most convenient method is to put your sightings, as soon as they are made, into the online Cofnod (North Wales Local Record Centre) recording system. Cofnod's Jennifer Batten has pointed out to me that it is now possible to record each of the life stages mentioned above into separate columns on their system. The image below shows how to enter two life stages at the same time into the Online Recording System (ORS).

The screenshot shows the 'Enter Record' form with the following details:

- Species Name:** Other Invertebrates, Golden-ringed Dragonfly (Cordulegaster boltonii)
- Recorder:** Jennifer Batten
- Date:** 01/06/2017
- Site Name:** Test
- Grid Reference:** SH61
- Abundance:** Count 1 (Exuviae), Count 2 (Pre-flight emer)
- Notes:** Please add information on the water body where you saw the species
- Confidence:** 5 stars

During capture of Download Records one can also tick the option to split abundances into separate columns.

The 'Download Records' dialog box includes the following options:

- Log Download
- Choose a download format:**
 - Excel Spreadsheet Format
 - MapMate Format
- Choose column options:**
 - Add a column containing a 1km (4-figure) Grid Reference
 - Add a column showing the Vice-County the record falls within
 - Move Additional Site Name into a separate column
 - Add a column showing the Unitary Authority area the record falls within
 - Split abundance qualifiers into separate columns, e.g. | Adult Male | Adult Female |

Excel files will be downloaded in Microsoft Excel 2007/2010 format (xlsx). If you have an older version of Excel you should download the [Office Compatibility Pack](#). Please [contact us](#) if you require data in other formats.

And finally, the image below shows what the spreadsheet looks like with separate life stage columns.

C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
English Name	Grid Reference	Grid Reference Type	Site Name	Exuviae	Larvae	Adult	Full-Grown	Adult Female	Male	Adult Male	Record Type	Date
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH61	Selected from Interactive Map	Test	1	2							01/06/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH85667751	Selected from Interactive Map	Upper Colwyn Bay			1						18/08/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH551689	Selected from Interactive Map	Hafod Lane, Bangor			1						06/08/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH69777364	Selected from Interactive Map	Nant-y-Coed, Llanfairfechan			1						08/08/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH4107185065	Selected from Interactive Map	Hen Felin Ddwr				1					22/07/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH414856	Selected from Interactive Map	Path near Ceidio				1					12/07/2
Golden-ringed dragonflies	SJ03575248	Selected from Interactive Map	Bronbannog			1						02/09/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH58622774	Selected from Interactive Map	Hen Bandy			1						30/08/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH59136799	Selected from Interactive Map	Home						1			29/06/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH451491	Selected from Interactive Map	Henbant, Pen y Groes			1						22/06/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH33774367	Selected from Interactive Map	Penryn Glas			1						11/06/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH7662243887	GPS Reading	Migneint			1						14/06/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SJ376568	Selected from Interactive Map	Home garden						1			03/08/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH63266414	Selected from Interactive Map	Afon Berthan, Nant Ffranco, Bethesda			1					Live Sighting	11/07/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH780627	Selected from Interactive Map	Tan yr Allt			1						03/08/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH451491	Selected from Interactive Map	Henbant			1					Netted	17/07/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH646607	GPS Reading	Nant Ffranco						1			25/06/2
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	SH4657001	Selected from Interactive Map	Dere Morri									25/06/2

Following verification by me, all records sent to Cofnod eventually finish up on iRecord (see below).

2. iRecord.

The national Biological Records Centre (BRC) ‘state of the art’ online recording system is iRecord. Details of this can be found on the BDS website:

<https://british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/submitting-your-dragonfly-records>

This is the future for dragonfly recording. There is an app, designed by BRC in conjunction with the BDS, that can be used with a smartphone, tablet, PC and anything with a modern web browser.

3. Local VC Recorder.

You can send your records directly to me by e-mail and eventually they will also finish up, after verification, on iRecord. In order to save me a great deal of work (which I find increasingly difficult to keep up with) I would urge you to send me records on an Excel spreadsheet. Please use separate columns for: Recorder, Determiner, Locality name, Grid Reference, VC, Date, Record Type, Species name, the 6 Life Stages (ad, co, ov, la, ex, em), Full survey (i.e. whether a full survey of all life stages was carried out), and comments.

Whatever system you opt for, please send photos to assist in the verification process. It doesn’t matter how poor quality the images are so long as they show some diagnostic characters. Both the Cofnod and iRecord schemes have facilities to enter images with the records.

Variable Damsel recording

I received this from Genevieve Dalley of the British Dragonfly Society:

‘I am just emailing to make you aware of a new citizen science survey which we have recently launched: The Variable Damsel Survey. I am sending this to my full CDR list so if you don’t have the species in your area, apologies.

We have launched this survey because we are interested in understanding some anomalies in the distribution of this species. There are a number of sites from which the species was historically recorded but which haven’t had records from for 20 years or more. There are

also sites which are adjacent to known populations which don't support the species, for currently unknown reasons. Finally we are interested in the distribution of the species in relation to the Azure damselfly, in particular because some people have observed possible hybrids between the species. We are unsure how much of this relates to variable recording effort at different sites or variability in the damselfly itself.

For this reason we are asking people to particularly record the Variable Damselfly this year, along with information as to whether Azure Damselfly were also present and a photo of the Variable Damselflies they observe, in order to verify the records. We are also planning on using the photos to create a database of images to go towards questions over the species variable physical appearance. We are also using the survey to encourage interest in dragonflies and damselflies as a whole.

A very capable undergraduate student, Alex Berryman, who those at the Spring Meeting would remember as a speaker, is coordinating the survey. He can be contacted at: A.Berryman@uea.ac.uk

As there is a theory that water quality may play a significant part in the species distribution, we have also teamed up with the Freshwater Habitats Trust (FHT) Clean Water for Wildlife Project for this survey. We are asking people to use the FHT water quality testing kits at sites they survey and give us the data, along with whether or not Variable Damselfly were found there. More information on the survey can be found at: <http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/variable-damselfly-survey/>

Common Clubtail emerges from the River Dee at Holt

As part of this year's Clubtail Survey, Steve Palin and Sue Loose had a good afternoon's walking along the Dee at Holt on the 14th May and sent in some fine photos. They found 36 *Gomphus vulgatissimus* exuviae and 26 adults, roughly two thirds being female.



Young female *Gomphus vulgatissimus*, River Dee at Holt, 14th May 2017. Photo Steve Palin.



A few of the *Gomphus vulgatissimus* exuviae found along the Dee at Holt, 14th May 2017. Photo Steve Palin.

They also saw this female *Brachytron pratense* (Hairy Hawker) close to the river as well as both species of demoiselle and a few *Coenagrion puella* and *Pyrrosoma nymphula*.



Female *Brachytron pratense*, River Dee, Holt, 14th May 2017. Photo Steve Palin.

White-faced Darter emerges from Fenns Moss

Stephen Barlow does a regular butterfly and dragonfly transect across Fenns Moss east of Wrexham, that part of the huge bog straddling the border that is entirely on the Welsh side. He sent me photos of the first adult *Leucorrhinia dubia* to emerge this year, on the 3rd May, and notes that emergence seemed early. Altogether he witnessed 7 young adults, both male and female.



Young female *Leucorrhinia dubia*, Transect C, Fenns Moss, 3rd May 2017. Photo Stephen Barlow.



Young male *Leucorrhinia dubia*, Transect C, Fenns Moss, 3rd May 2017. Photo Stephen Barlow.

Malcolm Watling's PondNet survey

This year Malcolm has taken on regular PondNet surveys for Hannah Shaw, of

Freshwater Habitats Trust, at the acid bog lake on the south-eastern slope of Moelwyn Bach [SH668431]. He recorded the first emergence of *Lestes sponsa* there on the 13th July.



Young male *Libellula quadrimaculata*, Moelwyn Bach pond, 27th May 2017. Photo Malcolm Watling.

A first sighting for Glascoed Nature Reserve, St Asaph and the hectad

Simon Hughes saw this female *Cordulegaster boltonii* (Common Goldenring) at the Glascoed NR [SJ012742] on the 17th June. It is also the first record for the Hectad SJ0174.



Female *Cordulegaster boltonii*, Glacoed NR, St Asaph, 17th June 2017. Photo Simon Hughes

A first for Gwern Engen, Sychnant Pass, Conwy

Whilst on holiday from California, Deganwyan Hugh Ranson visited the lovely acid bog lake of Gwern Engen in the Sychnant Pass several times. Eventually, the weather turned warm on July 6th and he observed two *Orthetrum cancellatum* (Black-tailed Skimmer). This is a new location for the species which has spread across North Wales since about 2000. He reports ‘Other odes seen at Gwern Engen: Common Bluetail, Azure Bluet, Large Red Damselfly, Four-spotted Chaser, Common Goldenring, Blue Emperor, and Southern and Moorland hawkers.’

On the 15th July we had the Snowdonia Society dragonfly course at nearby Pensychnant Conservation Centre and in the afternoon I took the group to Gwern Engen and saw a single male *O. cancellatum* when the sun eventually came out. It is uncertain whether the species is actually breeding at Gwern Engen as those seen may be just visiting males. In addition to Hugh’s list we also saw a single *Orthetrum coerulescens* (Keeled Skimmer).

Hugh also visited Bodnant Gardens in the Conwy Valley and was rewarded with ‘literally hundreds of Azure Bluets, some Common Bluets, a Large Red Damsel, a Common Goldenring, a few Southern Hawkets, and a Blue Emperor.’



Male *Orthetrum cancellatum*, Gwern Engen, 6th July 2017. Photo Hugh Ranson.



Male *Cordulegaster boltonii*, Bodnant Gardens, 6th July 2017. Photo Hugh Ranson.

Allan

Dr Allan Brandon
North Wales Dragonfly Recorder
Bryn Heilyn, Rowen, Conwy LL32 8YT.