

Dragonflies and Damselflies at Labanoras

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An ongoing project, the aim is to photograph and identify all the species of Odonata that occur on my Labanoras land. Four broad areas across the land are particularly attractive to both dragonflies and damselflies - the pools excavated in 2004; a small marshy area in a hollow near the woodland; the woodland fringe itself; and the flood forest interiors, a mosaic of shallow waters and deeper areas of standing water.

Over 60 species of Odonata have been recorded in Lithuania and there is every reason to suppose a significant number of these might occur on my land ...the only challenge being to identify them, I freely admit to being a novice in this field and all notes presented on status are preliminary, based on the 2007 season and limited observations from previous years. So far, the results of my first serious season engaged in this interest, 31 species have been noted.

At present this section will be presented as a systematic list of species within the confines of the land, with added notes relating to relative abundance, etc.

ZYGOPTERA - DAMSELFLIES

Calopterygidae - Demoiselles

Calopteryx virgo - Beautiful Demoiselle

Occurring in waterside clearings in the flooded forest areas and in adjacent meadows in late May and June, this species appears to be fairly scarce, with just ones and twos recorded per day.

Lestidae - Emerald damselflies

Lestes virens - Small Emerald Damselfly

Recorded and photographed in previous seasons, this damselfly appears scarce.

Lestes sponsa - Emerald Damselfly

Appearing from mid-June, this species appears relatively common in the grasslands alongside the forest and in the marshy areas.

Sympecma annulata - Siberian Winter Damselfly

Scarce (or overlooked), only records relate to photographed individuals from previous seasons. Status needs to be updated.

Coenagrionidae - Blue/black damselflies

Erythromma najas - Red-eyed Damselfly

To date, this damselfly has occurred only on the excavated pools. Through late May to early June, the maximum number seen on any one occasion has been four, though they are easy to find, due to their obvious fondness to rest upon floating vegetation, rather than bankside grasses and sedges.

Coenagrion hastulatum - Northern Damselfly

Appears fairly common, occurring in good numbers around the pools and, moreover, along the forest edges. Appeared slightly earlier than the other blue damselflies and was already abundant by late May. Numbers tapered off a little over the following weeks, but did occur alongside Azure Damselfly.

Coenagrion lunulatum - Irish Damselfly

Small numbers present around the pools from the middle of June.

Coenagrion puella - Azure Damselfly

Increasing in numbers from early June, this became the most abundant damselfly species from the middle of the month. Occurred in all areas, including around the pools and both along the forest edge and within the flood forest.

Coenagrion pulchellum - Variable Damselfly

One record only so far - two individuals seen at the woodland edge at the beginning of June.

Enallagma cyathigerum - Common Blue Damselfly

Appearing only from the middle of June, this species rapidly became fairly common in the damp marshy areas.

Ischnura elegans - Blue-tailed Damselfly

Fairly common in June, particularly in the flood forest and adjacent damp areas. Females occurring in *rufescens* and *infuscans* forms.

ANISOPTERA - DRAGONFLIES

Aeshnidae - Hawker Dragonflies

Aeshna cyanea - Southern Hawker

As in previous years, records exist from late in the summer onwards, mostly July to August. Common over the pools and

along the forest edge.

Aeshna grandis - Brown Hawker

A late summer species, this dragonfly is recorded in good numbers . First records in 2007 occurred in early July and the species soon became abundant.

Aeshna isosceles - Norfolk Hawker

Rare and localised in Lithuania, this species appeared in small numbers over the pools and marshy areas in early to mid-June, a minimum of ten individuals were present.

Anax imperator - Emperor Dragonfly

This rather dramatic species, listed in the Lithuanian Red Data Book, seems to favour the small marshy areas and drier

parts of my land, with most individuals seen occurring in the small meadows between the regenerating scrub. Recorded in early to mid-June, with minimum of ten inhabiting one small area.

Anax parthenope - Lesser Emperor

An unexpected addition to the land, this Red Data Book species occurred over the pools at the beginning of June and appeared to be fairly common, with at least eight hawking the two pools at any one occasion. By mid-June, the species had become more common on the land, favouring the pools, forest edge and marshy area.

Brachytron pratense - Hairy Dragonfly

A single individual photographed in a previous year, no records as yet in 2007.

Gomphidae - Club-tailed Dragonflies

Gomphus vulgatissimus - Club-tailed Dragonfly

Appeared fairly common in early June, with reasonable numbers being seen both around the pools and in the marshy areas. Declined in numbers by mid-month.

Onychogomphus forcipatus - Green-eyed Hooktail

Single recorded in early July is the first record on the land.

Libellulidae - Chasers, Skimmers and Darters

Libellula quadrimaculata - Four-spotted Chaser

Fairly common in early June and again at the month's end, preferring the marshy area or the excavated pools.

Libellula fulva - Scarce Chaser

Fairly common, occurring from the end of May until mid-June, smaller numbers again in early July. Most individuals favour the marshy area and borders of the pools.

Libellula depressa - Broad-bodied Chaser

Most abundant at the beginning of June, when good numbers could be found in the marshy area and around the pool, then more appeared from the middle of the month. A second emergence occurred at the very end of the month.

Orthetrum cancellatum - Black-lined Skimmer

Common from late May through to June, this was one of the most abundant dragonflies at times, particularly in the first weeks of June. Smaller numbers also present from early July through to August.

Sympetrum flaveolum - Yellow-winged Darter

Appearing only from mid-June, numbers began to increase in the latter days of the month. In previous years were fairly numerous later in the summer.

Sympetrum striolatum - Common Darter

Occuring in smaller numbers than Ruddy Darter and appearing later in the season, Common Darters were present in the marshy area adjacent to the forest from the beginning of August onwards.

Sympetrum sanguineum - Ruddy Darter

Recorded in good numbers in previous seasons, this dragonfly began to appear in 2007 from the first days of July.

Sympetrum danae - Black Darter

Another species that becomes common later in the summer. First individuals appeared in the very last days of June and, by August, had become common.

Sympetrum pedemontanum - Banded Darter

A very rare and localised species in Lithuania, three individuals were noted and photographed in a previous year.

Leucorrhinia albifrons - Eastern White-faced Darter

Small numbers present around the pools in the last week of May and beginning of June, tailed off by mid-month.

Leucorrhinia rubicunda - Northern White-faced Darter

Common in the first couple of weeks of June, occurring in all open areas, though most common around the pools and in the marshy area.