

North Wales Dragonfly Newsletter No. 45. 3rd July 2010.

Hi all,



Now that the later emerging species are on the wing, with the possible exception of Migrant Hawker, the optimum number of Odonata species are currently flying. The last damsel to emerge is the Common Emerald or Spreadwing (*Lestes sponsa*) and I saw the first teneral at Cors Bodgynydd on the 19th June. My first darter dragonfly, in the form of a teneral Common Darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*), was seen at the Point of Ayr on 17th June. Adult Black Darter (*Sympetrum danae*) are currently emerging in large numbers at some Snowdonian bogs.

Mature Clubtails and White-legged Damsels on the Dee

Neil Friswell made another visit to the Dee at Holt on 9th June and witnessed lots of Common Clubtail (*Gomphus vulgatissimus*) activity. He saw at least 25, mainly males 'quartering' the river and mostly turning green with maturity. There were 2 pairs in-cop. He also found about 20 White-legged Damsels or Blue Featherlegs (*Platycnemis pennipes*) in long grass on the banks.

Colin Davies found about 5 Clubtails in the same stretch of the river on the 13th June including this one sitting conveniently on a leaf (note the angular base to the hindwing which marks it out as a male):



Male Common Clubtail, River Dee at Holt, 13th June 2010. (Photo Colin Davies)



Female Blue Featherlegs with mites, Bavaria, 30th June 2010. (Photo A. Brandon)

Joint NWWT Arfon Branch/British Dragonfly Society field day to Llyn Tecwyn Isaf and Cors Geirch, 13 June.

Despite a fairly sunless and partially rainy day this was a successful trip with 12 people turning up. Unfortunately we failed to find either Downy Emerald (*Cordulia aenea*) or Hairy Dragonfly (*Brachytron pratense*) at the lake but there were a few Small Red Damsels (*Ceriagrion tenellum*) on the wing early. Plenty of common species including Keeled Skimmer (*Orthetrum coerulescens*) were also found. On arrival at Cors Geirch NNR, Llyn Peninsular, after lunch Les Colley quickly caught one of the Scarce Blue-tailed Damsels (*Ischnura pumilio*) and we also found Small Red Damsels flying there too. Les pointed out aspects of the botany including many very large and beautiful bog orchids. As an extra treat, on our way back east we stopped briefly off at one of the coastal lakes near Llanystumdwy and saw quite a few Variable Damsel (*Coenagrion pulchellum*). Cettis Warbler was sounding off as usual.

New Black-tailed Skimmer sites

More sightings of Black-tailed Skimmer (*Orthetrum cancellatum*) from new sites show it to be consolidating its hold on North Wales.

Dave Thorpe was surprised to find quite a few adult Black-tailed Skimmers flying on 16th June at a coastal pond belonging to the Environment Agency at the old Point of Ayr Colliery. Dave informs me that the pond was dug into highly acidic coal spoil 14 years ago but as the site steadily leaches the pond is developing well. Altogether the reclaimed site has 2 large ponds and a brackish lagoon and 20 small ponds put in during the last 15 months for waders/natterjack reintroduction, invertebrates etc. Dingy Skipper and Grayling butterflies use the site and there is a good flora developing including Bee Orchid and Yellow Wort.

I visited the site with Julian Weldrick on 17th June and we found many adult Black-tailed Skimmers happily mating. I also found 3 exuviae after an extensive search confirming successful breeding at the pond, this being only the second site for North Wales after Llyn Helyg. The pond has a fringed of Sea Club-rush and is probably slightly brackish being so near the sea. This is likely to be the very pond where a final instar nymph of Red-veined Darter was discovered in February 2001 (Wallace, I. 2001. *Dragonfly News*, No. 43, p. 34). That species is known to tolerate slightly brackish conditions.

Amazingly, three further sightings from across North Wales were all made on the 20th June and it has crossed my mind that we could have witnessed a mass migration. Simon Hughes found a male Black-tailed Skimmer flying over the pond at the new Rhuddlan Nature Reserve [SJ 020 776]. Bob Dennison found the species at the old peat cuttings at Cors Geirch NNR, Llyn Peninsular and Wil Williams took this photo of a male at Llyn Coron near Aberffraw, Anglesey.



Male Black-tailed Skimmer, Llyn Coron, 20th June 2010. (Photo Wil Williams)

A further new Scarce Bluetail site

On the 26th June Dave Lamacraft came across a few adult Scarce Bluetail (*Ischnura pumilio*) at the most northerly extremity [SH 290 393] of the long Cors Geirch nature reserve at Plasynghaidio near Morfa Nefyn. The species had not been recorded from there before.



Scarce Bluetail male, Plasynghaidio, 26th June 2010. (Photo Dave Lamacraft)



Scarce Bluetails copulating, Cors Bodgynydd, 21st June 2010. (Photo A. Brandon)

Studies in Gold

Several photos have been sent in of the Common Goldenring. Here are some:



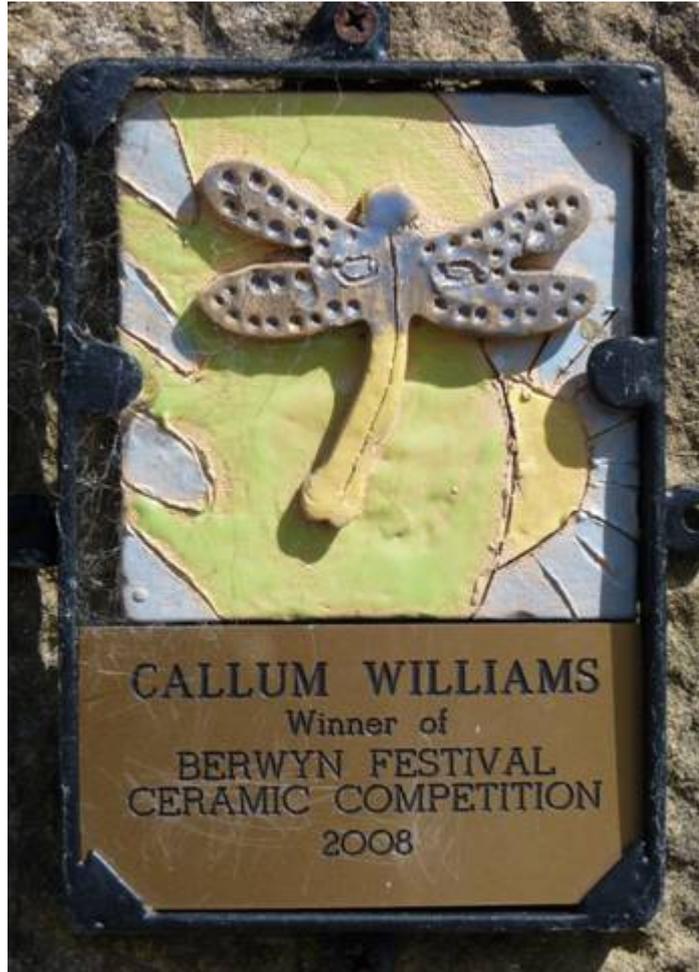
Mature adult male Common Goldenring, Fron, 22nd Jun 2010. (Photo Sue Loose)



Immature female adult Common Goldenring, Caecano Mwr,
below Manod Mawr, 11th June 2010. (Photo Mandi & Bill Taylor)



Female Broad-bodied Chaser (*Libellula depressa*), Aberffraw,
28th May 2010. (photo Wil Williams)



Plaque on bridge over Afon Ceiriog, Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog. (Photo A. Brandon)

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