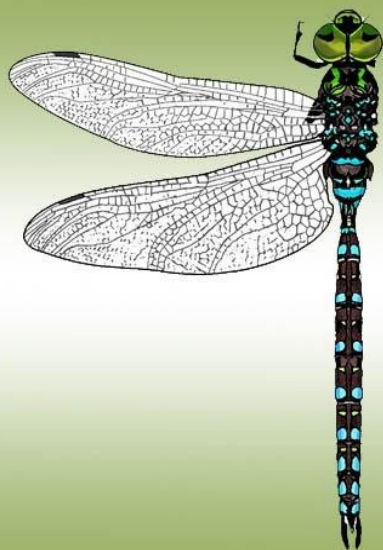


Ensuring the
Conservation of
Minnesota's
Dragonflies and
Damselflies
through Research
and Education

Winter 2020



Minnesota Dragonfly Society

2020—The Year that Needs No Introduction

By Kat Dickerson

I am certain this will not come as a surprise to anyone, but the year 2020 has presented unprecedented challenges for everyone, including the Minnesota Dragonfly Society. Events and surveys have been rightly postponed or cancelled, due to the health risks posed by Covid 19. Instead of clustering together over a gorgeous Mosaic Darner or a striking Ebony Jewelwing, we have stayed a safe distance, observing through pictures and social media. The surveys that have been accomplished were done by individuals, not groups, in as safe a manner as possible. As such, this newsletter may be shorter than previous years, but it is still our hope to inform and excite readers about the dragonfly and damselfly activities of this year. It has been a difficult year, but our love and care for these awesome creatures has not diminished.

Moving forward, we are taking great care to consider the safety of our group members and the public. We encourage and welcome any and all questions you may have, and love the photos posted to our social media. As more is learned about how to safely conduct group gatherings in the future, we hope to get right back into the events and surveys that provides educational experiences for everyone. It is thanks to you that we can continue our work and care for our essential Dragonflies and Damselflies.

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MDS Database Update

By Barry Mullin

As of right now, there is no complete and readily accessible record of all the dragonflies and damselflies housed within the University of Minnesota entomology lab. We are hoping to remedy that by adding all that data to the database. Adding this data will greatly assist in data searching and management, which in turn will help scientists answer scientific inquiries. Progress on entering dragonfly and damselfly specimen data into the Specify 7 database has been slow but steady. A number of people have been trained to do data entry; but it is mostly just a few that have done all the data entry. Mitch Haag and I recently met up with Robin Thomson, the Curator of the University of Minnesota insect collection at Hodson Hall. We returned about 200 specimens that have been entered into the database and picked up about 300 more specimens for data entry. The specimens we have been entering have been those collected by the Minnesota Odonata Survey Project (MOSP) and the Minnesota Dragonfly Society (MDS). Once all the specimens in the MDS/MOSP collection have been entered in the database, we will then begin working on the University's Odonata collection.

Ami Thompson connected me with folks from the Minnesota DNR who are interested in obtaining the data we are entering into our database. I spoke with Daren Carlson, MNWAP Monitoring Coordinator | Division of Ecological & Water Resources and Karen Cieminski, Natural Heritage Information System Data Manager and gave them both guest access to our database and gave them a tour of what data we are entering.

Re-curating Dragonfly Specimens

By Kat Dickerson

For most of 2019 and the first two months of 2020, a number of our board members were working hard to preserve our dragonfly specimens in the Entomology Lab at the University of Minnesota. Sadly, we were stopped dead in our tracks by Covid-19. Before that, we were making great progress.

Through some trial and error, we had discovered some very effective ways of storing dragonfly specimens. In previous years, they had been laid flat, wings spread, looking beautiful but taking up a lot of valuable space in the collection. Depending on the size of the species, only 20-40 could fit in a drawer. There was simply no more room for any future dragonflies. We found that we could fold the wings, place them in an envelope, and soon were placing 40 to 60 in a drawer.

Handling the dragonflies was not always an easy thing to do. These dragonflies were old and fragile, some dating back to the late 1800's. Some were preserved in different fluids, and others had pins pushed through tight bands of muscle. Most difficult of all, some were actually glued to the pin. Each dragonfly was unique, and carefully removing the pin always



Soaking the dragonfly allows the wings to be safely folded back.

seem to present new challenges.

Folding the wings also presented their own difficulties. We found that by soaking the thorax of the dragonfly in a mix of water and dish soap, we could loosen the muscles to the point of folding the wings

back so that they could fit in the envelope. We tried to keep the abdomen of the dragonfly dry, because this seemed easier to keep the dragonflies intact. This started with a complex system of tubes and floating pipettes, but thankfully ended with a simple scrub pad standing on end with a pinned dragonfly at the exact right depth.

Keeping track of the written information of each individual dragonfly also presented its own challenge. Drying the dragonflies after the soap and water was also difficult. Mitch Hagg created an ingenious board, made up of small clothes pins, that held the dragonfly and it's information together in one location until the specimen was dry enough to be placed within the envelope. We were making great progress, but then Covid happened. We hope to find a way to get back to the project as soon as it is safe to do so.



The Dragonfly soaking and drying process. The two paper-clips allows the information to stay with the dragonfly.

Artist and Scientist Spotlight



About the Artist: Luke T.

Why did you choose the damselfly?

I picked this creature because it's really cool and I like the pattern on its abdomen.

What art media did you use?

To draw this, I used a normal pencil and then colored pencils on printer paper.

Tell us about yourself:

My name is Luke, I'm in 4th grade, I have two cats and I like electronics, dinosaurs and everything science.

Thank you Luke! Keep up the awesome work!

MDS Annual Meeting

Join us virtually on Saturday, January 30th for our MDS Annual Meeting and Gathering! All are invited to attend. Starting at 1:00pm, we will have presentations, trivia, MDS updates, and a chance to win a dragonfly book or sweep net! (See contest details below.) This will also be a great opportunity to buy or renew your membership, check out our merchandise, ask questions, and find out what's going on in the world of odonates and MDS. The meeting will be held on Zoom, so get comfy, grab a mug of something warm, and tune in! More details will be shared on our [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Dragonfly Dazzle Art Contest

Why do you love dragonflies and damselflies? Answer this question via any art form you can dream of: drawing, painting, writing, poems, video, photographs, sculptures, interpretive dance, however you want to express yourself.

Submit your artistic answer in the form of photos, documents, or video by email to the online form <https://forms.gle/vhBRAENsc8vsZ6xL7>. Please include your name, age, and submission description. Time allowing, your submission will be shared during our annual meeting on January 30th and on our MDS Facebook group (with your permission).

If you are between the ages of 4-20, you can also choose to have your submission considered to win a Dragonflies of the North Woods identification book, by MDS founder, Kurt Mead, and/or an aerial sweep net. Prizes will be awarded based on creativity, originality, and age group. Only ages 4-20 will be considered for the prizes, but all submissions are welcome.

Minnesota Dragonfly Society Meet the Board Members

Board Members:

President: Curt Oien

Vice President: Bri Foster

Treasurer: Cathy Perkins

Secretary: Michael Moen

John Arthur--Ami Thompson--Mitch Haag--Kat Dickerson
Leah Darst--Amy Jo Forslund--Jeff Fischer--Kurt Mead
Dianne Rowse-Dave Doyle-Michael Moen -Ron Lawrenz-
Barry Mullin

Newsletter Editor: Kat Dickerson

Membership:

The Minnesota Dragonfly Society welcomes everyone!
Annual Memberships: Individuals-\$25, Families-\$30,
Senior/Student-\$15. Lifetime Memberships-\$500.
May also inquire into volunteer/scholarship membership
availability. Contact: info@mndragonfly.org

Who We Are:

The Minnesota Dragonfly Society is a 501(c)(3) organization that facilitates Odonata (dragonfly and damselfly) research, surveys, and education.

Public events include survey outings, identification and citizen science trainings, family education events, and board meetings. Other events include professional development workshops for educators and research outings for trained members.

Currently the best way to reach us is to request to join our Minnesota Dragonfly Society Facebook Page or through our website: www.mndragonfly.org.

Our Mailing Address:

Minnesota Dragonfly Society
P.O. Box 46192
Plymouth, MN 55446

A SUMMER LIKE NO OTHER

By Cathy Perkins

Looking back, this was a great summer and a sad one. My first year with MDS was so exciting in the discovery of dragonflies. It was photography that had drawn me to them. Seeing them up close through my photos, I saw their amazing details. And I watched their behavior. I love how Skimmers will return to the same perch and pre-focusing on that perch gives you great landing shots.

This summer was awesome because I saw so many lifer species, including St. Croix Snaketail, Western Red Damsel, Ringed Boghaunters and both the male and female Russet-tipped Clubtail and that is not all. I hiked many different parks and was able to capture some of my best shots to date. And I talked to total strangers only to find out some of them were not really strangers at all. We were already MDS Facebook friends! What a joy when you now have a face to put along with the wonderful photography you have LIKED on our page.



St. Croix Snaketail, Ophiogomphus susbehcha
Wild River State Park, Center City, MN. May 2020

It was at Crow Hassan Park Reserve near the intersection of Trails 12 and 6 where I met Marjie Carr Oxley and her husband with cameras in hand. Later that same day I met Scott Monge near Prairie Lake when he came upon me sitting on my 5 gallon bucket shooting Autumn Meadowhawks and Blue Dashers. Then there was the afternoon I popped over to North Mississippi Regional Park in Minneapolis looking for the Elusive Clubtail when I glimpsed a guy in hiking books with a camera plus binocs and said to myself, 'that is a human dragonhunter'. This was where I met Rick Schmid and we were successful in finding him his first Elusive. And while we couldn't get together with our like-minded Wisconsin dragonfly folk bumping into Ryan Chrouser and Jeff Fischer on the trails at Coon Fork Park was great fun. Saw my first Ebony Boghaunter there which was so well

camouflaged Jeff practically had to touch it for me to see it hanging on the pine tree. I also want to thank Dan Jackson for very precise directions on the Boghaunters to be found at Sandhill Wildlife Area. Terry and I were like kids in a candy store.



Ebony Boghunter, Williamsonia fletcheri
Coon Fork County Park, Augusta WI. May 2020

The sadness this summer came from missing out on our surveys and bioblitzes. Terry Carr and I had plans to attend the DSA in Oklahoma. And oh how I missed the Eastman Nature Center's Dragonfly Festival, Monarch Fest and all the other cancellations caused by the pandemic. If you haven't attended an MDS event or better yet, volunteered for one, you are missing out on a day of glorious fun...whether it is watching Curt Oien get down on his knees for an eye level explanation of dragonflies with the children to Dave Doyle's thorough explanation of netting safety you will learn and you will smile. Looking forward to a better 2021, hoping we can all get-together next summer!



Ryan Chrouser and Jeff Fischer swooping for dragonflies.
Coon Fork County Park, Augusta, WI. May 2020

Volunteering with MDS

Leah Darst, Volunteer Coordinator

Ensuring the conservation of Minnesota's dragonflies and damselflies through MDS literally couldn't be done without volunteers- with the very occasional exception of a grant-funded role, everyone involved with MDS is a volunteer. From board and committee members and the people who assist with events and projects, to the folks who simply share pictures or respond with enthusiasm and encouragement to those posting identification questions on our Facebook group, we literally couldn't do what we do without our awesome MDS community. To anyone who has had any level of involvement with the Minnesota Dragonfly Society, **thank you!**

Though opportunities for volunteering have been minimal over the last year, we'd like to find ways to allow more people to get involved. To those who have already offered their help but haven't received much direction with how exactly to do so, I apologize. I think many of us who have been involved with MDS sometimes forget to communicate opportunities to everyone in a way that allows involvement from those who aren't already active volunteers and board members. But I'm hopeful that 2021 will allow us to provide opportunities for more people to get involved, and we would love to see both new and familiar faces to help us fulfill our mission.

My personal involvement with MDS started with a basic love of dragonflies. I decided to observe a board meeting, where I learned MDS wanted someone to look into new t-shirt designs and ordering. Though I hadn't really been involved with MDS in the past, I knew that was something I could possibly help with... and that led to me eventually joining the board, chairing a committee, and attempting to coordinate MDS volunteer involvement.

If you would like to be more involved with MDS, please consider:

1) Joining a committee or attending board meetings.

Board meetings are open to all members and current/potential volunteers, and is where we discuss the majority of larger projects and opportunities. We are currently meeting virtually through Zoom; meetings are listed on our [event calendar](#).

2) Helping with an event.

Become a lead volunteer or assist with a booth or program. Every public event that MDS is involved with will be listed on our [event calendar](#), including time and location information as well as the contact information for the lead volunteer so you know who to e-mail if you'd like to help. Events are currently limited due to COVID, but we're hoping virtual event requests will be considered in the near future.

3) Participating in a survey.

Sweep or swoop for dragonflies and report what you find to [Odonata Central](#). Group survey opportunities may also be listed in our [event calendar](#).

4) Helping with a project.

We need help with an assortment of projects throughout the year. Our most pressing current projects include our odonate collection database project (explained above in this newsletter) and helping coordinate our virtual annual meeting in January.

5) Offering your talents.

If you enjoy photography, social media, fundraising, organizing, data entry, or anything else you think might be useful to MDS, please let us know! Submitting an article or drawing for the newsletter, making artwork for our annual meeting, or offering advice for how I can write articles and e-mails in a less verbose manner... you never know what might be useful!



If you are interested in volunteering, and/or would like to make sure you're on our volunteer e-mail list, please e-mail Leah at:

volunteer@mndragonfly.org

Thank you for your involvement and interest in MDS!

Minnesota Dragonfly Swag



Looking for an awesome new t-shirt or hat?
MDS can help you out.

Our ball caps are Adams adjustable caps with a leather strap and come in many colors as seen below. We also have bucket hats, one size fits most, in beige, gray, royal blue, tan, and navy. All hats are embroidered in two areas with our logo and a nymph.

The brand for our adult t-shirts is Gildan Soft-Style Ringspun in sizes Small to XXX-Large. You can find our current stock of size and colors listed below. These shirts have our logo on the front and our mission statement on the back.

We also have adult tank tops size Small to XL. The women's tank is black and the men's are gray. The tanks have only our logo on the front left.

The Youth shirts are Gildan Heavy Cotton and come in cobalt blue in sizes small, medium and large. Their design is identical to the adult t-shirt.

	\$ Members	\$ Non-members	Color	# Small	# Medium	# Large	# X Large	# XXL	# XXXL
Baseball Hats	20	25	*See Picture	One size fits most					
Bucket Hats	20	25	*See Picture	One size fits most					
Adult T-Shirt	15	20	Dark Purple	-	3	3	1	-	2
			Green Heather	3	6	-	-	-	2
			Navy	3	7	4	-	1	1
			Purple Heather	2	2	1	-	-	-
			Seafoam	6	-	9	5	-	-
Women's Tank-Top	15	20	Black	5	5	4	2	-	-
Men's Tank-Top	15	20	Gray	4	9	10	5	-	-
Youth T-Shirts	15	20	Cobalt Blue	3	4	4	-	-	-
Number of Items Left in Inventory									



If you are interested in making a purchase, please contact Cathy Perkins at:
treasurer@mndragonfly.org