



Williamsonia



Vol. 4, No. 1

Winter, 2000

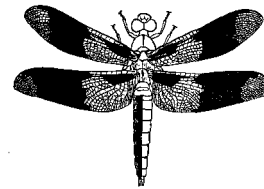
A publication of the Michigan Odonata Survey

WELCOME TO A NEW CENTURY!

It seems unusual to be using the year 2000 as I write in determinations on Odonata cards. All the more interesting is that some of these specimens I am working with now were collected nearly 70 years ago, and others were collected a decade ago. I have to wonder what some of the habitats were like 70 years ago -- certainly, many of them may have been still recovering from the extensive logging and environmental changes that had taken place since the late 1800s. In many ways, it is quite possible that our aquatic habitats have improved in quality since 1930. National and State Forest lands have improved watersheds by reforestation of degraded habitats. Marginal agricultural areas that were heavily farmed in the earlier part of the 1900s have reverted to woodlands and old fields. Other watersheds have been negatively impacted, especially in areas where suburban sprawl and industries have contributed to degradation of riparian systems. Unless we can ameliorate the effects of suburban expansion on our watersheds, we are in for some tougher times ahead. The activities of the numerous land conservancies and groups such as the Huron River Watershed Council are encouraging. Public education and outreach from these groups has certainly made an impact, and I think they'll become even more important over the next few years.

We are really blessed with an abundance of aquatic habitats in Michigan. Extensive bog and fen areas in the UP and NLP are something not found in most states, and the variety and abundance of stream systems all over the state provide many exciting opportunities for research (not to mention recreation). When I see our friends in Ohio getting excited about *Dorocordulia libera*, I have to smile at our abundance of habitat for that species in Michigan. On the other hand, they have some really nice gomphids in those southern Ohio rivers that I'd like to see... The

wide variety of wetlands and the sheer size of the state is what makes the MOS a challenging task. Driving from one end of Michigan to the other is like driving south to Georgia, and taking 2 lane roads part of the way! Such a large area makes it imperative that we recruit more talented naturalists to assist with our survey. We especially need more people in the field in the western UP!



As we finish off the 1900's and head into the 21st century, I see some trends that are alarming. Although biological research is heavily funded, very little is spent on organismal biology, and many departments are not hiring new people to teach about whole organisms. Yet, agencies are desperate for information on flora and fauna. How will we be able to preserve what we cannot identify? I think what will happen is a return to avocational specialists in entomology and related sciences. I use the term avocational instead of amateur for a good reason. Even though both terms are roughly equal, amateur denotes someone that perhaps knows a lot about a topic but doesn't get paid for it. It is also used to lower someone's stature in relation to a "professional." I have met some avocational entomologists that put their "professional" counterparts to shame in terms of productivity and level of expertise. Perhaps it is because they are not burdened by the committees, administrative work and departmental distractions that their professional counterparts must often face. Avocational odonatologists are making great contributions to our area of study, and it is because of them that many states are able to catalog their fauna. (You see, I do have a point here!). The Michigan Odonata Survey is dependent on volunteers to collect and identify our fauna. Likewise, the folks in OH, MA, CT, ME, WI, and other states are training and using avocational naturalists to help survey their states (see Brunelle, P. 1997.

The role of the amateur in insect conservation. *Northeastern Naturalist* 4(3):159-164.). Fortunately, some new books and guides as well as web sites are making training a lot easier, and as more people become interested in Odonata, the pool of potential surveyors becomes larger. Also, as more people become interested in securing the conservation of habitats and watershed water quality, it is likely that some of those people will become excited about dragonflies and other aquatic insects.

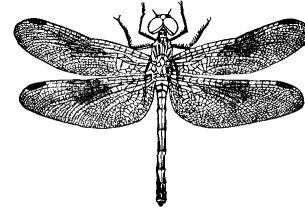
How can such people help the Michigan Odonata Survey? Here are a few ideas for starters:

1. Monitor constructed ponds for spring arrivals of migrant species and range expansion of species that prefer such habitats.
2. Compare species diversity/abundance in long-established ponds to those recently created.
3. How does vegetation diversity affect Odonata abundance?
4. Sample for exuviae at parks along the rivers in SE Michigan.
5. Give presentations at outdoor centers on the role of Odonata in the ecosystem.
6. Work with land conservancies to catalog Odonata on their properties.
7. Provide help with newsletters and outreach materials.

Keeping Busy in the Winter

I have been quite inundated with specimens throughout the fall. Printing cards, identifying specimens and writing have kept me busy. A trip to Michigan State in November turned up an unexpected lot of odonates collected in the late 80s to mid 90s that had not yet been identified. A few new localities for *Williamsonia fletcheri* resulted, which was pretty exciting. In addition, some good *Somatochlora* records from the UP were added and some collections from Marinette Co., WI have been identified. I have also examined our databases for new county records that have been added since I prepared the County Distribution Spreadsheet last January. I recently completed that task and sent off the new records to Nick Donnelly for his North American dot map project. In the process, I have been correcting minor errors in the MOS Database and the Larval Odonata Database. We now have over 20,000 records in the MOS Database, and there are about 2300 Michigan records in the Larval Database. That's 22,300 records, and we aren't done yet!

Fortunately, I have had the assistance of Ellie Shappirio with the larval database, and David Marshall, a UMMZ doctoral student has been working with the MOS database. As previously noted, those databases are available over the web [<http://insects.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/michodo/mos.html>].



THANKS TO OUR SURVEYORS

The following people are acknowledged for contributing specimens and/or data to the MOS in 1999:

Carl Freeman, Steve Ross, Thomas Heatley, Jane Winkler, Holli VanLoo, Mandy Tabb, Allen Chartier, Alan Hance, David & Janie Peters, Mo Nielsen, Bob Kriegel, Ellie Shappirio, Richard Taylor, Michele Jokinen, Lissa Anderson, Marjorie O'Brien, Reeve Bailey, Wayne Steffins and Liz Coolidge. This has been a banner year, as Ethan Bright and Margie Chriscinske have identified all of the Michigan Odonata larvae in the collection, and Ethan has kept up with incoming specimens throughout the fall and winter. As a result of the larval records, we significantly increased the number of new localities for a number of species. Combined with the adults in the MOS database, we have added **635** new county records to the MOS list. A listing has been included in this issue of *Williamsonia* so you'll see where the gaps are. We now have several species recorded from nearly every county, which gives a basis to the statement that a species is "state-wide." Much more intriguing are those species for which we have scant records or no recent additions. Are they truly that rare, or were they spurious individuals? *Ischnura kellicotti* comes to mind as a species with only a few records because one has to canoe or float out to the lily pads where they seem to spend most of their adult life. Some species are truly uncommon, due to the paucity of their habitats in Michigan -- *Tachopteryx thoreyi* falls into that group. In the last issue, I provided the Y2K list for target species, and with the county list in this issue,

you'll have a good idea of places to go to improve our distributional data.

Is the Pacific Ocean a Great Lake?

I recently received a reprint from a Japanese Odonata enthusiast, Tokihiro Nishida. This one was a nice surprise, considering that it dealt with Michigan fauna in a Japanese journal! "The Odonata collected in the United States of America, mainly in the State of Michigan" appeared in *Aeschna* 36:1-20, Oct. 1999. Nishida visited the UMMZ several times during his stay in Michigan (1994-95) where I believe he was associated with industry. In any event, his visits took place before I ever imagined a state-wide survey. He provides the earliest state record for *Libellula vibrans* from Wayne Co., near Westland. His paper also features 24 very nice color photos of dragonflies and habitats -- something that's prohibitively expensive in US journals! Now, we need to get even by publishing a new record from Japan in *The Great Lakes Entomologist*.

MORE COOL THINGS TO BUY...

A number of organizations are now selling Odonata-related items that are sure to be bought by people reading this newsletter. Perhaps it's time for the MOS to do the same. I have been thinking about a full-color postcard with about six nice Odonata images on it. Of course, T-shirts also sell well.

Texas A & M Dept. of Entomology has a card featuring *Dromogomphus spoliatus* in full-color. Try their web site at <http://entowww.tamu.edu> for more information.

Northeastern Naturalist Cards (P.O. Box 9, Steuben, ME 04680) has a beautiful note card - #11 - featuring 17 beautiful odonates from the NE that are rare or endangered. The card is based on Paul-Michael Brunelle's stunning artwork that has appeared on a poster. Try e-mailing them at humbodlt@nemaine.com for more information.

Update on soon to be published Odonata books with special discount for Michigan Odonata Survey participants!

The expected date of publication for the revised "Dragonflies of North America by Needham, Westfall, and May is June according to the

publisher. It is currently list at 80.00 plus S & H retail. It is available though the International Odonata Research Institute for 80.00 which includes S & H. (about a 10% discount).

The projected publication date for Sid Dunkle's *Dragonflies through Binoculars* is May of this year. Its list price is \$29.95 plus S&H but is available for a flat \$30.00 (which includes S&H) from the I.O.R.I

Special discount for **Michigan Odonata Survey** participants: Order The Dunkle book and get 100 free 3.25 x 6in Poly envelopes for your specimens. Order the Revised Manual and get 100 free 3.25 x 6in cellophane envelopes.

Check out the web site for ordering instructions and other specials www.afn.org/~iori. Please mention this article to get the special.

The IORI is a non-profit organization with 100% of its net proceeds to support Odonata information activities.

Bill Mauffray
iori@afn.org

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MARCH 25, 2000 – The Ohio Odonata Society will hold its annual meeting in Columbus, at the Ohio Historical Society, 9 am - 2 pm. Check the OOS home page for more information about the meeting. I plan on giving a talk there about the MOS data, so if anyone else wants to go to the meeting, I have space for 5 more people.

APRIL 29, 2000 – The MOS will be holding a spring field trip in Mecosta Co. Lodging is available in Big Rapids (Super 8 Motel 231-796-1588 or Holiday Inn 231-796-4400). Stephen Ross will be leading the way through some interesting habitats as we search for **new** *Williamsonia* sites in and around Mecosta Co.. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate. More precise information, including maps, will be made available in a March mailing to MOS members.

JUNE 1, 2000 - Odonata slide show/field trip to be held at the Traverse Area District Library, Woodmere Library North-east corner of Boardman Lake, Traverse City MI, from 10-2. Contact Jody

Clark at 4900 Greenhill Ct., Traverse City, MI 49684 (e-mail: etc@traverse.com) for more information.

JUNE 2, 2000 - Michigan Entomological Society annual meeting, Kellogg Biological Station, Hickory Corners, MI. Check the web site (<http://insects.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/mes/>) for more information.

SUMMER STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Study on an Island During the Summer of 2000 at the F.T. Stone Laboratory

Experience hands-on science at The Ohio State University's north coast campus. Stone Laboratory is the Lake Erie research and teaching laboratory for the university's Ohio Sea Grant College Program. Located on the 6.5-acre Gibraltar Island in Put-in-Bay harbor, this facility is the oldest freshwater biological field station and research laboratory in the United States.

Application deadlines are approaching. To obtain the necessary applications and forms, go to the Stone Lab section of our website: www.sg.ohio-state.edu or contact our office at 614/292-8949.

You may also e-mail Stone Lab coordinator Arleen Pineda at pineda.2@osu.edu. You must state if you are a high school student; college student; or educator to receive the correct application packet.

Stone Lab is a unique learning environment that enables students to gain a comprehensive background in freshwater systems and the environmental attributes of Lake Erie. The Laboratory provides exceptional educational, research, and outreach opportunities for the entire state and region.

ODONATES FROM SHIAWASSEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

David and Janie Peters

2230 Blackmore Street, Saginaw, MI 48602-3509

The following is a list of Odonata species that we catalogued at Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge in Saginaw County, Michigan during 1999. All were identified visually without capture, using the

Color Guide to Dragonflies of Wisconsin by Legler, et al, and Mike Kielb's *Sympetrum* key on the MOS website. Unless indicated, the specific dates and populations provided in the notes are by no means inclusive, but merely those we recorded in our field diaries. Additionally, we observed two or more species of *Aeshna* that we were unable to identify, and we made no attempts this year, save one, to identify the many damsels that we encountered.

CALOPTERYGIDAE

Hetaerina americana, American rubyspot [1 m on 7/23]

AESHNIDAE

Aeshna constricta, Lance-tailed darner [1 f on 7/29, 1 m on 7/30, 1 pr. on 9/1]

Anax junius, Common Green Darner [a "flock" of 20 on 9/13]

LIBELLULIDAE

Celithemis elisa, Calico Pennant [1 on 6/16, 1 on 7/14, only records]

Celithemis eponina, Halloween Pennant [1 on 6/24, only record]

Erythemis simplicicollis, Eastern Pondhawk [m & f on 5/13, 7/10]

Leucorrhinia intacta, Dot-tailed Whiteface [4 on lily pads @ Bullhead Creek on 6/2]

Libellula luctuosa, Widow Skimmer [male & teneral on 5/31]

Plathemis lydia, Common Whitetail [8 f & 3 m on 5/31]

Libellula pulchella, Twelve-spotted Skimmer [4 on 6/10]

Pachydiplax longipennis, Blue Dasher [3 @ pond adj. to observation tower on 7/15]

Pantala flavescens, Wandering Glider [1 juv. & a pr. ovipositing on 7/13, 1 on 9/13]

Perithemis tenera, Eastern Amberwing [9 on perches in moist soil on 7/14]

Sympetrum obtrusum, Whitefaced Meadowfly [1 on 7/15, 1 on 9/21]

Sympetrum rubicundulum, Ruby Meadowfly [6/24 - 7/9, the most common *Sympetrum* spp.]

Sympetrum vicinum, Yellow-legged Meadowfly [first on 8/31, last one on 11/5]

Tamea carolina, Carolina Saddlebags (tentative id) [1 on 7/1, 2 on 7/14]

Tamea lacerata, Black Saddlebags [4 @ pool 1A on 6/4, 1 on 9/13]

