

The Dragonhunter

Spring 2008

Newsletter of the New Hampshire Dragonfly Survey

(The NHDS is a partnership of N.H. Audubon, N.H. Fish and Game, and UNH Cooperative Extension)

Coordinator: Pam Hunt (603) 224-9909 ext 328 or phunt@nhaudubon.org



Coordinator's Greeting,

Well—we made it. After a winter of record snowfalls and a spring that seemed decidedly late in arriving, the dragons and damselfly are finally gracing New Hampshire's airspace, and even seem to have caught up after a slow start. Reports from the field suggest that at least 40 species have been seen by the first week of June, so there are no excuses for keeping your feet dry any longer!

In this issue of *The Dragonhunter* we report on some of the cool early season finds for 2008, plus a late report of some significance from 2007. The remainder of the issue is devoted to a list of field trips through late July. Any participant in the NHDS is more than welcome to attend any of these trips.

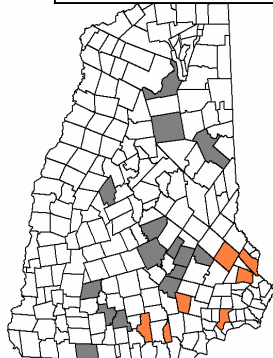
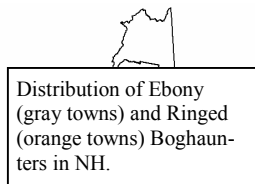
Pam

Boghaunter Update

In the last *Dragonhunter* I sent out an appeal for folks to look for either of our two boghaunters in May. As a result, we found three new locations for the more common Ebony Boghaunter, bringing the number of sites for this species up to 15 (see map). The endangered Ringed Boghaunter was not found in any new locations, but good populations persist at the three primary breeding sites in the southeastern part of the state.



Ebony Boghaunter at Putnam Pond, Lyndeborough on May 25. Photo by W. Saenger



Other Spring News

Among the other exciting finds this spring was an impressive hatch of both Spine-crowned Clubtails (*Gomphus abbreviatus*) and Pygmy Snaketails (*Ophiogomphus howei*) along the Contoocook River on June 1. Martha Reinhardt, Nancy Rideout, and I found over 250 exuviae of the former and 26 exuviae of the latter in only a half mile of river in Penacook. The Pygmy Snaketail is known only from the Merrimack and Contoocook Rivers in NH, and appears relatively common. Finding it can be tricky however, since it emerges early and spends relatively little time near the water. Nonetheless, keep an eye out for this tiny clubtail (or its exuviae!) along rivers like the Saco, Ossipee, and Con-



upper necticut.

General Pygmy Snaketail in Penacook on June 1. Photo by Pam Hunt

The Spine-crowned Clubtail appears relatively common in tributaries to the Merrimack, with scattered sites elsewhere in southern NH. This is in stark contrast to Massachusetts, where it is listed as Endangered, with only a handful of records.

Elsewhere, people have reported hatches of Springtime Darners, New England Bluets, and all three species of Spiketails.

BREAKING NEWS!
Species #161 Documented for NH!!

One of the fun things about dragonfly hunting is that you never know what you'll find next, and there are still plenty of opportunities for people to contribute significantly to our knowledge. Regular readers of *The Dragonhunter* already know this (e.g., middle school girls on the Merrimack last year!), but sometimes those significant finds come out of left field.

Such was the case in early June, when a posting to the NH.Birds email list included a link to the poster's dragonfly images on the web. I decided to check it out (as did fellow odophile Steve Mirick) and we were both amazed to find a beautiful photo of a Comet Darner (*Anax longipes*), a species never reported conclusively for New Hampshire. Congratulations thus go out to Dennis Skillman, who found the bug in Brentwood on August 16, 2007. Dennis is now ready to tackle odonates in an official capacity through the NHDS.

Thanks Dennis!

Dragonfly Field Trips in 2008

In an effort to provide volunteers with additional field experiences, I've initiated a series of extra field trip opportunities. More are likely to follow, so watch your email!

All trips are subject to cancellation or postponement under unsuitable weather conditions. Examples of such weather include low temperatures (e.g., less than 60), excessive wind, complete or mostly overcast, and of course rain. Under each trip's description there is a note about the options if weather on the official date is unsuitable. Decisions about weather delays will be made by 4 p.m. of the day preceding the trip. In all cases, wear footwear you don't mind getting wet and bring an insect net and hand lens if you have them. Unless otherwise stated, contact Pam Hunt for details.

Lovejoy Marsh, Albany

Friday, June 13 OR Saturday, June 14, time to be determined. I will be conducting a couple of regular inventories at this Audubon sanctuary, and the exact timing of this visit will depend on both daytime and evening weather. If you're interested, let me know ahead of time and I can try to keep you in the loop.

Tin Mountain BioBlitz, Albany

Saturday, June 21, noon to 3 pm
The Tin Mountain Conservation Center is conducting a 24-hour survey of its 140 acres in an attempt to find as many species as possible. Among those are of course odonates, and we will focus on the property's wetlands and small stream to help out in the larger effort. Trip will NOT occur under unsuitable conditions. More details about Tin Mountain and their BioBlitz can be found at <http://www.tinmtn.org/indextinmtn.cfm> or by calling 447-6991.

Loverens Mill Cedar Swamp, Antrim

Sunday, June 29, 9:30 to 11:30
This Nature Conservancy preserve is famous for its cedar swamps, which may be home to relatively rare dragonflies. Join

Tom Young for a brief overview of dragonfly biology, followed by exploration of the preserve's varied habitats. This event is free and open to the public. Please RSVP Gail Coffey @ 603-224-5853 x21 or gcoffey@tnc.org by June 26th.. Directions and additional information are available at:

<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/newhampshire/events/events5025.html>

Dragonfly Search in Warner/Bradford

Saturday, July 5, 10 am

Although Concord has one of the highest species lists in the state for dragonflies and damselflies, areas of the county to the west are very poorly known. This trip will attempt to fill some of the holes, and do it during the peak dragonfly season when the most species are flying. We will visit areas along the Warner River and end up in the vicinity of Lake Massasecum. Trip will last 4-5 hours, so bring a lunch or snacks. If weather is not suitable on the 5th, the trip will be postponed to Sunday, July 6. Meet at the McLane Audubon Center in Concord.

Dragonfly Search in Keene

Saturday, July 12, 10 am

The dragonfly fauna of southwestern NH is not as well known as many other parts of the state. This trip will attempt to fill one of the known holes by exploring a variety of habitats within the city of Keene. How many species do you think we'll find?!? Trip will last 4-5 hours, so bring a lunch or snacks. If weather is not suitable on the 12th, the trip will be postponed to Sunday, July 13. Meet in carpark of Keene Cinema, 121 Key Road.

Bear Brook State Park, Allentown

Sunday, July 13, 10 am

Bear Brook is home to a wide diversity of wetlands and thus is well-known as a good place to find odes! Join Martha Reinhardt for this mid-day exploration to see what we can find! Meet in hotel parking lot at intersection of Deerfield Road and Route 28 in Allentown. For more details contact Martha at 798-3318.

Quincy Bog, Rumney

Saturday, July 19, 9 am to 1 pm

This trip is part of the Quincy Bog summer program series, and will be led by Bill Taffe. It will start with an hour indoor presentation and then spend three hours in the field. Workshop is free but limited to 6-8 participants. If interested please register by calling Bill Taffe at 786-2553.

Ponemah Bog, Amherst

Saturday, July 19 AND Saturday, July 26, 10 am

This NH Audubon sanctuary is home to over 60 species of dragonflies and damselflies, and is perhaps the best studied site in the state for odes. The July 19 trip will be led by Pam Hunt, with Tom Young leading on the 26th. These trips are part of a summer-long series put on by the "Friends of Ponemah Bog." Trips will last about 2 hours and there are no rain dates. To reach Ponemah Bog, take Route 101A to Route 122, and turn immediately right on to Stearns Road. Ponemah Bog is off Rhodora Drive, about a mile west on Stearns Road.

I will also be visiting Audubon's Fosket Sanctuary in Rindge about once a month. Watch your email for details, and let me know if you're interested in joining me.