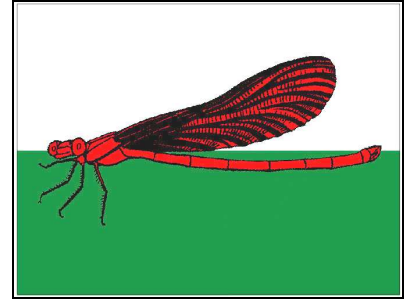


Y Fursen

NORTH WALES DRAGONFLY NEWSLETTER No. 70



21st March 2013

Odonata news and events from across the vice counties of Anglesey, Merionethshire, Caernarvonshire, Denbighshire and Flintshire



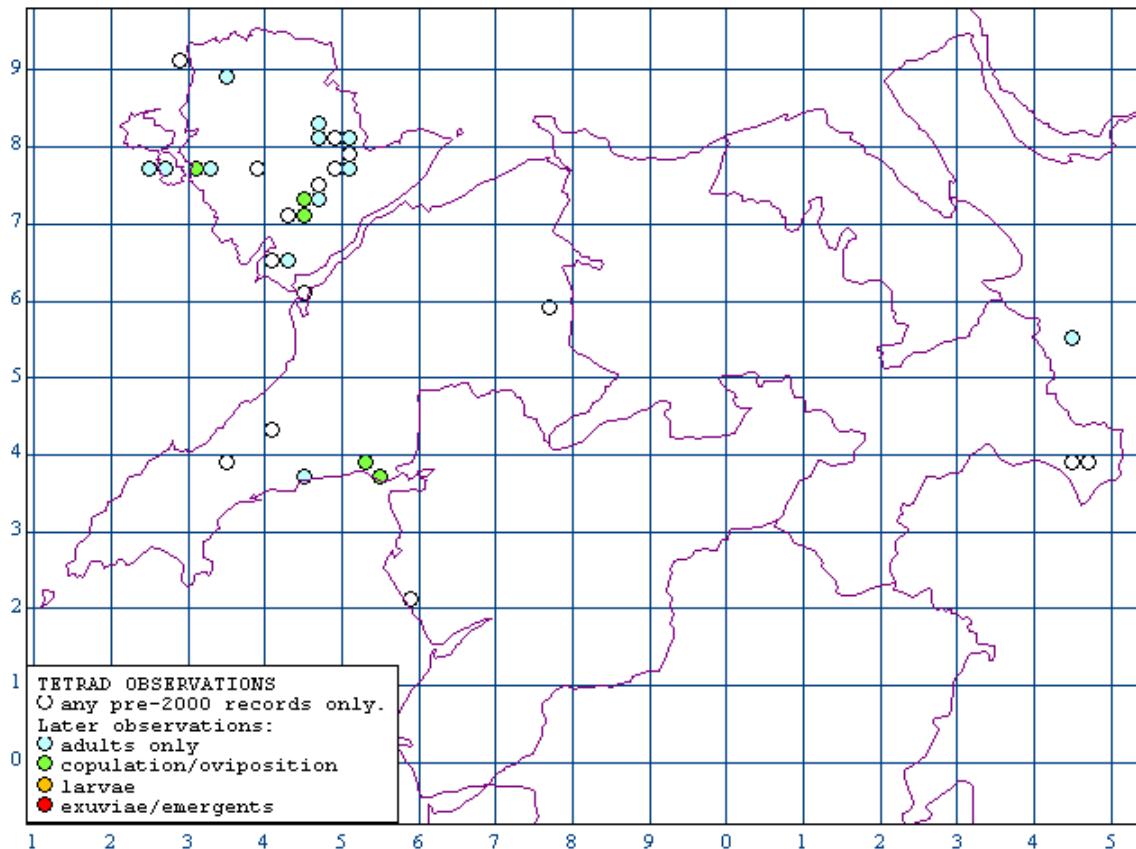
Hi all,

The Large Red Damsel (*Pyrhosoma nymphula*) is always the first species to emerge and last spring its early emergence on the 6th April broke all records for North Wales thanks to a lovely warm March. It will be interesting to see when the adults are on the wing this year after the cold spell that we're currently experiencing.

National trends in species ranges

I was down at the British Dragonfly Society Recorders Conference at CEH, Wallingford last weekend where there was a joint meeting of BDS and Biological Records Centre. Nick Isaac has analysed the ranges of British species for the new atlas and shown that there are distinct national trends for many species that may be due to a variety of factors, such as improved water quality of rivers, but a major component is thought to be due to our warming climate as dragonflies are sensitive indicators of climate change. The records show that since 1970 they are doing much better as a group than, say, butterflies. There are more species actually increasing their range than those in decline - 14% are increasing and 5% decreasing. The winners, i.e. those species that have expanded their ranges or are colonising new sites are: *Aeshna mixta*, *Aeshna cyanea*, *Anax imperator*, *Brachytron pratense*, *Calopteryx splendens*, *Erythromma viridulum*, *Libellula fulva*, *Libellula quadrimaculata*, *Orthetrum cancellatum*, *Platycnemis pennipes*, *Sympetrum sanguineum*. Distinct losers are: *Aeshna grandis*, *Coenagrion puella*, *Coenagrion pulchellum*, *Enallagma cyathigerum*, *Ischnura elegans* – this includes three of our most common damselflies! Some of the positive trends have already been picked up by our North Wales data, such as the range expansions into the region since around 2000 of *A. mixta*, *A. imperator*, *O. cancellatum* and the range expansion north-westwards of *A. cyanea*. But there are no obvious changes in the distribution of the remaining species. Of the species in decline, only the fate of *C. pulchellum* has been picked up in our region. It appears to be sadly missing from several former sites in Anglesey, the Lleyn Peninsular and south-east Denbighshire (see map). The sole record from the Gwydyr Forest is considered suspect and has now been taken off the list. If you happen to know of sightings in these apparently lost tetrads would you please let me know.

Coenagrion pulchellum



Dragonfly larva videos

I'd like to draw your attention to some wonderful video footage about the underwater life of dragonflies and other invertebrates by a Mexican chap. The videos are mostly of Mexican species. Some examples are:

Hunting by larvae of the Spot-winged Glider (*Pantala hymenaea* - species identified by Dennis Paulson): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkOpWKyM_go This video clearly shows how larvae fire out their specialised, extendable underlip (labium or mask) to grab prey by the end claws. They then drag prey back to begin eating. It also shows jet propulsion used by dragonflies to get around more quickly than by just walking.

Emergence of the Common Green Darner (*Anax junius*):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t3f9umjAlk&list=UUeYu-CH82jeBJ4dWNWNSevA&index=67>

Damselfly larvae hunting prey:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t3f9umjAlk&list=UUeYu-CH82jeBJ4dWNWNSevA&index=67>

Emergence of perching dragonfly:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzO09KmG7kc>

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