

DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES

Note: Scale bars = 10 mm in all photographs.



1 Broad-bodied chaser dragonfly
Libellula depressa
(male shown, female overleaf)



3 Downy emerald dragonfly
Cordulia aenea



2 Club-tailed dragonfly
Gomphus vulgatissimus



4 Hairy dragonfly
Brachytron pratense



5 Azure damselfly
Coenagrion puella



6 Banded demoiselle
Calopteryx splendens



7 Blue-tailed damselfly
Ischnura elegans

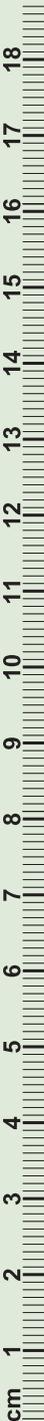


8 Large red damselfly
Pyrrhosoma nymphula

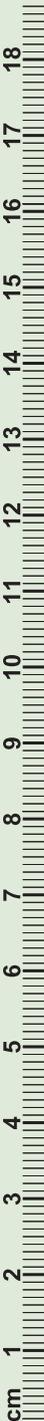


9 Red-eyed damselfly
Erythromma najas

Figures 1, 5–8 and overleaf, courtesy of Mike Dodd; Figure 2 © Dave Hollis; Figures 3 and 4 © David Smallshire; Figure 9 © Dr I. Johnson.



DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES



A	Large insect at least 40 mm long by 4 mm wide, with wings normally held open at rest	Bb (dragonflies)
a	Small insect 25–45 mm long by 2 mm wide, with wings normally held closed at rest	Ee (damselflies)
Dragonflies		
B	Abdomen extensively patterned with black and blue or black and yellow spots	Hairy dragonfly
b	Abdomen mainly unspotted although it may have a yellow or green stripe or a few spots on the side	Cc
C	Clearly a wide body, light blue or brown	Broad-bodied chaser dragonfly
c	Yellow-green and black or metallic green	Dd
D	Body yellow and black or pale green, yellow and black	Club-tailed dragonfly
d	Body dark metallic green with noticeable apple green eyes	Downy emerald dragonfly
Damselflies		
E	Blood red and black	Large red damselfly
e	Not red and black	Ff
F	Metallic green or metallic blue, wings may be tinted, very large damselfly	Banded demoiselle
f	Colours not metallic, wings mainly clear	Gg
G	Eyes red or red-brown, most of body black	Red-eyed damselfly
g	Eyes blue or green	Hh
H	Viewed from above, body black with obvious blue band on 'tail' (segment 8 of abdomen)	Blue-tailed damselfly
h	Body mainly azure blue (male); or black with some green but no blue band on 'tail' (female)	Azure damselfly



Female broad-bodied chaser dragonfly *Libellula depressa*



Pair of blue-tailed damselflies *Ischnura elegans*

DRAGONFLIES

1

Broad-bodied chaser dragonfly *Libellula depressa*

Tends to stay perched on a twig, then suddenly darts out to catch prey or chase off other dragonflies. There is an interesting colour difference in this species, with the male being powder blue and the female light brown (see photo below). Common in the south of England and Wales.

2

Club-tailed dragonfly *Gomphus vulgatissimus*

In the British Isles, normally only found at a few places near the rivers Severn, Thames and Arun. It is a yellow-green and black medium-sized dragonfly. It sometimes holds its wings closed. If you do come across it there may be several individuals confined to one small area. Rare.

3

Downy emerald dragonfly *Cordulia aenea*

Medium-sized dragonfly, metallic green, may have fine hairs on body. It is normally only found in areas of mature deciduous woodland containing ponds and is restricted to just a few parts of the British Isles. Rare.

4

Hairy dragonfly *Brachytron pratense*

Hairy; flies backwards and forwards patrolling a set area and rarely stopping (if the weather is warm and sunny). Both male and female may appear almost black at a distance but, closer to, blue spots can be seen on the male and yellow spots on the female. Occasional throughout the British Isles.

DAMSELFLIES

5

Azure damselfly *Coenagrion puella*

Male has a bright azure blue body and blue eyes. Female either black and yellowish green or black and azure blue, but no blue band towards end of body. Common throughout the British Isles.

6

Banded demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*

Different from the other damselflies in that it is significantly larger and has bright metallic coloration — either blue or green. Common in most of the British Isles, except Scotland.

7

Blue-tailed damselfly *Ischnura elegans*

Its basic coloration is a black body with an obvious blue band towards the end of the body and blue eyes, although the females can have a variety of other colours such as violet or pink on their thorax (the part of the body towards the head end, see photo below). Common throughout the British Isles.

8

Large red damselfly *Pyrhosoma nymphula*

Not surprisingly, red, in contrast to the other species of damselfly which appear superficially blue or black or metallic blue/green. Common throughout the British Isles.

9

Red-eyed damselfly *Erythromma najas*

Similar to blue-tailed damselfly with a black body and blue segment at the end of the 'tail'. The main difference is that the red-eyed damselfly has obvious red or red-brown eyes. Locally common in England.

