



Williamsonia



Vol. 5, No. 1

Winter, 2001

A quarterly publication of the Michigan Odonata Survey

2001 A Bug Odyssey

My apologies for the lateness of this issue!

Welcome to another year of *Williamsonia* and another year of dragonflies. As I look out my kitchen window in late January I am reminded that it will be a while before I see any insect life at all. However, it looks good for the coming season's Odonata-- with the snow accumulation we have had this winter, many ponds and marshy areas should have a better start than the past couple of years. Was the dearth of pond and marsh species last fall simply a result of drying conditions over the last two summers or due to other factors? I heard from several MOS observers that the fall numbers of *Aeshnas* and *Sympetrum*s were lower than usual. It certainly makes sense when I recall my visit to the "pond" that used to exist on the E side of Embury Road in NW Washtenaw Co. In 1997, several of us visited the pond in late May and water levels were several feet deep at one end -- Ethan Bright was up to his hips in chest waders at one point. That year we saw many *Aeshna mutata* and *Lestes eurinus* -- good indicators of fishless ponds (or at least ponds without members of the bass and perch family). The following year, we saw pond levels drop, but it still harbored odonates. When I visited in early summer 2000, the pond had become nothing more than a muddy depression. What had been sedge/moss hummocks on a small "island" were then looking pretty dry. Burrows excavated by crayfish were quite obvious with the large mounds of pellets deposited at the surface -- a telling sign that they were burrowing deep to have flooded tunnels. Maybe the Odonata larvae were down there with them. Quite obviously, there were no Spatterdock darners in the pond last year. It will be interesting to see how the pond and others like it have fared when the snow melts. As long as groundwater reserves get replenished, the many depressions in the NW part of Washtenaw Co. should have a better year than last. I'll be awaiting your impressions later this year!

It is shaping up to be a busy year for me -- at least if talks are any indication. I will be giving a lecture on March 4 at Lake Erie Metropark, several on April 7&8 at the Bluebird Festival in Jackson, and a very likely one-day field class at Fish Lake Biological Station in late June. I'll be giving a series of presentations on dragonflies at the Rouge River Water Day for 5th grade students at UM-Dearborn on May 3. I'm also organizing the 47th annual

meeting of the Michigan Entomological Society, which will be held on Saturday, June 9 in Glen Arbor, MI at The Leelanau School. This year's featured speaker will be Ann Swengel - a noted researcher of prairie and pine barrens Lepidoptera -- if you have a chance to attend, please do! I have scheduled an MOS-sponsored field trip on Sunday June 10, which ought to be a LOT OF FUN. In addition, there will be a Great Lakes Regional Odonata meeting in Sudbury, Ontario, July 3-6. There is more information about that later in this issue. Whew! I'm tired already. However, I am counting on the MOS getting an infusion of new enthusiasts to get out there and start adding additional information about the Odonata in other parts of the state. One way to do that is via outreach in educational programs and the like.

The MOS Database keeps growing. It is currently at 21,500 records, and I suspect it will grow a great deal larger after we catalog the remaining specimens from MSU and the specimens sent down from Northern Mich. University in Marquette. The database is being continually improved. I have Mike Ebinger working on the file, and he has been adding a lot of new functionality to the MOS database. Now, merely clicking on a county brings up lists of species and collection dates for that county. It's getting to be way too much fun!

WILLIAMSON DRAGONFLY GUN CONFISCATED!

In early February, Univ. of Michigan Dept. of Public Safety and Security conducted an inventory of firearms being stored in the Museum of Zoology. While most of the attention was on the Bird and Mammal Divisions, it turned out that the only illegal weapon being stored here was in the Insect Division. Yes, you guessed it -- the 22-cal. pistol with a soldered on 26" barrel that E.B. Williamson used to shoot down high-flying Odonata. He used 22 - cal. dust-shot rounds, which were only potent enough to bag small creatures. I suspect that E.B. subscribed to "walking softly and carrying a big stick" and certainly the weapon in question looks somewhat impressive. Officer Tim Shannon was very apologetic about confiscating the pistol, as it was illegally modified under State law and also illegal under campus policy. However, since the weapon has not been fired in probably 75 years, it will not be a loss in terms of its use. At my suggestion, they'll make the pistol inoperable and return it so we can mount it on a plaque for display.

Great Lakes Odonata Meeting: July 3-6, 2001

Location:

Laurentian Lodge, Algoma District, Ontario - www.laurentianlodge.com

The lodge is located about 30km (19 miles) north of Elliot Lake. There is a map on the Laurentian Lodge website.

The area around the lodge and nearby Mississagi Provincial Park has a great variety of sites that should be excellent for odonate collecting/observation. These include: the Boland River (a sandy bottomed river), the Little White River (nice rapids), the Stag Lake peatlands, and numerous lakes, ponds and creeks.

Accommodation:

Accommodation costs (including all three meals a day) are as follows (in Canadian dollars):

\$74/person/night - double occupancy (approx. US\$53)

\$89/person/night - single occupancy (approx. US\$64)

Camping is also available at the lodge at \$15/night/campsite for an unserviced site (i.e no electrical or sewage hook-up). Meals are available in the restaurant for campers if desired.

Camping is also available at Mississagi Provincial Park a few kilometers down the road.

For those interested in attending, it is recommended that a reservation be made as soon as possible as the lodge seems to be very popular. To make reservations for either a room or camping at Laurentian Lodge, give them a call at 1-705-848-0423 and tell them that you are attending the Dragonfly Meeting.

Agenda:

This will be a very informal meeting concentrating on meeting each other personally, sharing ideas about provincial/state surveys and inventories, and mostly getting out to survey the local area which has received very little activity in the past - so there should be lots of exciting discoveries. If anyone would like to present a short slide presentation in the evening, suggestions are welcome.

A little about the Odonate fauna of the area:

The area has both northern and southern elements and a combination of both northern and southern species will be flying here. The entire district of Algoma has been very poorly surveyed in the past. Currently, the Algoma list consists of only 66 species and the vast majority of these records are historical records. The most recent records that we are aware of are from 1989! There are therefore many possibilities for additions to the list, and many

exciting discoveries to be made. Some particularly interesting species that are expected include:

Coenagrion interrogatum (Subarctic Bluet)

Nehalennia gracilis (Sphagnum Sprite)

Hylogomphus adelphus (Mustached Clubtail)

Ophiogomphus carolus (Riffle Snaketail)

Helocordulia uhleri (Uhler's Sundragon)

Somatochlora cingulata (Lake Emerald)

Somatochlora franklini (Delicate Emerald)

Somatochlora kennedyi (Kennedy's Emerald)

For more information or if you plan to attend contact:

Colin Jones

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47th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MICHIGAN ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Saturday, June 9, 2001

Field Trip Sunday, June 10, 2001

This year's 47th meeting of our society will be held in the NW corner of the Lower Peninsula in scenic Glen Arbor – close to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and only 32 miles from Traverse City. The meeting will be held at The Leelanau School, a private preparatory school that has housed students from all over the world. The site is located along the Crystal River, and you'll enjoy the rustic location and scenic qualities of the area. We are trying something new – a **Saturday** meeting, which should benefit members that have to travel some distance or have a difficult time getting a weekday off to attend an annual meeting. The area is full of scenic opportunities, and we hope you'll attend. Field activities are planned on Saturday evening and Sunday, June 10. Therefore, lodging will be available for Saturday night, too. Members are invited to visit and collect in the varied habitats of the Leelanau Peninsula. **On Sunday, June 10 we will have a field trip sponsored by the Michigan Odonata Survey to several sites in the area. Carl Freeman will be leading the group, and we'll start from the Leelanau School about 9:30 am.**

This year's featured speaker will be Ann B. Swengel of Baraboo, Wisconsin. Ann is the vice president of the

North American Butterfly Association, co-editor of the annual report of the 4th of July Butterfly Count Program, and has authored many papers on field research of Lepidoptera in a variety of journals. She has published extensively on tallgrass prairie and pine barrens Lepidoptera. We are sure you won't want to miss her presentation and the chance to speak with her on topics of mutual interest.

Costs for meals and lodging at The Leelanau School are located on the pre-registration form, which is on the web at: <http://insects.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/MES/meeting47.html>. The fees are very reasonable, especially given the tourism factor for the Leelanau Peninsula. If you plan on staying at the Leelanau School you are encouraged to submit your pre-registration form as soon as possible. For more information on the area, go to <http://www.leelanau.com/online/>. There are many campgrounds and other types of lodging available in the area, ranging from bed and breakfast establishments to hotels. You are also encourage to go <http://www.mapquest.com> for travel directions to Glen Arbor from wherever you are departing.

To drive to the Leelanau School from Traverse City, take US31 to SR72 (west) for about 22 miles to SR22. Go N or SR22 for 8.1 miles to Glen Arbor. One Old Homestead Road is about 1 mile N of Glen Arbor on SR22 (see map). The distance from Lansing is about 220 miles, and 212 from Ann Arbor.

Please contact Mark O'Brien if you have questions about the meeting: Mark O'Brien, Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1079. Phone: 734-647-2199; Fax: 734-763-4080. Email: mfobrien@umich.edu

BOOK REVIEW

Field Guide to the Dragonflies and Damselflies of Great Britain and Ireland. Steve Brooks, Illustrated by Richard Lewington. British Wildlife Publishing, 160 pp., softcover. ISBN 0-953-13990-5.

Wow, another guide to the Odonata of the British Isles. These things keep appearing as though no one has published one before, on a fauna that is poorer than any one of the counties in Michigan. Yet, these books continue to amaze me. Each one seems better than the others prior to it. This particular work is wonderfully illustrated in color, has keys to the larvae, distribution maps, and very informative text. If I were to pick a model for a book on Odonata, this one certainly comes close to my ideal. For one, the color illustrations are fantastic. I have always been a proponent of good, accurate artist renderings instead of color photographs.

Such work is time-consuming and expensive, but the end result is so much better than a photo. That's why the best bird guides don't use photographs.

This book's introductory chapters on life history, distribution, and habitats are excellent. The author obviously knows his subject and presents a lot of information in a small amount of space. Likewise, the write-ups for each species are well-done. Excellent illustrations really add to the usefulness of this guide, and they are reminiscent of the work I have seen by Paul-Michael Brunelle for North American species. In addition, there are sections on collecting techniques, a bibliography, plus a list of dragonfly societies and equipment vendors. This book is obviously one of the best of its genre that I have seen for any insect group.

Whether you are planning a trip to Great Britain or Ireland, or just want to have good books on Odonata, I recommend "Field Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies of Great Britain and Ireland." I'm sure you can order it via any internet book-seller, and probably directly from British Wildlife Publishing.

Mark O'Brien



Summary of 2000 Odonata Field Season

Most of the specimens from last year have been identified and databased, and I thank the following people for their contributions: Carl Freeman, Stephen Ross, DeLora Loope, John Douglass, Marjorie O'Brien, Elwin Evans, George Balogh, Allan and Nancy Chartier, Myles Willard, and Owen Perkins.

Over 600 specimen records based upon year 2000 work, were added to the MOS database, and although there were no new state records last year, there were **many** new county records and additional confirming records.

A new site for *Williamsonia fletcheri* in Alger Co. was found by Myles Willard on June 18, 2000 at a bog near AuTrain. It appears that this species is definitely out somewhat longer than *W. lintneri*, (Which we still only

have one locality recorded in all of Michigan!). He also found *Gomphaeschna furcillata*, the harlequin damer, in the same general area. A day later he photographed *Nannothemis bella* at a bog east of Munising. Myles started collecting later in the season, and I expect we'll see some really important additions to the lists for the Thumb area. More Alger Co. records were provided in the form of specimens by Lora Loope of the National Park Service. Lora knows the area around Pictured Rocks extremely well, and I look forward to more fine catches from her. Last season she picked up the new Alger Co records for: *Lestes dryas*, *Chromagrion conditum*, *Nehalennia gracilis*, *Arigomphus cornutus*, and *Nannothemis bella*. Additional records from Alger Co. were provided by Jon Douglass, and he too picked up *Nannothemis bella*. *Ophiogomphus colubrinus* and *Lestes eurinus* were new records, and there may be more by the time I finish with the ID's from his lot of specimens.

Whenever Carl Freeman collects, I expect he'll bring in some new county records, and last year, he did not disappoint me. Notable were *Cordulegaster diastatops* from Kalkaska Co., *Gomphus vastus* (Manistee Co.), *Gomphus viridifrons* (Manistee Co.), and *Didymops transversa* (Grand Traverse Co.). Carl also made additional collections of *Somatochlora tenebrosa* in Benzie Co.

Stephen Ross also collected *Aeshna tuberculifera* and *Cordulegaster diastatops* in Mecosta Co., adding new records for his already burgeoning county inventory.

More new records from Tuscola Co. were added by Myles Willard: *Aeshna constricta* (Iosco Co., too), *Aeshna umbrosa*, *Aeshna verticalis*, *Sympetrum semicinctum*, and *Lestes rectangularis* from Sanilac Co.

Elwin Evans, an adjunct entomologist from MSU, added *Ceonagrion resolutum* as new county record for Grand Traverse Co. He also made additive records from many less-worked counties.

George Balogh picked up *Hetaerina americana* from Barry Co., and added more specimens of *Argia sedula* from Barry State Game Area.

I added the following new county records from various field trips last year: Barry Co. – *Argia sedula*, *Ischnura posita*; Lenawee Co. – *Sympetrum corruptum*; Ogemaw Co. – *Argia fumipennis violacea*, *Enallagma antennatum*, *E. exsulans*, *E. geminatum*, *E. traviatum westfalli*, *Didymops transversa*, *Gomphus exilis*, *Epithecina princeps*; Menominee Co. – *Argia moesta*, *Enallagma exsulans*, *Macromia illinoensis*, *Libellula pulchella*. Had I been able to devote a full day at the Cedar River in Menominee Co., I know I would have been able to add a slew of gomphids to the list. However, there is always next summer!

The list of last year's work is not complete, and I am sure more county records were added. As the material from Northern Michigan University gets identified, I am certain more good records will turn up. With over 500 vials of larvae and several hundred pinned specimens, it will be next winter before it's all identified.

Now is the time to start thinking about 2001 collecting, so let me know if you'll need equipment or supplies for the field season. As I write this (March 10), we are but a month and a half away from the beginning of *Williamsonia* emergence. I am hopeful that someone will find additional localities for the Ringed Bog Haunter. If you'd like a copy of the paper on *Williamsonia* by Ross and O'Brien (2000), send me a request and I'll mail a copy.

The following information on Zebra mussels is presented to show what can happen when people look out for a species, and if you likewise find these invaders in a new site, contact the Brick Watch people!

ZEBRA MUSSELS FOUND IN 30 MORE MICHIGAN INLAND LAKES

EAST LANSING, Mich. -- In 2000, zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) were found in 30 more Michigan lakes, bringing the total number of infested lakes to 149, according to Michigan Sea Grant. This is a 21 percent increase over the number of lakes confirmed as infested in 1999. In 2000, volunteers found the invasive species in lakes in the following counties: Alcona (1), Antrim (1), Barry (1), Benzie (4), Branch (7), Cass (1), Genesee (2), Grand Traverse (5), Livingston (1), Manistee (1), Mason (2) and Oakland (4). (A complete list of the lakes is listed below.)

All of last year's reports came from lakefront property owners and resource managers who found adult colonies of the mussels clinging to boats, docks, dams, water pumps and equipment. The majority of the reports came from participants in the Brick Watch program, initiated last year by Michigan Sea Grant, Michigan Lake and Stream Associations (ML&SA), and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

Because Michigan has more than 10,000 inland lakes larger than 5 acres, resource management professionals can monitor only a few lakes annually and collect a limited number of samples. Brick Watch volunteers simply suspend an ordinary building brick from a dock with a rope and check periodically to see if zebra mussels have colonized the surface.

According to Sea Grant Extension associate Mike Klepinger, citizen monitoring, especially for adult zebra

mussels, has dramatically increased scientists' knowledge and understanding of how and why invading organisms spread once they arrive in the Great Lakes basin. Citizen participation in sampling and monitoring has greatly increased the number of lakes surveyed and the accuracy of surveys on individual lakes, providing early detection of zebra mussel populations and helping prevent damage to boats, beaches and lake ecosystems, Klepinger said.

Large inland lakes with public access and a high level of transient recreational boating activity and those in close proximity to infested waters are particularly vulnerable. Zebra mussels can contaminate lakes when boaters and anglers unknowingly transport the clinging veligers (larvae) from infested waters via boats, trailers, and fishing equipment.

Early detection allows lake managers and citizen groups to erect signs at boat launches and develop volunteer programs for boat inspections and cleanings.

Organizations and individuals interested in participating in Brick Watch should contact Pearl Bonnell at (517) 257-3583. For more information about citizen lake monitoring and zebra mussels, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu/seagrant/sgezmanns.html> on the Web. ML&SA is a statewide organization of more than 375 local lake and stream associations. Michigan Sea Grant is a cooperative program of Michigan State University and the University of Michigan in Great Lakes and marine research, education and outreach.

CONTACT: Carol Swinehart, 517-353-9723
Mike Klepinger, 517-353-5508
Pearl Bonnell, 517-257-3583

County Lake Name

Alcona Alcona Pond
Antrim Clam
Barry Payne
Benzie Bass, Loon, Otter, Platte
Branch Craig, Matteson, Messenger, Morrison, North,
Randall, South
Cass Birch
Genesee Ponemah, Silver,
Grand Traverse Arbutus, Duck, Fife, Green, Silver
Livingston Rush
Manistee Bear
Mason Ford, Hackert
Oakland Brendle, Crystal, Orion, Pontiac

GREAT LAKES FACTS PUBLICATIONS

EAST LANSING, MI. -- FACT: More than 33 million people inhabit the Great Lakes basin. FACT: The Laurentian Great Lakes make up one-fifth of the world's surface fresh water.

These and many less well known facts about the Great Lakes are presented in Michigan Sea Grant's new Great Lakes Facts publications. Five of the brochures are filled with facts about the individual Great Lakes basins: Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie and Ontario. Statistics about each lake's dimensions are presented, along with facts about its shoreline use, economy, ecology, and natural resource and environmental issues. Each brochure opens into a 12- by 16-inch two-color map of the lake and its basin. A sixth brochure provides facts about the entire Great Lakes basin and opens into a 17- by 22- inch four-color poster.

Highlighted sections present particularly distinctive facts about each lake. The map images feature its entire drainage basin, state and provincial boundaries, major cities, areas of concern, national parks and recreation areas. The Great Lakes basin brochure features a depth and distance profile of the entire Great Lakes system.

"Whether you're a reporter or a legislator needing to find a statistic, a teacher who's planning a curriculum unit on the Great Lakes or a person who simply loves the lakes, you'll find these useful," said Carol Swinehart, editor of the series. "Anyone who's interested in the Great Lakes can learn from them; I've worked on Great Lakes issues for 25 years, and I've learned many new things in producing this third edition."

The Great Lakes Facts series can be purchased as a set for \$3. To order, contact Michigan Sea Grant at (734) 764-1118 or msgpubs@umich.edu; the MSU Bulletin Office at (517) 355-0240; Sea Grant Extension district offices in Grand Haven, Mount Clemens, Port Huron, Traverse City, Tawas City and Marquette; or MSU Extension county offices throughout the state.

CONTACT: Carol Swinehart, 517-353-9723

DON'T FORGET!
BlueBird Festival and Wildlife Art Show
April 7 – 8, 2001
Jackson Community College
2111 Emmons Rd. Jackson, MI

The Michigan Odonata Survey will be at Booth #60, and Mark O'Brien will be speaking on Odonata both days. Stop by and visit! If you wish to be present at the booth, give Mark a call. There are a limited number of free passes available to MOS helpers.



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If you like *Williamsonia*, and would like to contribute towards its operating expenses, make your \$10/year contribution payable to the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.

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Dragon Hunter T-shirts are still available.



Price: Only \$15 (\$2 per shirt goes to MOS)
T-Shirt: Hanes Beefy T, 100%cotton shirts
Color: Ash, design is 3-color - black, yellow, green
Sizes: MED, LG, XL

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