

Dragonflies and damselflies are similar but can be distinguished by several conspicuous characteristics. Most obvious is that at rest dragonflies hold their wings spread out to the side of their bodies, while most damselflies (Spreadwings and the Aurora Damsel are exceptions) hold their wings together pointing upwards. Also, the front and back wings of a damselfly are the same shape. The front and hind wings of a dragonfly differ somewhat in shape. Dragonflies have giant eyes that take up nearly their entire head surface and, in most species of dragonfly, the eyes touch. In damselflies the eyes are smaller and do not touch. Dragonflies have a robust body structure to support their large, broad wings, while damselflies also have a very slim body structure. In the air, dragonflies are strong, fast fliers while damselflies have a simple fluttering flight.

There are seven families of dragonflies and damselflies found at Schiff, each of which is easily identifiable with some practice. These insects are commonly found around ponds and small streams and can also be found hunting in the Great Meadow. Dragonflies and damselflies are valuable predators that eat mosquitoes and other small insects like flies, bees, ants, and butterflies.



Tiger Spiketail



Aurora Damsel

Work still needs to be done to add to our understanding of dragonfly and damselfly distribution at Schiff. Please send comments or sightings to: info@schiffnaturepreserve.org or call the Nature Center at 973-543-6004. Reports should include sighting date, exact location, observed behavior and photographs, if possible.

The premiere resource for studying these fascinating bugs in our home state: *Field Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies of New Jersey* by Allen E. Barlow, David M. Golden, and Jim Bangma.

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For an online resource and photographic guide to New Jersey dragonflies and damselflies visit www.njodes.com

All photos courtesy of Allen Barlow



Schiff Natural Lands Trust
339 Pleasant Valley Road
Mendham, NJ 07945
973-543-6004
www.schiffnaturepreserve.org

Paper info to come

Dragonflies & Damselflies

Scientific Name: Insecta: Odonata

OF SCHIFF NATURE PRESERVE



Halloween Pennant

The order Odonata contains the dragonflies and damselflies and is one of the most popular insect groups because they are large, colorful and have interesting behaviors when feeding and reproducing. Schiff Nature Preserve is home to at least 49 species of odonates.



Dragonfly Checklist for the Schiff Nature Preserve Area



Key To Status*

C - Common; seen in proper habitat at proper time

U - Uncommon; visitor or occasionally seen

R - Rare; Seen at preserve, but unexpected

Orange Bluet

Common Name

Scientific Name

Status* Flight Period

Broad-Winged Damsels

Calopterygidae

- Ebony Jewelwing**
Calopteryx maculata C May – Sept

Clubtails

Gomphidae

- Ashy Clubtail**
Gomphus (Gomphus) lividus C May – Jul
- Black-shouldered Spinyleg**
Dromogomphus spinosus C Jun – Sept
- Eastern Least Clubtail**
Stylogomphus albistylus C May – Sept
- Southern Pygmy Clubtail**
Lanthus vernalis R May – Jun
- Unicorn Clubtail**
Arigomphus villosipes C May – Aug

Darners

Aeshnidae

- Comet Darner**
Anax longipes U May – Sept
- Common Green Darner**
Anax junius C Mar – Nov
- Fawn Darner**
Boyeria vinosa C May – Nov
- Shadow Darner**
Aeshna umbrosa C Jun – Nov
- Swamp Darner**
Epiaeschna heros U May – Sept

Emeralds

Corduliidae

- Clamp-Tipped Emerald**
Somatochlora tenebrosa C Jun – Sept
- Common Baskettail**
Epitheca (Tetragoneuria) cynosura C May – Jul
- Mocha Emerald**
Somatochlora linearis U Jun – Sept
- Prince Baskettail**
Epitheca (Epicordulia) princeps C May – Sept

Pond Damsels

Coenagrionidae

- Aurora Damsel**
Chromagrion conditum U May – July
- Azure Bluet**
Enallagma aspersum C June – Sept
- Blue-Fronted Dancer**
Argia apicalis C June – Aug
- Double-Striped Bluet**
Enallagma basidens R May – Sep
- Eastern Forktail**
Ischnura verticalis C Apr – Oct
- Familiar Bluet**
Enallagma civile C Mar – Oct
- Fragile Forktail**
Ischnura posita C Apr – Oct
- Orange Bluet**
Enallagma signatum C May – Oct
- Powdered Dancer**
Argia moesta C Jun – Sept
- Skimming Bluet**
Enallagma geminatum C May – Oct
- Turquoise Bluet**
Enallagma divagans C May – Aug
- Violet Dancer**
Argia fumipennis violacea U May – Sept

Skimmers

Libellulidae

- Autumn Meadowhawk**
Sympetrum vicinum C Jun – Dec
- Band-Winged Meadowhawk**
Sympetrum semicinctum C Jul – Sept

- Black Saddlebags**
Tramea lacerata C Apr – Nov
- Blue Dasher**
Pachydiplax longipennis C May – Oct
- Calico Pennant**
Celithemis elisa C May – Oct
- Carolina Saddlebags**
Tramea carolina U May–Sept
- Common Whitetail**
Plathemis lydia C Apr – Nov
- Eastern Amberwing**
Perithemis tenera C Jun – Sept
- “Eastern” Cherry-Faced Meadowhawk**
Sympetrum internum C Jun – Oct
- Eastern Pondhawk**
Erythemis simplicicollis C May – Oct
- Halloween Pennant**
Celithemis eponina C Jun – Sept
- Painted Skimmer**
Libellula semifasciata C May – Oct
- Slaty Skimmer**
Libellula incesta C May – Oct
- Spangled Skimmer**
Libellula cyanea C Apr – Sept
- Twelve-Spotted Skimmer**
Libellula pulchella C May – Oct
- Wandering Glider**
Pantala flavescens C Jun – Nov
- Widow Skimmer**
Libellula luctuosa C May – Oct

Spiketails

Cordulegastridae

- Delta-Spotted Spiketail**
Cordulegaster diastatops R May – Jun
- Tiger Spiketail**
Cordulegaster erronea R Jun – Sept

Spreadwings

Lestidae

- Slender Spreadwing**
Lestes rectangularis C June – Sept
- Swamp Spreadwing**
Lestes vigilax C June – Sept