

A Hot Day!

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Odonata Survey, 31st July, 2020.

Today is very hot - all of a sudden. This may have taken some species by surprise, since it has been cool and damp.

Damselflies were conspicuous mainly by their absence - I saw a single male Azure damselfly (*Coenagrion puella*) on Lucy's Pool, and one each male and female Blue-tailed (*Ischnura elegans*) on Anna's Pool.

In the main, activity was away from the ponds. Dragonflies are much more powerful fliers than damselflies, and much wider ranging - which can sometimes make it hard to ascertain precisely how many there are in an area.

I was unable to go into the Big Meadow because of the cattle, but there was a female Brown Hawker (*Aeshna grandis*) near the path at the north end, and a male Common Hawker over Loxam's Pond.

In the Hay Meadow, there was a male Common Hawker (*Aeshna juncea*), plus two male and one female Brown Hawkets.

Basking on the barbed wire fence across Lucy's Pool was a pale-coloured male Common Darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*).

In Upper Sowerholme, there were two male Brown Hawkets and, lurking in the trees, a female Common Darter - there were probably more, but they're (deliberately!) very hard to spot - she was very shy, and I couldn't get close enough for a good photo.

Anna's pool seemed devoid of life at first, but then two male Brown Hawkets turned up (which may have been two of those seen earlier in the Hay Meadow, and then a copulating pair of Common Darters arrived... I should have had a longer lens with me - I couldn't get near enough for a good shot.

Willow Pond was home to a single male Common Darter.

Two female Brown Hawkets were hunting in the wide flower margin of Flora Field beside Pony Wood.

School Pond had one each male and female Common hawkets - they were not being aggressive towards each other, so I suspect mating may well have occurred. The male may have been the same one I saw over Loxam's Pond - it isn't far from School Pond.

All in all, a pretty decent day for dragonflies.

Pictures

Here are a few photographs, taken today, together with locations and descriptions.



Pale male Common Darter beside Lucy's Pool.



Female Common Darter in Upper Sowerholme.



Common Darters copulating beside Anna Pool.



Male Common Darter on Willow Pond.