

THE DAMSELFLIES AND DRAGONFLIES OF CHUDLEIGH PARISH

The following annotated checklist has been prepared by Dave Smallshire on behalf of Chudleigh *WILD*. All records up to the end of 2020 known to him and other local naturalists, including those from the National Biodiversity Network Atlas (<https://nbnatlas.org/>) and British Dragonfly Society database, are summarised. It should be regarded as work in progress and will be updated periodically as new information comes to hand. It does not necessarily represent all areas of the Parish equally and anyone who can add, correct or update this information is asked to send details to davesmall@btinternet.com.

The taxonomic sequence and scientific and vernacular names follow those of the British Dragonfly Society (<https://british-dragonflies.org.uk/>). To jump to a particular species, try using the 'Find' function (click the magnifying glass search icon, or use <Ctrl+F> on a desktop computer, and type in the species you want to look for).

Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa*

Very scarce, flying in late summer. Has been recorded in a pond at Deer Park Farm; a single wanderer to a Twindle Beer garden pond on 8-11/8/13 was the only record there during 1990-2020.

Beautiful Demoiselle *Calopteryx virgo*

Small numbers, presumed to be breeding, fly in spring and summer along the River Teign and Kate Brook, with large numbers along Bramble Brook; noted in town gardens in Twindle Beer (four singles during 1990-2020) and Woodway St in 2020.

Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella*

Probably widespread in ponds in small numbers in spring and summer. Present and breeding in a Twindle Beer garden pond in most of the last 30 years, usually in single figures, but about 50 (including 17 pairs egg-laying) on 13/6/92; at least 500 emerged from the pond in 1992.

Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*

Likely to occur mainly at larger ponds and lakes in summer, such those at Ugbrooke, Harcombe and Watercress Farm. Highly dispersive in fine weather (e.g. one in Oldway Batfields Reserve on 20/5/20) and hence sometimes appears at smaller ponds; seven singles recorded during 1990-2020 in a Twindle Beer garden pond, although possibly breeding in two years.

Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans*

Likely to occur at ponds and lakes in summer. Present and breeding in a Twindle Beer garden pond in most years during 1990-2020, with 32 on 4/7/91 and 19/6/92 (at least 100 emerged from the pond in 1992).

Large Red Damselfly *Pyrrosoma nymphula*

Small numbers probably widespread in garden and farmland ponds in spring and summer. Present and breeding in Twindle Beer garden pond in most years during

1990-2020, with adults emerging from 7 April; no more than ten adults seen together (in 1992 – although at least 119 emerged from the pond).

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*

May breed at larger ponds and lakes, such those at Ugbrooke and Watercress Farm. Adults fly in late summer and autumn, often wandering from breeding sites (typically reed-fringed lakes) and migrants also occur. At least four records from a Twindle Beer garden during 1990-2020.

Southern Hawker

Probably breeds commonly in lakes and ponds in woodland and gardens, flying in summer and autumn. Bred in a Twindle Beer garden pond in most years during 1990-2020, with 46 adults emerging in 1993 and 36 in 2008.

Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*

Probably breeds commonly in lakes and larger ponds, flying from May to August. Smaller garden ponds may be used: e.g. seen in nine years during 1990-2020 at a Twindle Beer garden pond, with breeding proven in eight years. One seen to eat a Honey Bee in Woodway Street in 2004.

Golden-ringed Dragonfly *Cordulegaster boltonii*

Presumed to breed in the River Teign, Kate Brook and Bramble Brook, and possibly in other smaller watercourses. Adults wanders away from water during summer, sometimes coming into gardens and even buildings. Examples include singles in a Woodway St garden (2010 and 11/7/12), Puttshills Wood meadows (8/6/18), Oldway Batfields Reserve (16/6/20) and twice in a Twindle Beer garden during 1990-2020.

Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa*

Adults fly in spring and summer, wandering freely to feeding areas away from water and finding new ponds remarkably quickly. Likely to be widespread and breeding in ponds, including those in gardens. Recorded in 17 years during 1990-2020 at a Twindle Beer garden pond, with breeding proven in 13 years; a total of 30 emerged from the pond in May 1992.

Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*

Flies in summer at lakes and large ponds, territorial males favouring those with open margins where they bask. Recorded in the hectad SX87, which includes the southern part of Chudleigh, on 1/6/1921, suggesting a long history in the area. Present and likely to be breeding at Ugbrooke Lakes and Watercress Farm. Single wanderers in Puttshills Wood meadows on 8/6/18 and in Oldway Batfields Reserve on 20/5/20.

[Keeled Skimmer *Orthetrum coerulescens*

Has been recorded at a pond on Haldon Racecourse, possibly not within the Parish.]

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

Resident and migrant, probably breeding commonly in many lakes and ponds, including garden ponds; e.g. present and breeding in most years during 1990-2020 at a Twindle Beer garden pond. Recorded in the monad SX8679 (Chudleigh town) in 1923, 1925 and 1928, so has a long history in the area.