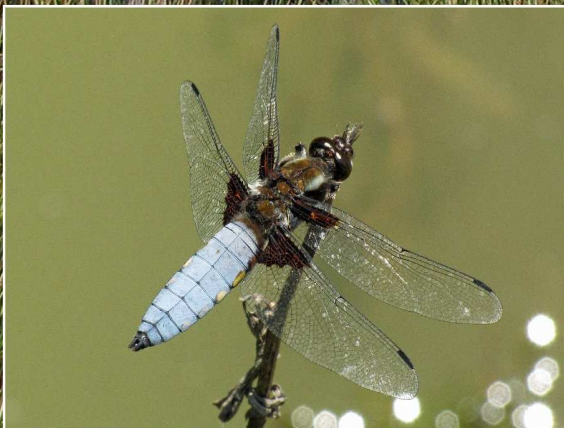
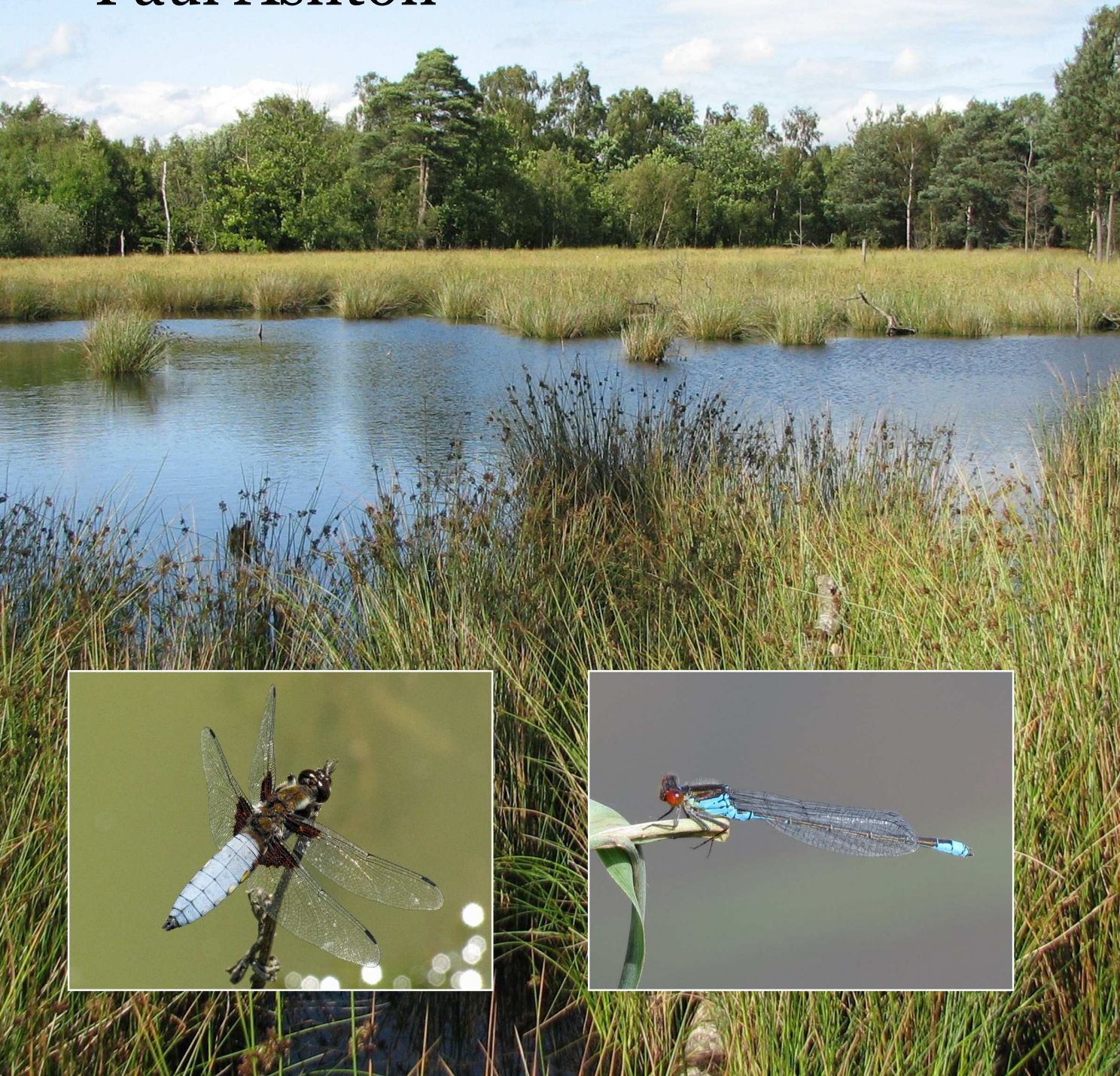


Dragonflies of South-east Yorkshire

Paul Ashton



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Dedicated to Tracy, Daniel and Emily.

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www.erdragonflies.co.uk

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Preface

Like many who develop an interest in dragonflies, my route was via bird watching. Whilst out in the field, I started to appreciate the wider range of fauna in the environment around me, butterflies being my next evolutionary step, before eventually developing my interest in dragonflies more seriously, at the start of the new millennium.

The flying adults are stunningly colourful, representing the largest insects to be found in Britain. Although the dazzling adults are the most obvious life stage, it also represents the shortest period of their life-cycle, most adults only surviving weeks, with some managing to stretch this out to a few months, solely to breed and reproduce. This is in stark contrast to the aquatic larval stage, where some species can live for up to five years, hidden away from prying eyes, before finally emerging as adults. The transformation from larvae to adult, being akin to the more well known emergence of a butterfly from its pupae, the only difference being that dragonflies miss out the pupal stage.

With my interest sparked, I started to target dragonflies whilst out in the field. It was at this point, through trying to research more about local species, that I became acutely aware of how little information was available, or known, about the distribution of dragonflies in East Yorkshire. Whilst working on a website for a local wildlife group, I had also considered setting up a website to cover the Dragonflies of East Yorkshire, to try and create some local interest. At the same time, Geoff Tulloch had already had the same thoughts, setting up his own website. This ran for a year or so, with me supporting Geoff by submitting my own records. During 2005 Geoff contacted me to say that he would no longer be running the website due to ill health. Having previously considered setting up a website, I offered to take on his site and move it forward. By late April the East Riding

Dragonflies website was launched, mainly due to support from Geoff, allowing me to use his original material. During the course of the year, several observers sent in their records, which were diligently collated and passed on to the Yorkshire Recorder for the British Dragonfly Society (BDS).

During the first year of running the East Riding Dragonflies website, I was approached by Tom Hubball, Chairman of the Yorkshire Branch of the BDS, to become VC61 Recorder. I accepted the offer, and began my current term as VC61 Recorder for the BDS. At the start of 2006 I decided to write a report covering the 2005 recording period. I felt that it was worthwhile showing how, in just one season, the current know distribution of several species had improved. It also represented a way of acknowledging all the observers who had submitted records, and at the same time allowing them to see how their records had made an impact on known distributions. This report was well received, leading to an increase in the number of observers submitting records. A further report was produced during 2007, covering the 2006 period, again being well received. Going forward the report was planned to be an annual production, to keep observers up to date with current recording. During 2008 I started to write the 2007 report, however as I wrote the accounts for the first six species, I felt the summaries were beginning to become repetitive, the only change being the early and late dates that species were observed on. I took the decision to abandon the annual report in favour of a five year update. This would allow sufficient time for unusual observations to build up, making the species accounts more interesting, rather than becoming repetitive. The next report was therefore planned to be produced in 2011, covering the period 2005-2010.

In the meantime, during 2008, the BDS launched the British Dragonfly Atlas project. This being a five year recording project to update the known distribution of dragonflies in the British Isles, culminating in the publication of a new national atlas in 2013. As VC61 Recorder, the national atlas has been a key focus for recording effort during 2008-2012, with great gains being made for several species, and under-recorded areas.

The drive to record dragonflies at a national level has also led to more direct routes for people to submit casual records, which has resulted in some good records being received, especially from under-recorded areas. The key drivers of additional records has been Living Record, a web based recording application, with iRecord being the latest addition to on-line recording. Web addresses can be found for both these resources on page 101.

With this increased distribution data, I felt the gains were significant enough to justify a more professionally produced publication. After searching the internet I finally found a suitable, print on demand publisher. This has enabled me to produce this atlas to a higher standard than the previous reports, without having to commit any expenditure to the project, other than personnel time writing the book.

Although my initial target publication date has lapsed, this has only improved the end result, as all data collected for the national atlas, has been included. My hope is that this publication is as well received as previous reports.

Paul Ashton.



Common Darter emergence
(Martin Hodges)

Introduction

The aim of this atlas is to illustrate the status and distribution of *Odonata* within the old Watsonian Vice-county 61, South-east Yorkshire. It is not intended to be a field guide to the species that can be found in the area, or a guide to their life stages, as this is better facilitated by the excellent field guides available covering the species of the British Isles. I would recommend both of the following publications:- *Field Guide to the Dragonflies and Damselflies of Great Britain and Ireland* by S.Brooks and R.Lewington, and *Britain's Dragonflies* by D.Smallshire and A.Swash, a photographic guide, recently updated to its second edition.

The first section of this book covers the Natural Areas of South-east Yorkshire, summarising how the underlying geology can have an impact on habitat, and therefore the species that can occur there.

The largest section of the book covers the status and distribution of all the breeding species. Distribution mapping illustrates species abundance, breeding information and how a species has spread. Brief details are noted covering habitat, distribution, breeding status, behaviour and current trend. Phenology charts highlight the adult flight period by week.

Migrants, vagrants and historical records, are dealt with separately, following the main species accounts.

A site guide to ten locations, provides opportunities for all the breeding species to be observed, in areas with public access.

Finally, references used in compiling this book are listed, along with a useful selection of on-line resources and addresses.

Contributors and Acknowledgements

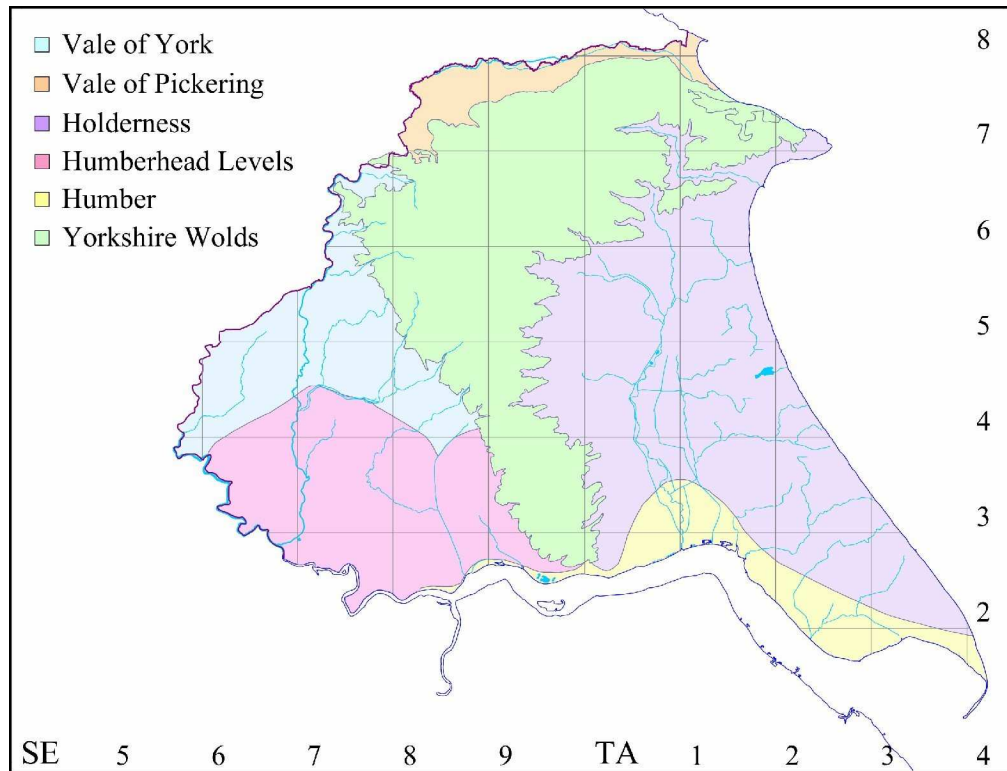
Firstly I would like to say a huge thank you to the many observers who submitted records during the period of 2000-2012, without whom this publication would not have been possible.

I would like to acknowledge the major contribution played by Martin Hodges. Throughout the recording period he has visited and recorded at sites on an almost weekly basis, therefore contributing greatly to the improved distribution knowledge of *Odonata* in the county. He has also provided support by way of proof reading and editing, including on the previous reports produced in 2006 and 2007. Without this support and encouragement, the task of writing would have been much tougher.

Despite many hours in the field it has not always been possible for myself to achieve a photograph to the required standard for publication. I would therefore like to thank the following people for allowing the use of their photographs to illustrate this publication:-

David Ashton
John Harwood
Martin Hodges
Diane Wakelin
Barry Warrington

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Environment Agency for allowing me to publicise Broomfleet Washlands, and allow people access to observe *Odonata* at this site, particularly Variable Damselfly *Coenagrion pulchellum*.



Impact of Natural Areas

South-east Yorkshire

South-east Yorkshire is divided into six Natural Areas. Each area within the region plays host to a range of *Odonata*, some being abundant, or specific to one area, whilst others are more widespread across a number of them.

The key characteristics that determine a species' abundance or presence are defined by:

- natural geological features
- current land use patterns
- the impact of human history

The presence of some species however is defined by the Natural Areas in the adjacent counties and they would not be part of the local fauna without this influence.

The following accounts aim to highlight the characteristics of each of the six areas, along with the impact they have on the species that occur within them.

Humberhead Levels

The levels are bordered to the north by the Vale of York and to the east by the Yorkshire Wolds. The area occupies the former pro-glacial Lake Humber and is a flat landscape. The underlying geology of glacial tills, clays, peat, sand and gravel, along with wind blown sand, give local variations to surface features. The floodplains of the rivers draining into the Humber form areas of washlands and flood meadows, the River Derwent having a floodplain of national importance known as the Derwent Ings. The majority of the levels consist of large open fields,



Lily Pond, North Cave Wetlands

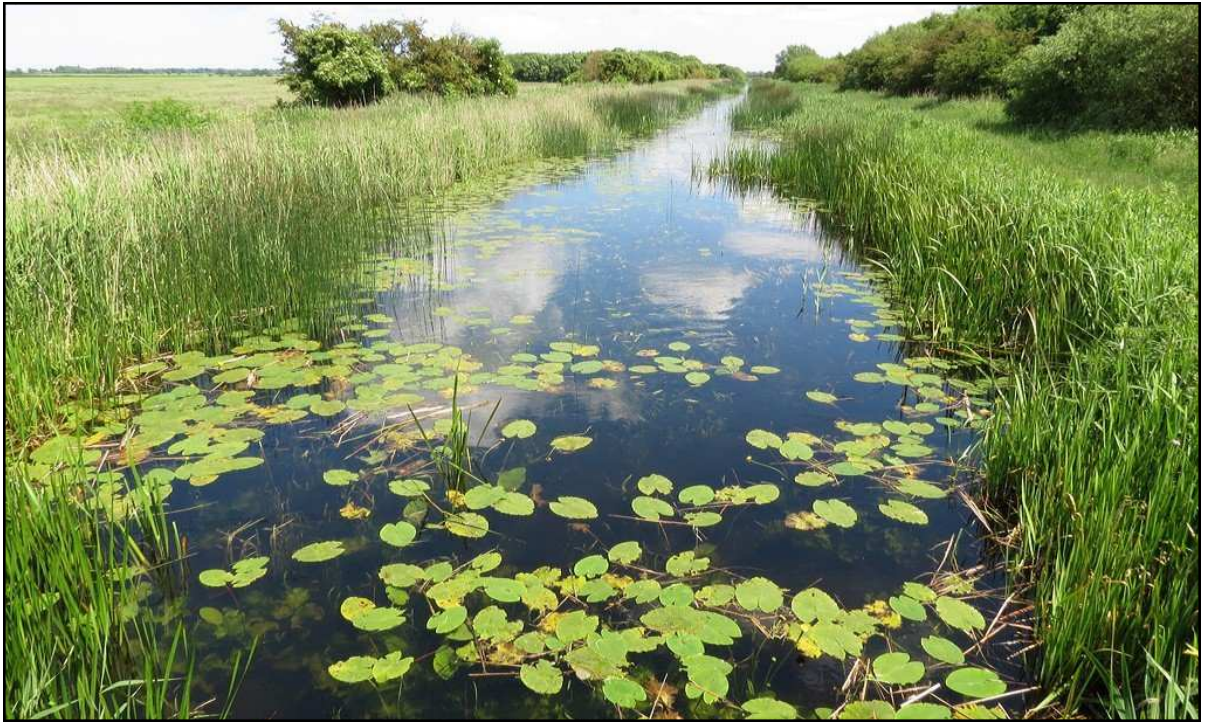
divided by dykes, with relatively few hedgerows, and is a highly productive arable area. There are small pockets of remnant heath on the poor sandy soils, which have survived due to the difficulties of cultivating these areas. Because of this, many have been planted with coniferous plantations. In modern times, the underlying sand and gravel deposits have led to extraction taking place for the construction industry, resulting in the creation of many ponds and lakes.

Notable species include the near-threatened Variable Damselfly *Coenagrion pulchellum* which is only found on the Broomfleet Washlands complex, adjacent to the Market Weighton Canal. This complex is also one of the best sites to see Hairy Dragonfly *Brachytron pratense* in the area. Skipwith Common is an important remnant heath, and is the stronghold

for Common Hawker *Aeshna juncea* and Black Darter *Sympetrum danae*. Former sites of sand and gravel extraction have inadvertently created suitable habitat for Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*, which has progressively spread northward since the turn of the century. One of the key sites for this species is North Cave Wetlands. The slow-flowing River Derwent is home to Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*.

Holderness

Holderness is an intensively agricultural low-lying area, consisting of arable and livestock farming. It borders the Wolds to the north and west, the North Sea to the east, and the Humber Estuary to the south. It is a glacial landscape made up of tills, gravels and alluvium over chalk.



Leven Canal

It shows many features of glacial activity such as drumlin mounds, hummocky terrain, moraine-like features and kettle holes. The coastline is a rapidly eroding soft clay. The valley of the River Hull is broad and indistinct. The winding headwaters run south, where the river becomes bounded by flood banks along its lower reaches. There are many drainage ditches taking water away from the former floodplain of the river. Marshlands and meres were historically common, though Hornsea Mere, Yorkshire's largest natural lake, is the only sizable example remaining. There are a number of both former and current sand and gravel pits, which are now of ecological importance to the area. Other important man-made features include the disused Leven Canal, which is now a SSSI. Tophill Low water treatment works hosts many wetland habitats including reservoirs, marshes, lagoons, ponds and

drainage ditches. Part of the site is managed as a nature reserve and holds one of the largest range of breeding dragonflies in the region.

Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma najas* reaches its most northerly point in Britain here, found along Leven Canal and the many former gravel pits from Brandesburton to Frodingham. Several species have recently colonised, or expanded their range, the most recent being Hairy Dragonfly *B. pratense* at Leven Canal. Others include Large Red Damselfly *Pyrrosoma nymphula*, Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea*, Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*, Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa* and Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*.



Allerthorpe Common

Vale of York

This low-lying, generally flat landscape is formed from glacial till, sand and gravel, offering some similar habitats to those that are found in the Humberhead Levels. There are numerous streams and dykes, which meet up with the Rivers Derwent and Ouse. Floodplains are a feature of the main rivers, with extensive areas at Wheldrake Ings. Other water features include Pocklington Canal, which also passes through the Humberhead Levels. Due to the sandy nature of the soil, there are some old heathland areas that have been covered in coniferous plantations, such as Wheldrake Wood and Allerthorpe Common.

Due to the similarity of habitat to the adjacent Humberhead Levels, the key species found are almost the same. Common Hawker *A. juncea* and

Black Darter *S. danae* are found on the heathland of Allerthorpe Common. Red-eyed Damselfly *E. najas* is found along Pocklington Canal and Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens* features strongly along the River Derwent.

Humber

The Humber is one of the largest estuaries in England, draining around one-fifth of the entire country. In South-east Yorkshire, high flood banks prevent inundation by the tides onto areas that have been reclaimed from former salt marshes. The land is highly engineered and shaped by man. Away from the City of Hull, the area consists of large open fields, drained by cuts and dykes. Suitable breeding habitat is largely man-made, through the creation of borrow pits, soak dykes and local ponds. The nature of the



Rivers Hertford and Derwent Confluence

area means it is poor for many species found in the region. There are local hotspots, of which Spurn plays a major part, boosting the number of species recorded through vagrants that have made landfall. One of the most regular migrants here is Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*, which manages to breed in most years. The other recent colonist is Small Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma viridulum*, which has recently appeared at both Oak Road Lake in Hull, Paull Holme Strays and Spurn.

Vale of Pickering

This low-lying vale forms only a small part of South-east Yorkshire. It is drained from the east by the River Hertford, joining the River Derwent at Ganton, where it flows inland to the west. The Derwent and Hertford form the main water

courses through the area, in addition many canalised water ways, cuts and dykes drain into these two rivers. The coastal area consists of a much more undulating landscape. Development around the town of Filey, including a golf course and several holiday parks, has resulted in the addition of several ponds along the coastal strip, providing valuable breeding habitat.

Notable species include Beautiful Demoiselle *Calopteryx virgo*, which only occurs on the Hertford and the eastern stretches of the Derwent, before it gives way to Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*. Red-veined Darter *S. fonscolombii* is a regular migrant recorded at the ponds along the coast, and has bred in recent years. The proximity of the North Yorkshire Moors means there are irregular occurrences of Common Hawker *A. juncea* and Black Darter *S. danae*.



Givendale

Yorkshire Wolds

Above 50 metres, the chalk geology of this area means that standing water is more or less confined to man-made features, comprising of village ponds, ornamental lakes and fishing ponds. This restricted habitat has helped highlight how the development of new ponds can have a major impact on the abundance of species within specific areas. During 2005, a series of ponds were constructed near Reighton village to facilitate the relocation of Great Crested Newts *Triturus cristatus* from nearby developments. The ponds were planted with weed that was imported from southern England, near High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Along with the pond weed, a number of dragonfly larvae of varying species were also relocated. This has resulted in a large number of species appearing in the area over

a relatively short period of time. Some are numerous at the site due to this relocation, in terms of species numbers and abundance within the Wolds area.

With the exception of Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*, which is a result of introduction, there are few signature species. Some of the more common species, such as Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans*, are the most likely to be found at village ponds, along with Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*. Away from water, Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*, Southern Hawker *A. cyanea* and Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*, may be found hunting along hedgerows and woodland glades.

Introduction to Species Accounts

The species accounts include all of those that breed, either regularly or occasionally, within the vice-county of South-east Yorkshire. In order to enable the photographs of similar species to be displayed adjacent to each other, these accounts do not run in taxonomic order. Migrants, vagrants and historical records are dealt with in a separate section at the end of the main species accounts.

The accounts are laid out as follows:

English Name - *Scientific Name*

Flight Period

Description of the flight period for South-east Yorkshire.

Habitat

A brief account of the usual habitats for each species.

Distribution

An account on the relative distribution of the species, taking into account the different natural areas within the vice-county.

Breeding Status

A brief description of breeding status, where possible by natural area.

Behaviour

Detail on how they react with each other and their habitat. In some cases this can highlight why specific habitats are required by relevant species.

Trend

A brief summary of the trend, i.e. increasing or decreasing, in range or numbers.

Dates

Earliest and latest recorded dates, plus year first recorded. Phenology chart showing the adult flight period for the relevant species.

Abundance Map

Records are plotted at 2km (tetrad) resolution.

Date Band and Breeding Status Map

Records are plotted at 2km (tetrad) resolution.

Breeding data is displayed for all records involving exuvia, pre-flight emergence, larvae and oviposition - these all being activities that take place at the breeding site. Records of copulation are excluded as this can take place away from the breeding location. Records are plotted by two date bands - the oldest records overlay the most recent records. This makes it possible to see how a species has spread its range, or how increased recording has uncovered previously unknown areas where populations are present.

Beautiful Demoiselle *Calopteryx virgo*

Flight Period Early June to early August with a peak period from late June to mid-July.

Habitat Restricted to faster-flowing clear water, found only along streams and rivers, more often acidic, with a sand or gravel bottom. Mostly found along heathland or moorland streams, though can also occur in farmland and woodland, including well-shaded streams. Prefers cooler water than Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*, and as streams broaden, this species gives way to Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*, though there may be a broad overlap.

Distribution Restricted to the Vale of Pickering along the Rivers Hertford and Derwent, including associated drainage dykes that flow into both rivers. Recorded as far east as Folkton Carr on the Hertford, and as far west as Sherburn along the River Derwent.

Breeding Status Locally important, occurring in less than 10% of recorded tetrads within the vice-county.

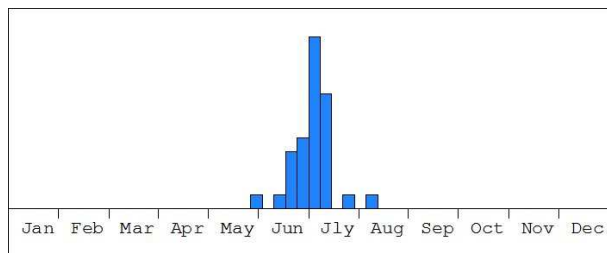
Behaviour Males are territorial, perching on bankside vegetation. There can be regular jostling for prime sites where densities are high. Females only visit water to breed, males performing an aerial dance to attract a mate. Copulation lasts for two to five minutes, after which the female will oviposit alone into submerged vegetation, often submerging herself. Males will guard the female from a nearby perch, or by hovering over the area. Larvae live amongst plant debris and roots, over-wintering buried in sand and gravel. They emerge after two to three years.

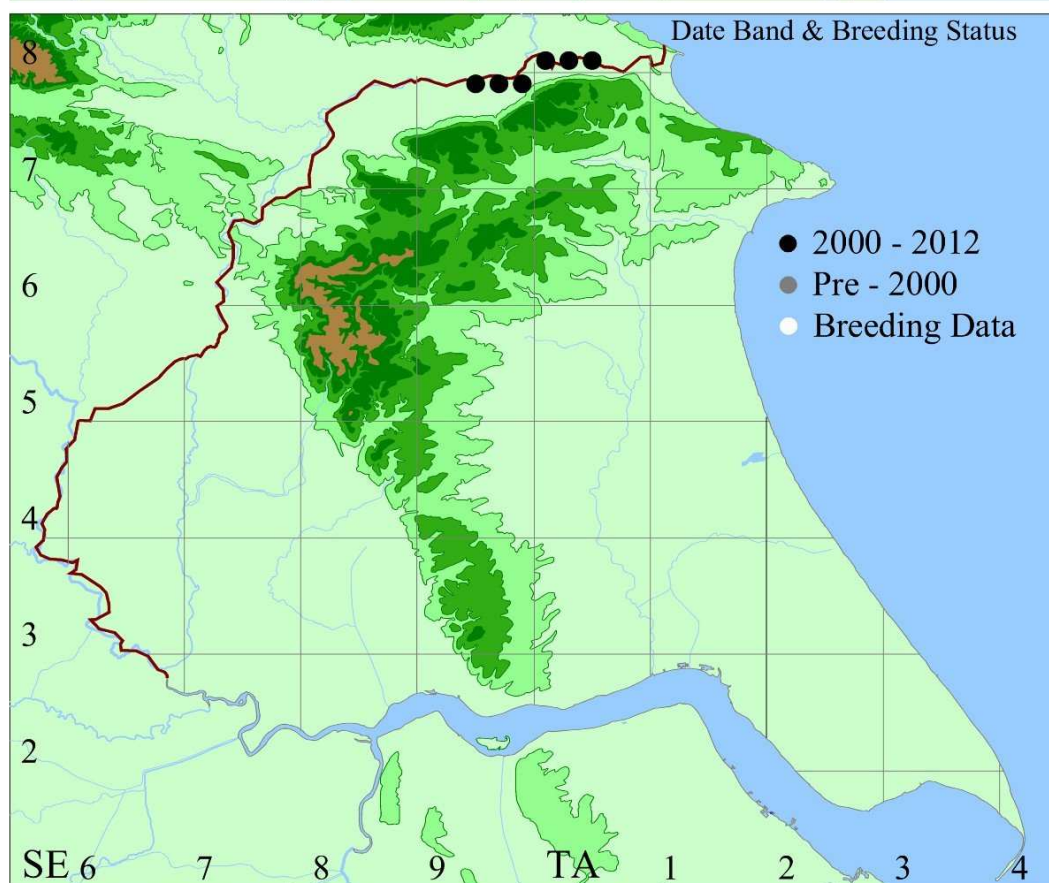
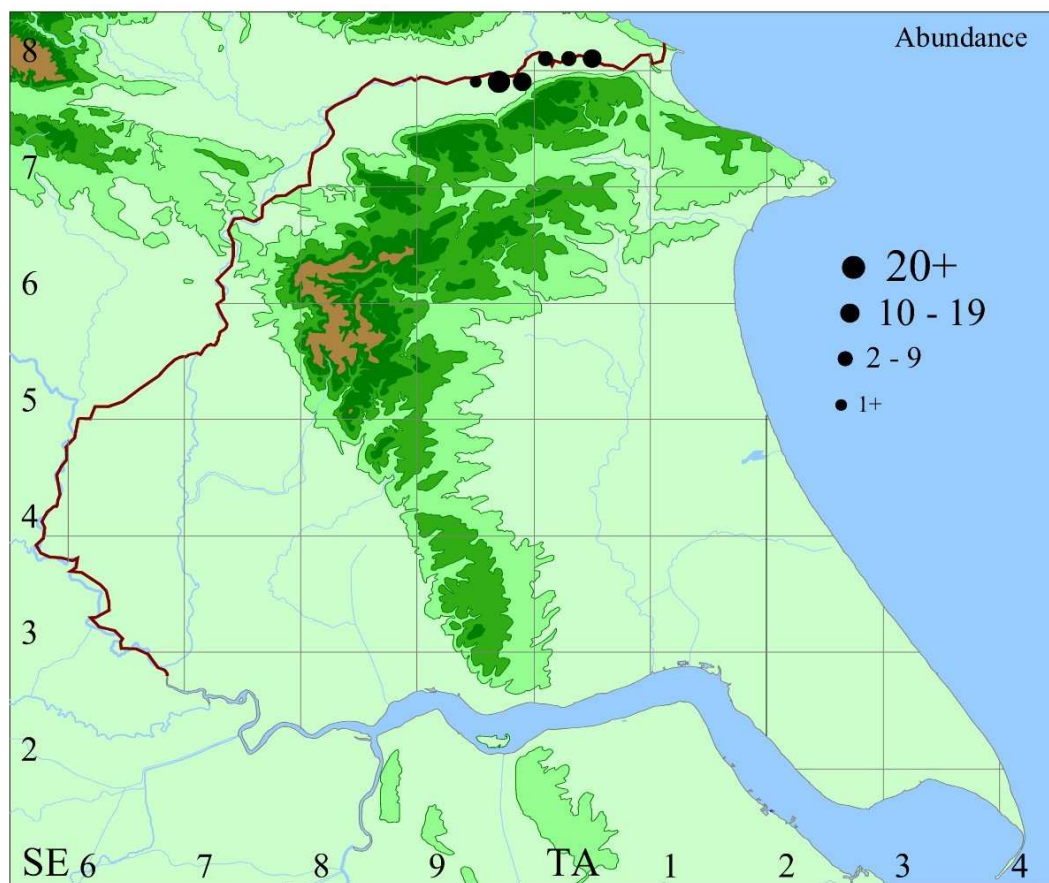
Trend First discovered in 2004 along the River Hertford. Subsequent observations have shown that they prefer the shaded areas of the river, with higher numbers encountered away from open aspects. Likely to remain restricted to the area around the confluence of the Rivers Hertford and Derwent.

Dates First Recorded:
2004

Earliest:
29th May 2009

Latest:
8th August 2007





Beautiful Demoiselle *Calopteryx virgo*



Male



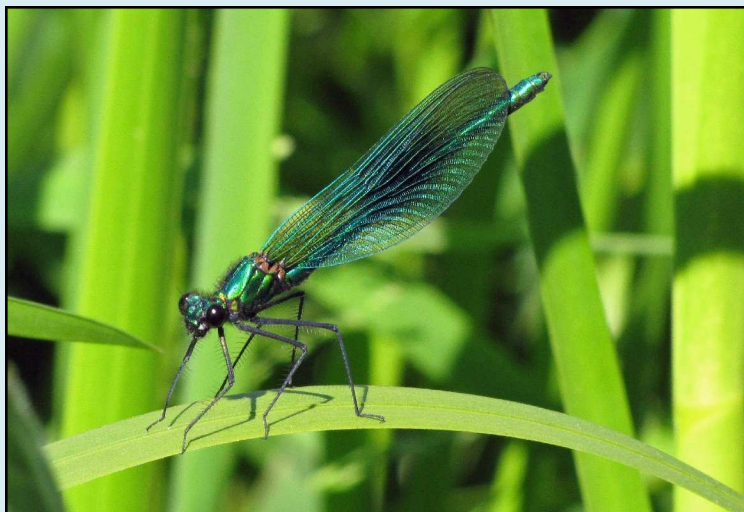
Immature male



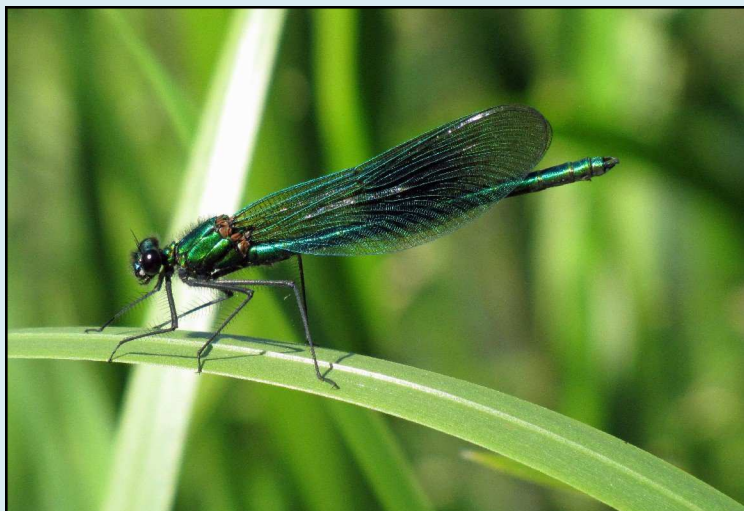
Female

Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*

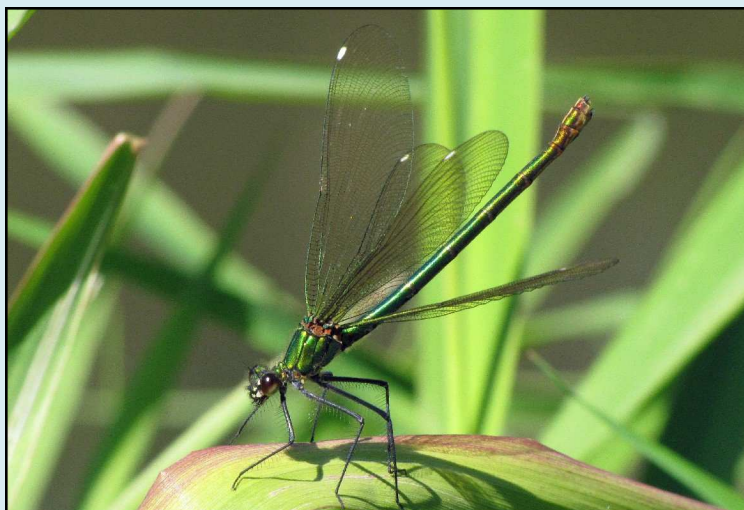
Male



Male



Female



Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*

Flight Period Mid-May to early September, peaking in number from early June to mid-July.

Habitat Preference for slow-flowing lowland rivers with muddy bottoms and open aspects, but also found along canal margins. Rarely strays from these habitats though can be found on ponds and lakes close to the favoured habitat. Range overlaps with Beautiful Demoiselle *C. virgo*.

Distribution Common along most stretches of the River Derwent and associated tributaries. Found along the Pocklington Canal, though more abundant in the streams and drainage channels that border the waterway. Occurs in small numbers along the River Foulness and Market Weighton Beck. Scarce east of the Yorkshire Wolds, though several records from the mid-section of the River Hull indicate that it may have a toe-hold in the area. A random set of records from along the coast seem to indicate migratory or dispersive tendencies, though the area east of the River Hull is under recorded, there may be areas where this species is already established.

Breeding Status Common west of the Yorkshire Wolds in suitable habitat, scarce east of the Yorkshire Wolds.

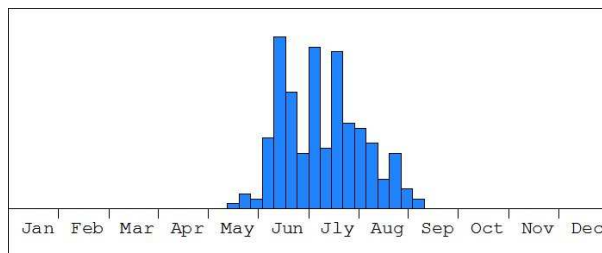
Behaviour Males are territorial, defending ideal egg laying sites. Densities can be high causing constant mayhem amongst defending males. An aerial courtship dance with flicking wings attracts females for mating, with copulation lasting around one minute. The female will oviposit into floating and submerged plants, often submerging to do so, while the male will guard her by hovering over the location, or perching on nearby vegetation. Larvae live among the submerged plant debris and bottom vegetation. They will tolerate muddy water and emerge after two years, on tall bankside vegetation. They have a short teneral stage of only two days.

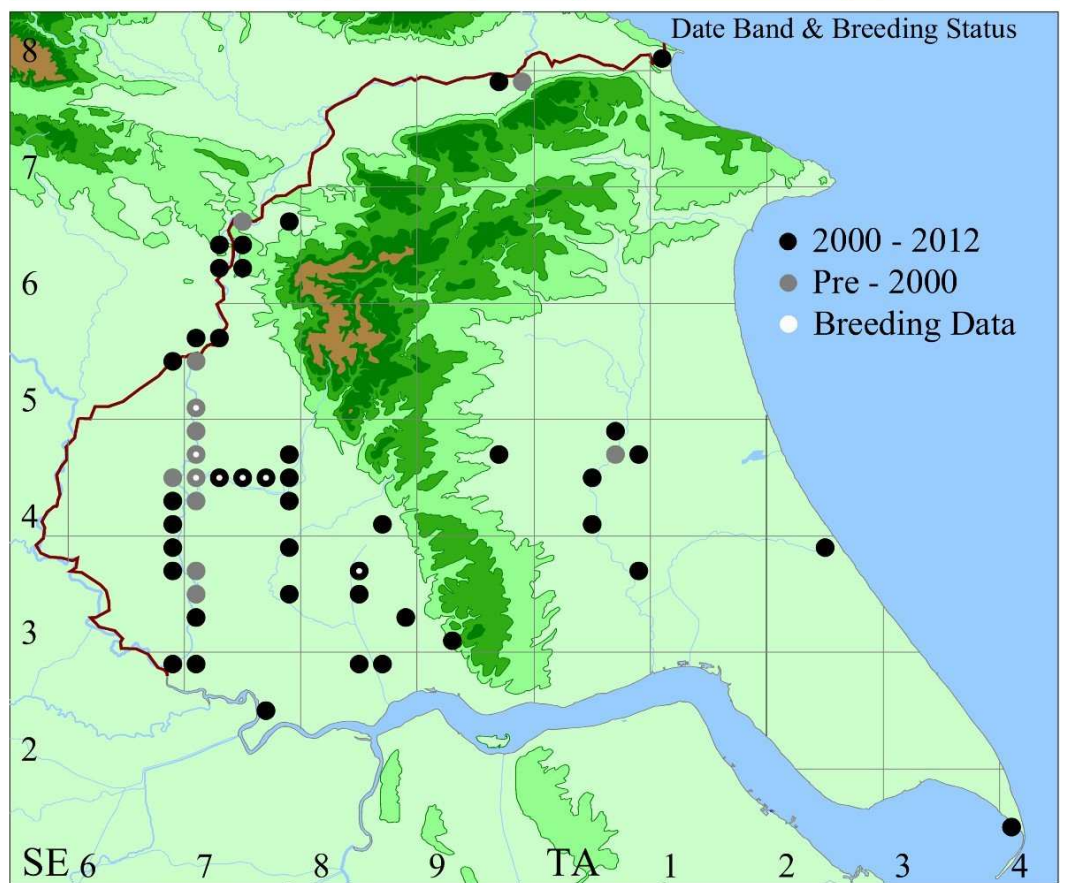
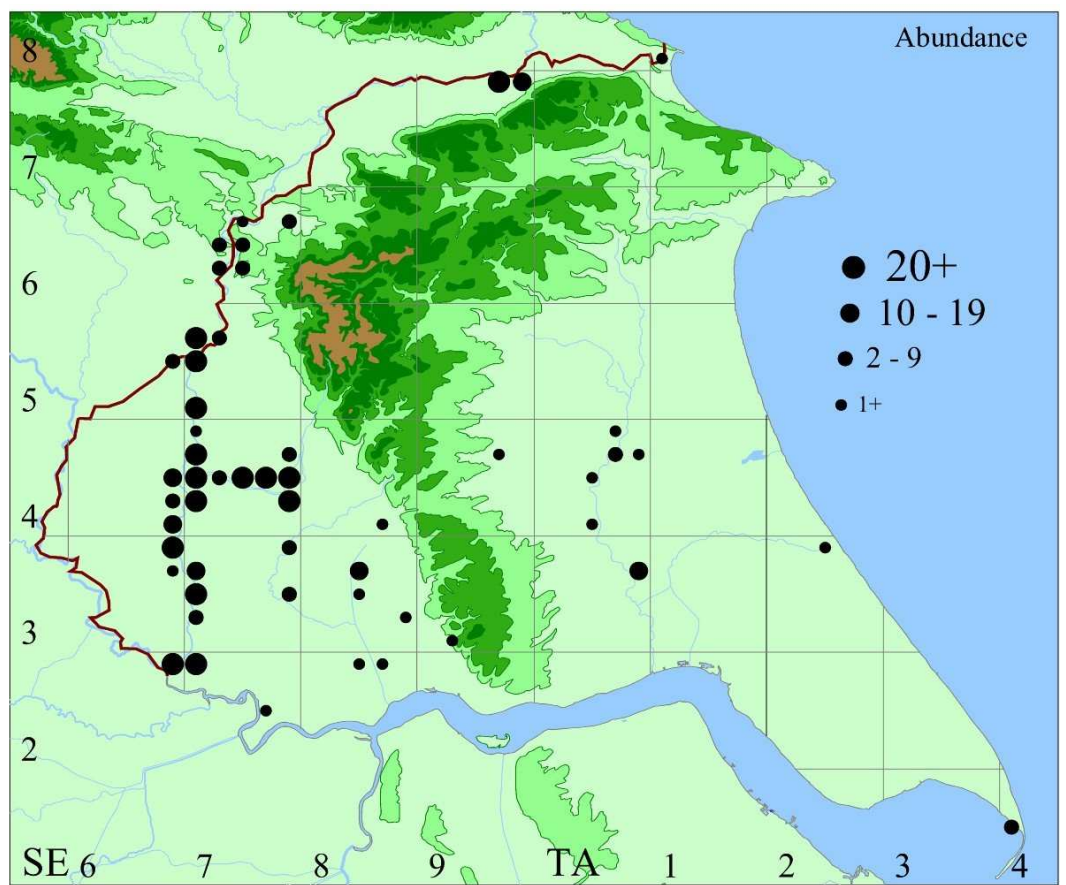
Trend Stable along its strongholds in the west. Possible range expansion in the east, where there appears to be areas of suitable habitat. There are still many opportunities to increase the know distribution of this species.

Dates First Recorded:
1918

Earliest:
15th May 2007

Latest:
3rd September 2012





Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa*

Flight Period Early June to the end of September, peaking during July and August.

Habitat Wide range of habitats including lakes, ponds, canals, ditches and acidic bog pools. Will also tolerate brackish conditions. Main requirement is shallow water with abundant emergent and marginal vegetation, consisting of grasses, rushes, sedges and horsetails. Rarely found far from water.

Distribution Thinly distributed, occurring in all the natural areas, though locally abundant in the right habitat. Found in good numbers at acidic sites, which is a scarce habitat in South-east Yorkshire. Key sites include the heathland bogs and pools at Skipwith Common and Allerthorpe Common, along with non-acidic sites at Tophill Low, Noddle Hill and Langton. Away from these key areas, present in small numbers at a number of sites including Broomfleet Washlands, North Cliffe Wood, Reighton Ponds and South Cliffe Carr.

Breeding Status Locally common in suitable habitat. Currently no documented breeding data from the Vale of Pickering, the Wolds, or the Humber.

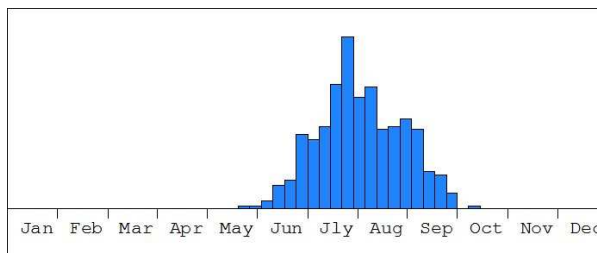
Behaviour This species is a weak flier, spending much of its time resting in marginal vegetation. Copulation takes place near water and lasts between 30-60 minutes. The female oviposits into stems of water plants with the male in tandem. They start above the water and gradually submerge for up to 30 minutes. The eggs hatch the following spring and the larvae develop quickly in around two months. Due to this they can survive pools drying out in late summer. Emergents take between two to four weeks to mature.

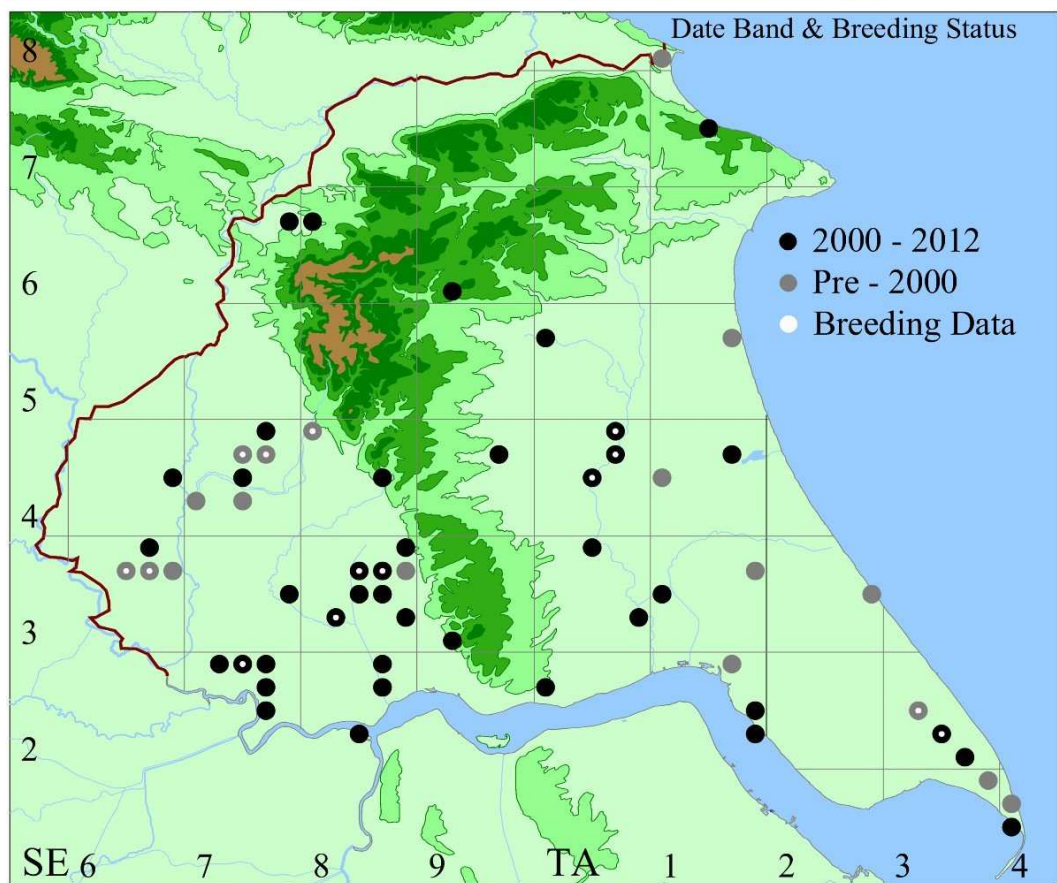
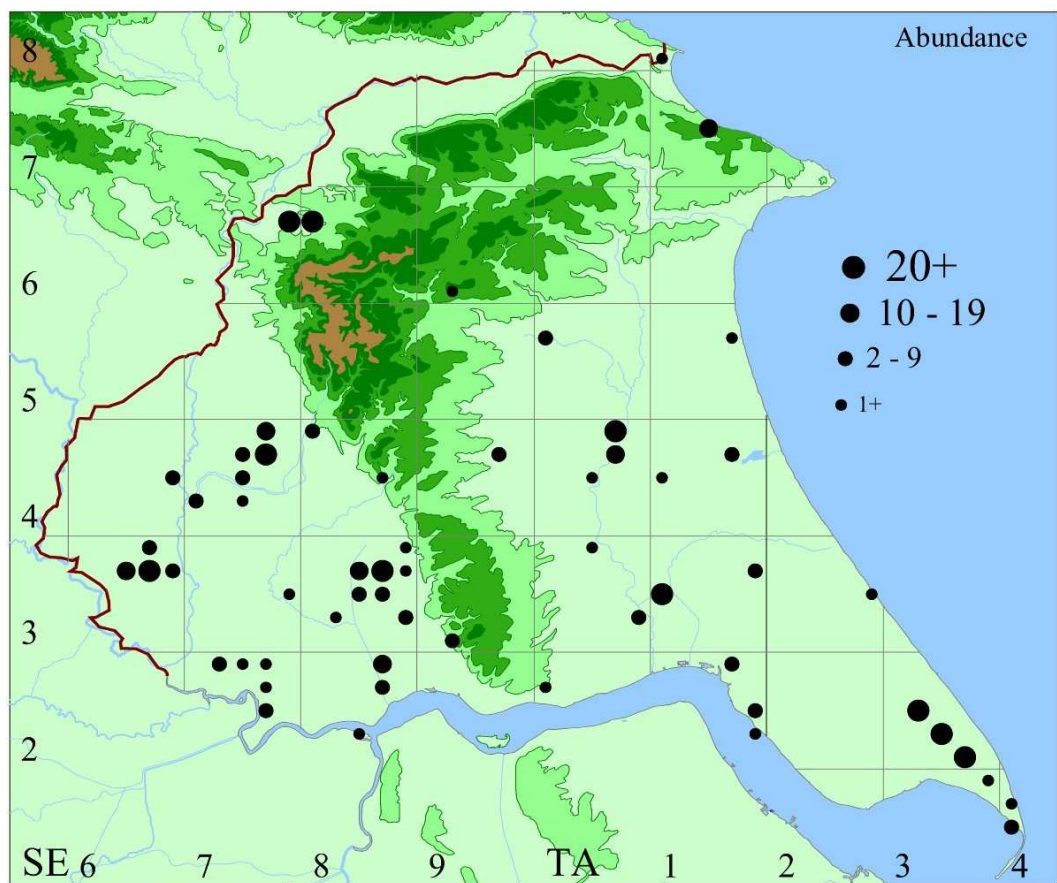
Trend Probably overlooked and under recorded due to their sedentary lifestyle, with many more sites likely to be discovered. Colonies have been maintained at many sites for several years, though numbers fluctuate on an annual basis.

Dates First Recorded:
1909

Earliest:
25th May 1968

Latest:
7th October 2012





Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa*



Male



Mature male



Female

Large Red Damselfly *Pyrrhosoma nymphula*

Male



Female



Female



Large Red Damselfly *Pyrrhosoma nymphula*

Flight Period Late April to late July, peaking during May.

Habitat Wide range of habitats from ponds, lakes, rivers, canals, ditches and acid bogs. During the maturation period, individuals can be found in adjacent grasslands and scrub.

Distribution Despite a wide habitat preference, it appears thinly distributed and absent from many suitable locations. Where found it can be very abundant and easily observed. To the west of the Yorkshire Wolds, key sites include Allerthorpe Common, Broomfleet Ponds complex, Langton and Skipwith Common. Prior to 2000, this species was only recorded a handful of times east of the Yorkshire Wolds. Since then it has become more widespread in the Tophill Low, Brandesburton Ponds and Leven Canal complex, though still remaining scarce away from this area.

Breeding Status Locally common and abundant, though scarce in the east, with no breeding data from the Humber or the Wolds.

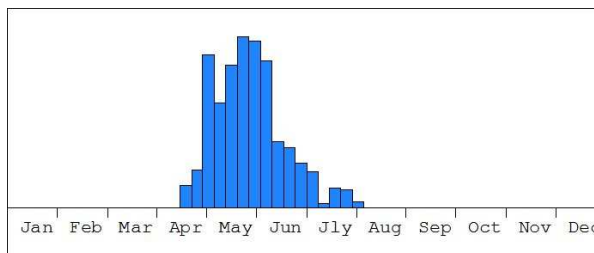
Behaviour Males are territorial. Once they have found a female, copulation usually last around 15 minutes. The female then oviposits into submerged plants, or the underside of floating leaves, usually in tandem with the male. The larvae live amongst the roots of vegetation, and the bottom debris. They generally emerge after two years, though occasionally after only one. Emergence is usually synchronous over a three week period, the first emergence date varying depending on location and habitat. Numbers being highest during this period. Males emerge first and mature quicker than females over a period of one to two weeks.

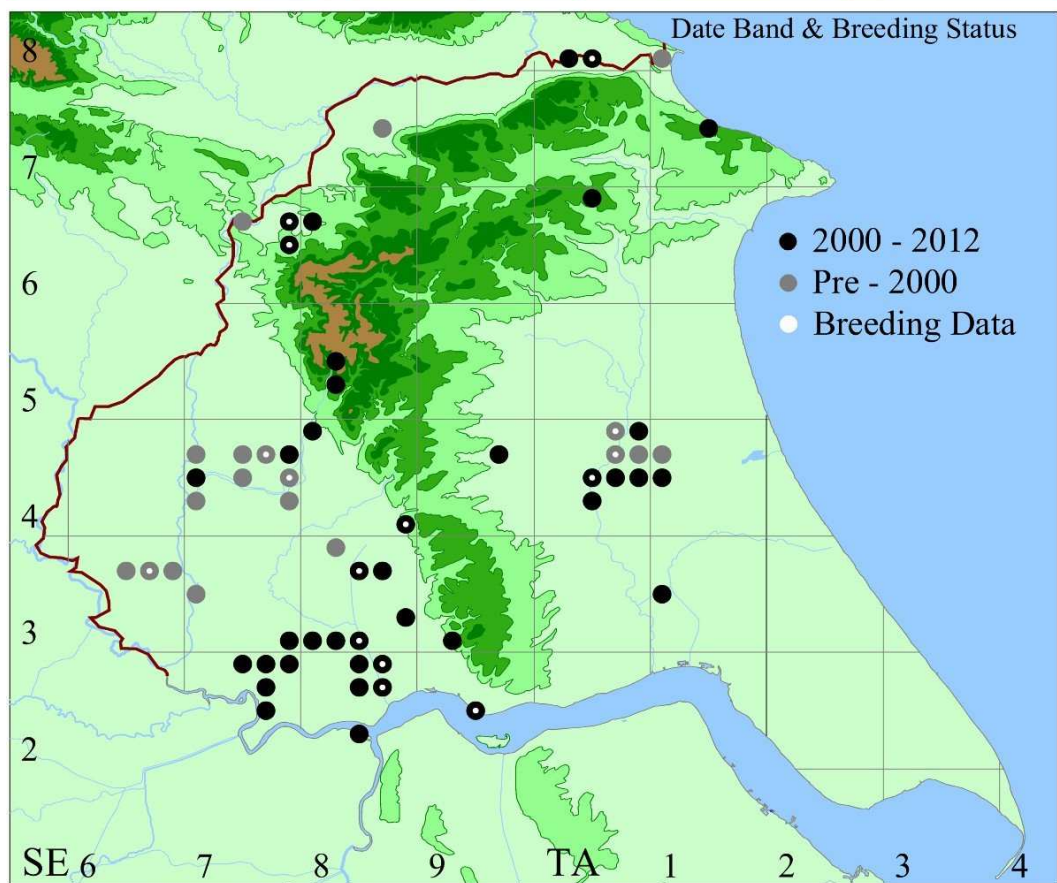
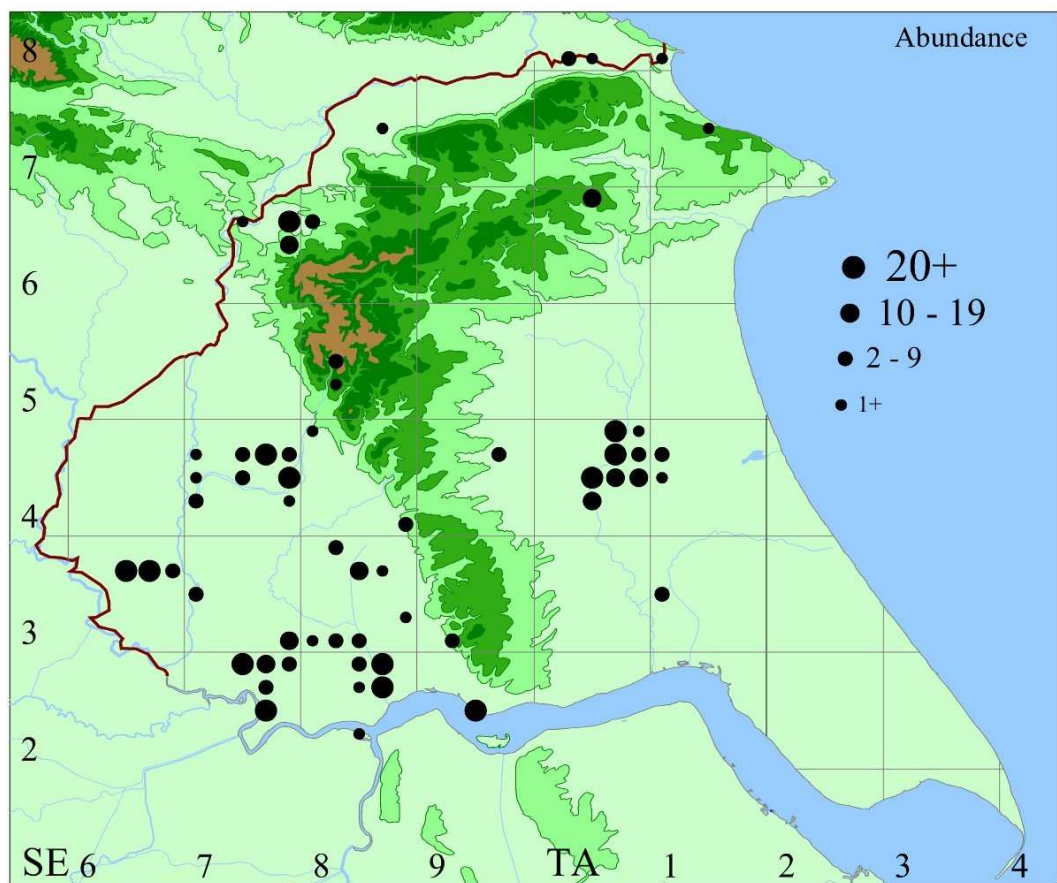
Trend Probably under recorded due to its early flight period. Likely to become more widespread in Holderness as it expands its range.

Dates First Recorded:
1917

Earliest:
15th April 2012

Latest:
5th August 1989





Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma najas*

Flight Period Early May to end of August. Peak period is late May to the end of July.

Habitat Preference for larger ponds, lakes and canals. Requires abundant floating vegetation, such as water-lilies *Nymphaeaceae*, or broad-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton natans*. When these are absent it may use floating algae mats, or rest on bankside vegetation.

Distribution Occurs at the north of its national range in South-east Yorkshire. Present in the Vale of York along the Pocklington Canal, where it is abundant at the western end. Found in the Humberhead Levels along the southern stretches of Market Weighton Canal, plus adjacent sites such as Newport Ponds and Broomfleet Ponds complex. Present on the River Foulness and certainly under recorded here, probably also found on suitable adjacent sites. In Holderness, Leven Canal and Brandesburton Ponds are the key strongholds for this species. They are also found at sites nearby such as Tophill Low. To the south, a small population can be found on Beverley Beck.

Breeding Status Locally common in the right habitat.

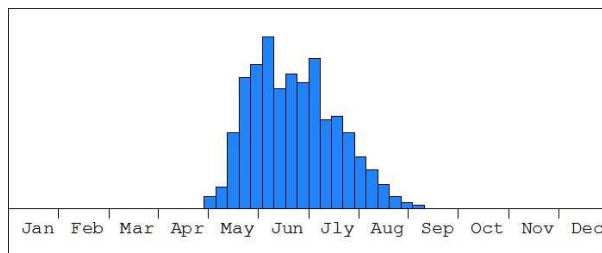
Behaviour They have a strong direct flight over water, frequently settling on floating vegetation. Males are aggressive, tackling other males that come close to their chosen resting place. After copulation the female oviposits in tandem with the male into stems and leaves of aquatic plants. Can submerge for up to 30 minutes. Larvae live among submerged plants. They usually emerge after two years, though one year is not uncommon.

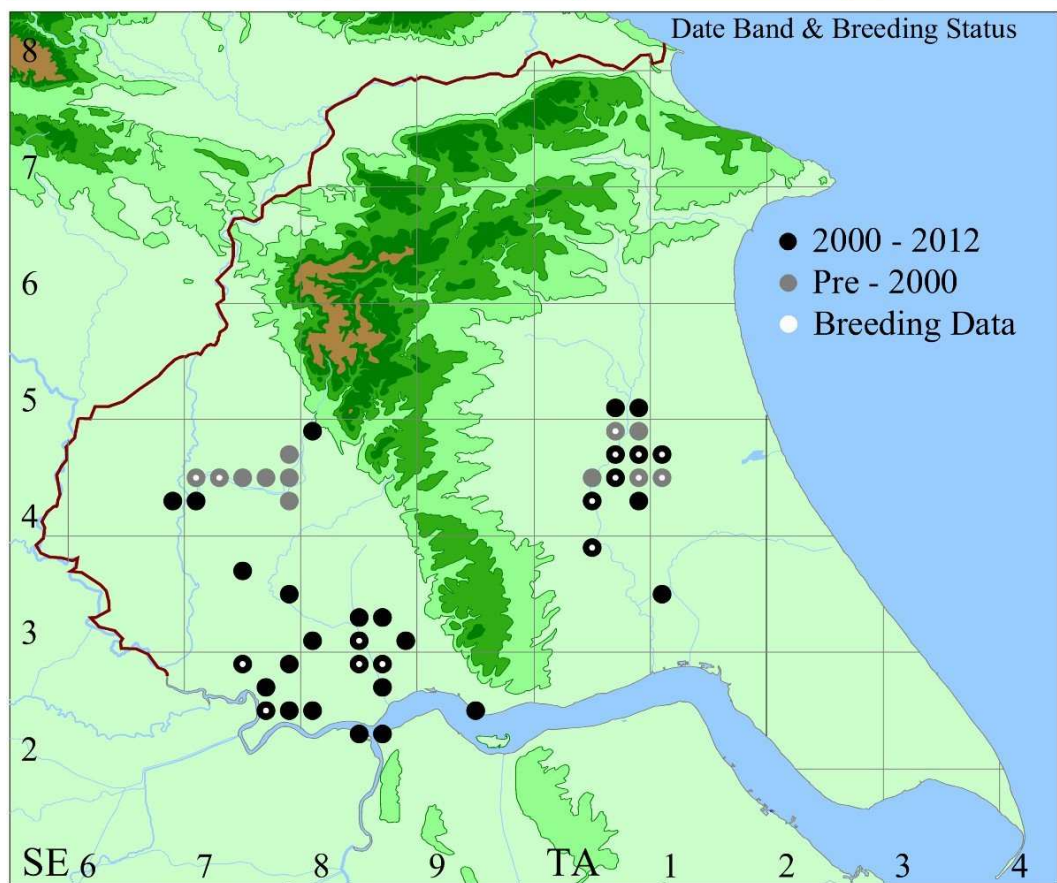
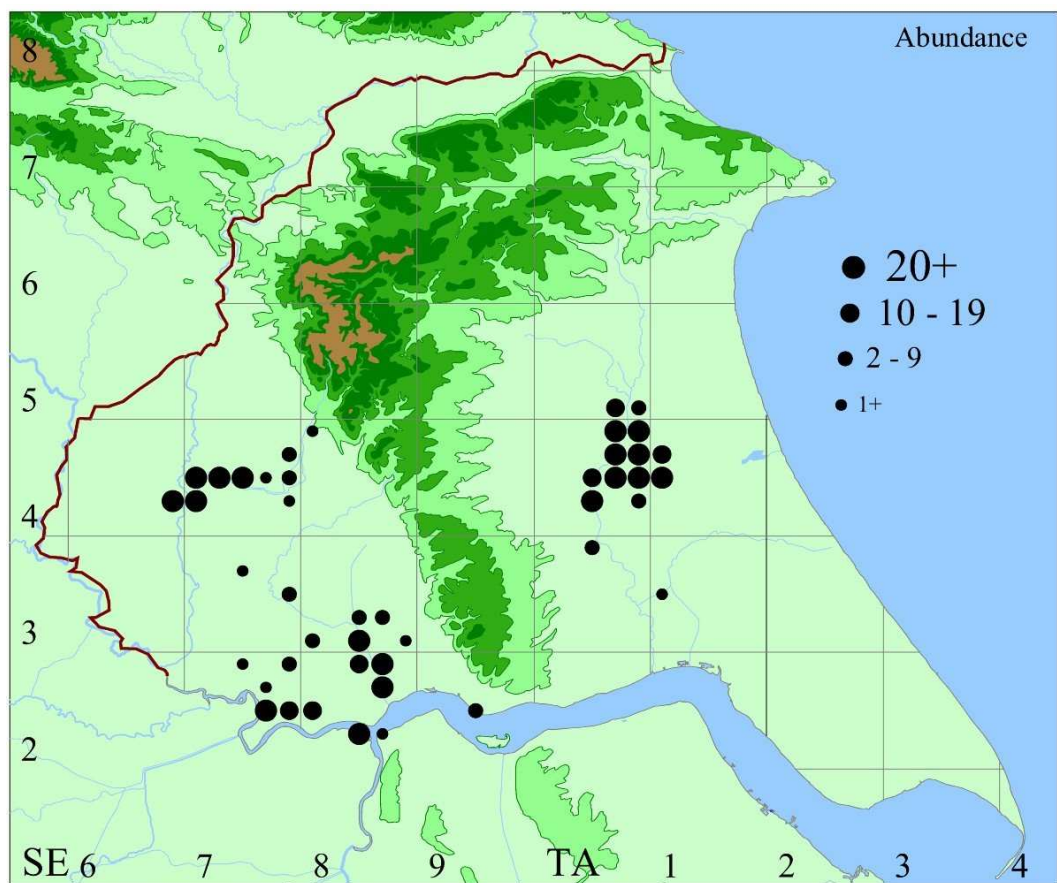
Trend This is a fairly sedentary species and not likely to spread far from its core areas. There is potential for more sites to be discovered around the River Foulness which is currently under recorded. Likely to be recorded in greater numbers along the eastern stretch of Pocklington Canal, which has recently been cleared after many years of being overgrown. The biggest threat is sites becoming overgrown with vegetation, especially with stands of reeds.

Dates First Recorded:
1972

Earliest:
30th April 2011

Latest:
4th September 2010





Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma najas*



Male



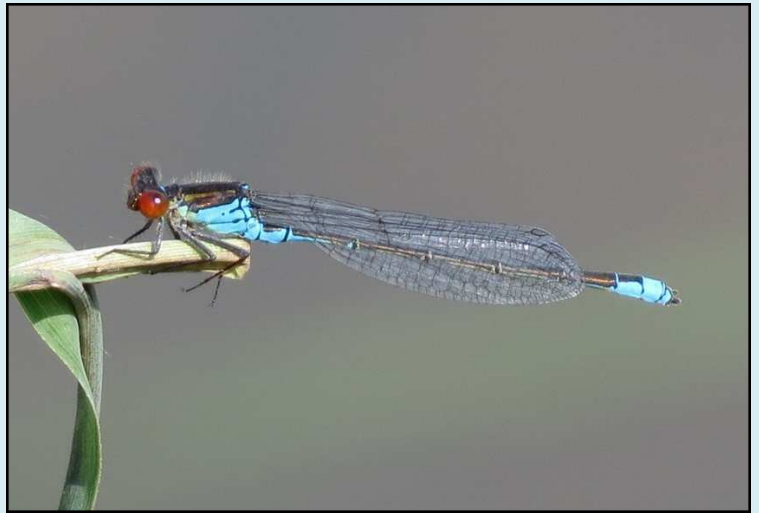
Female



Copulating pair

Small Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma viridulum*

Male



Male



Copulating pair



Small Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma viridulum*

Flight Period Mid-July to early September. Peak time is second and third week of August.

Habitat Ponds, lakes and ditches with plenty of floating vegetation such as Hornwort *Ceratophyllum*, Water-milfoil *Myriophyllum* and Waterweed *Elodea*. Also uses rafts of floating algae. Generally found in sheltered positions, with nearby trees and shrubs for roosting. Will tolerate brackish conditions.

Distribution Having only colonised the area as recently as 2006 it is currently only known from a handful of sites. The core site is Oak Road Lake in Hull which is adjacent to the Beresford Road playing fields. It was recorded at Noddle Hill in 2006, though there have been no subsequent records. During 2007 present in single figures in the Canal Zone at Spurn. First recorded at Saltmarshes Delph near Howden in 2009, and more recently from Paull Holme Strays

Breeding Status Recent colonist and scarce breeder. Currently confined to the Humber and Humberhead Levels.

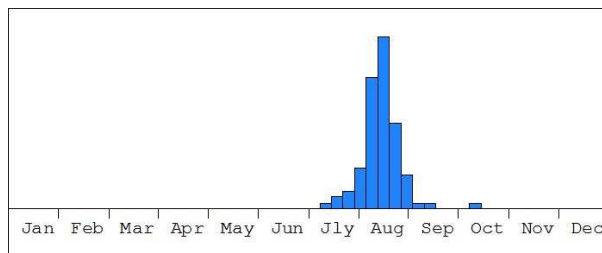
Behaviour During the day males appear constantly active, patrolling well away from the margin in search of females. Once copulation has taken place, they oviposit in tandem into stems and leaves of floating vegetation. They can often submerge for long periods of time. Larvae live among submerged water plants and emerge after one year on to floating vegetation.

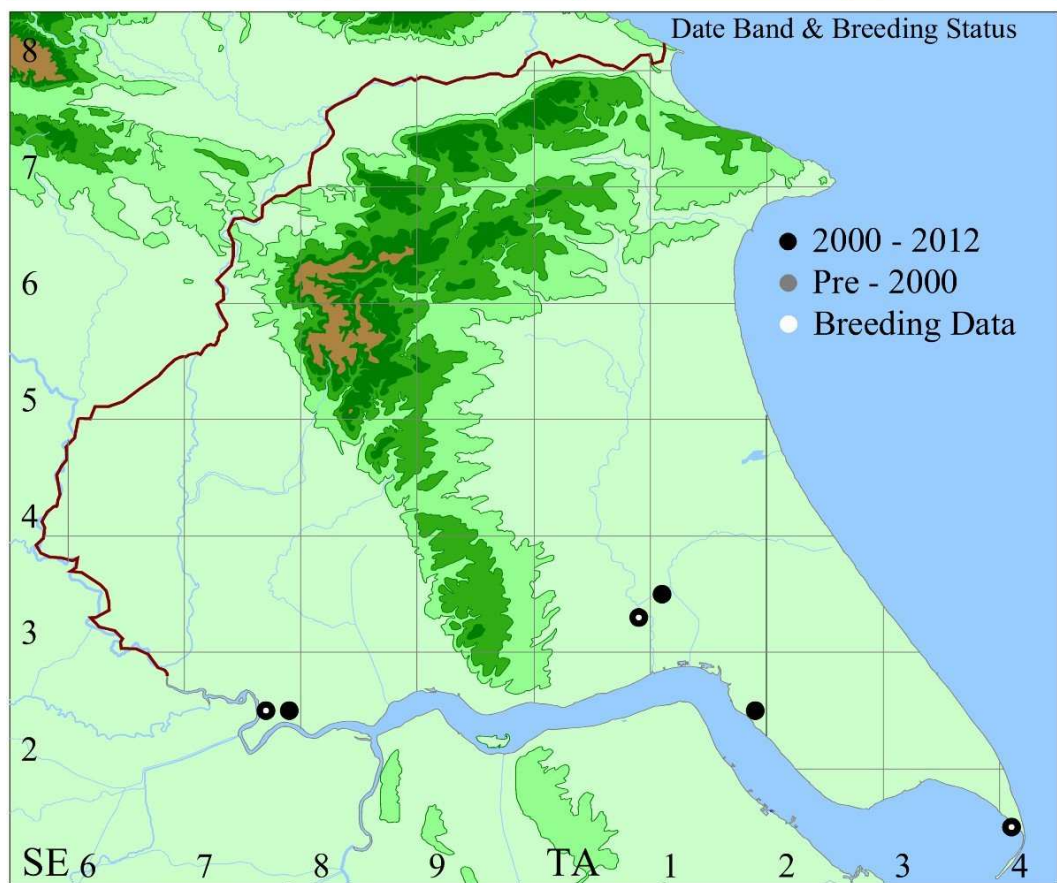
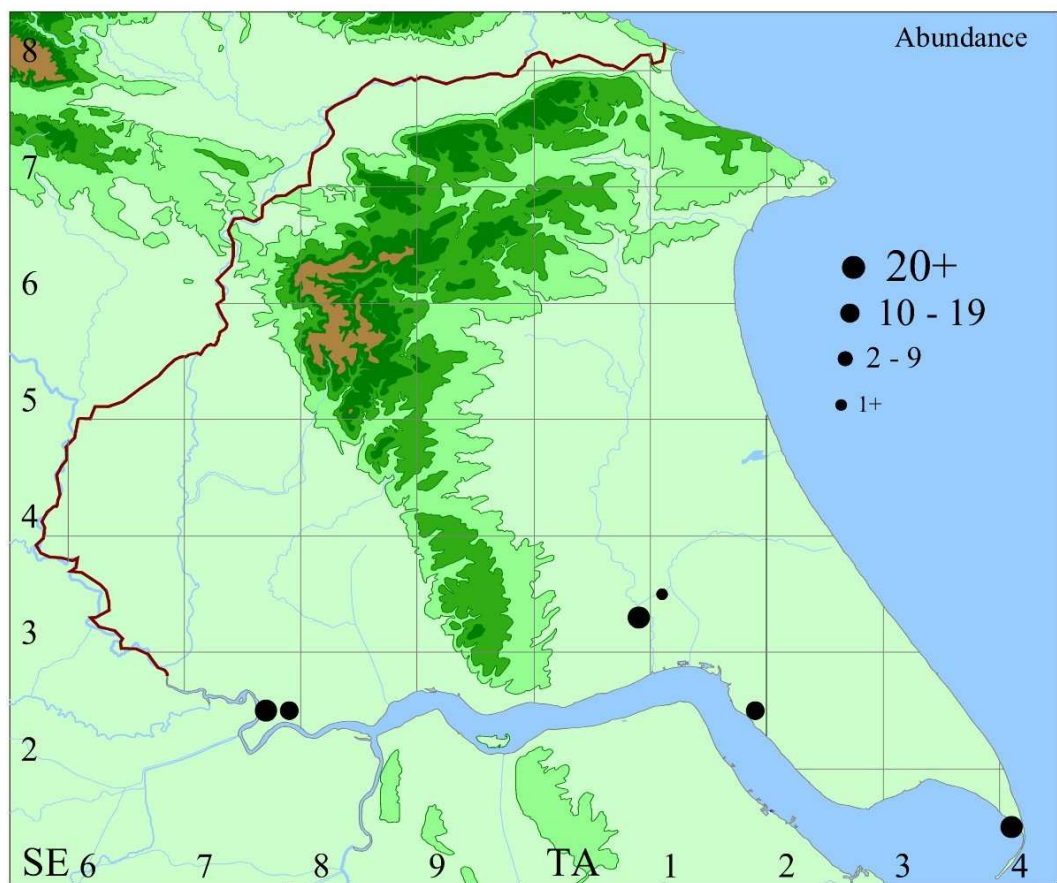
Trend Currently expanding its range northwards through the country, reaching its current northern limit in Yorkshire. Since its arrival, wetter and cooler summers seem to have restricted its dispersive nature, with only five sites colonised since first appearing in 2006. If the national trend continues, it should become established at more sites around the region. The main risk for this species is the removal of floating aquatic vegetation.

Dates First Recorded:
2006

Earliest:
12th July 2012

Latest:
2nd October 2011





Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans*

Flight Period Late April to late September, peaking from late May to late July.

Habitat Wide range including garden ponds, lakes, rivers, canals and ditches. Can also be found in brackish conditions and acidic peaty pools. More tolerant of pollution than other species, only really avoiding fast-flowing water. Readily disperses and is one of the first species to colonise new sites.

Distribution Occurs in all the natural areas of South-east Yorkshire and can be very abundant. Where there is plenty of marginal vegetation, or surrounding meadows, it is often readily flushed whilst walking through the grasses. It is scarce on the Wolds, though is the most likely *Zygoptera* species to appear at lakes and ponds in the area.

Breeding Status Common resident breeder.

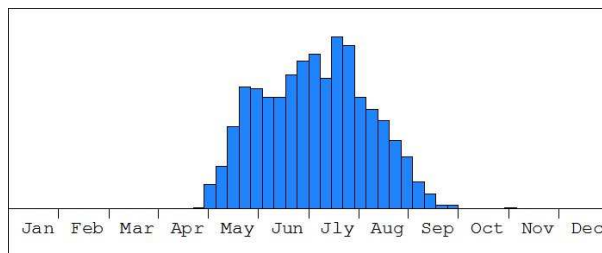
Behaviour Often found in marginal vegetation in large numbers. Copulation last from between two to six hours, due to this, it is the most frequently observed species seen in the wheel position. Often females selected by the males are still in their immature colour forms. Females oviposit alone onto the tissue of aquatic plants and debris, where they are not usually harassed by the males. Frequently found in dull weather when other species are inactive. Larvae emerge after one to two years.

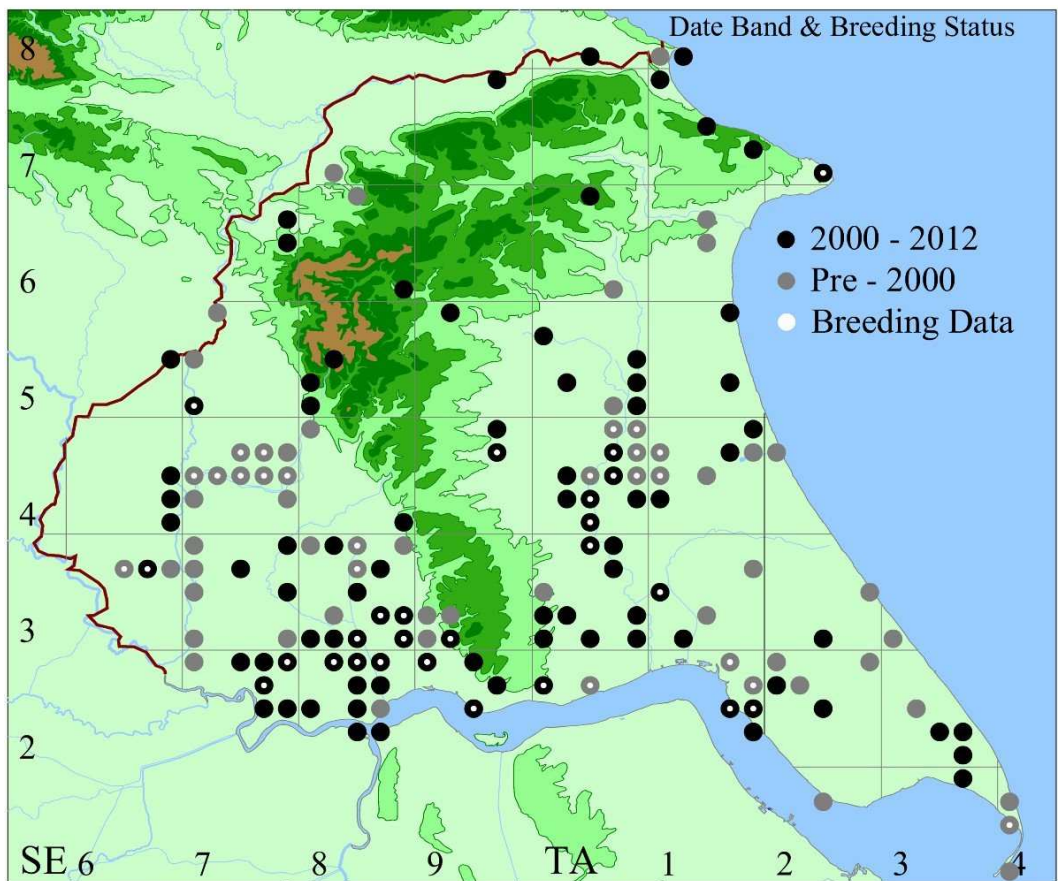
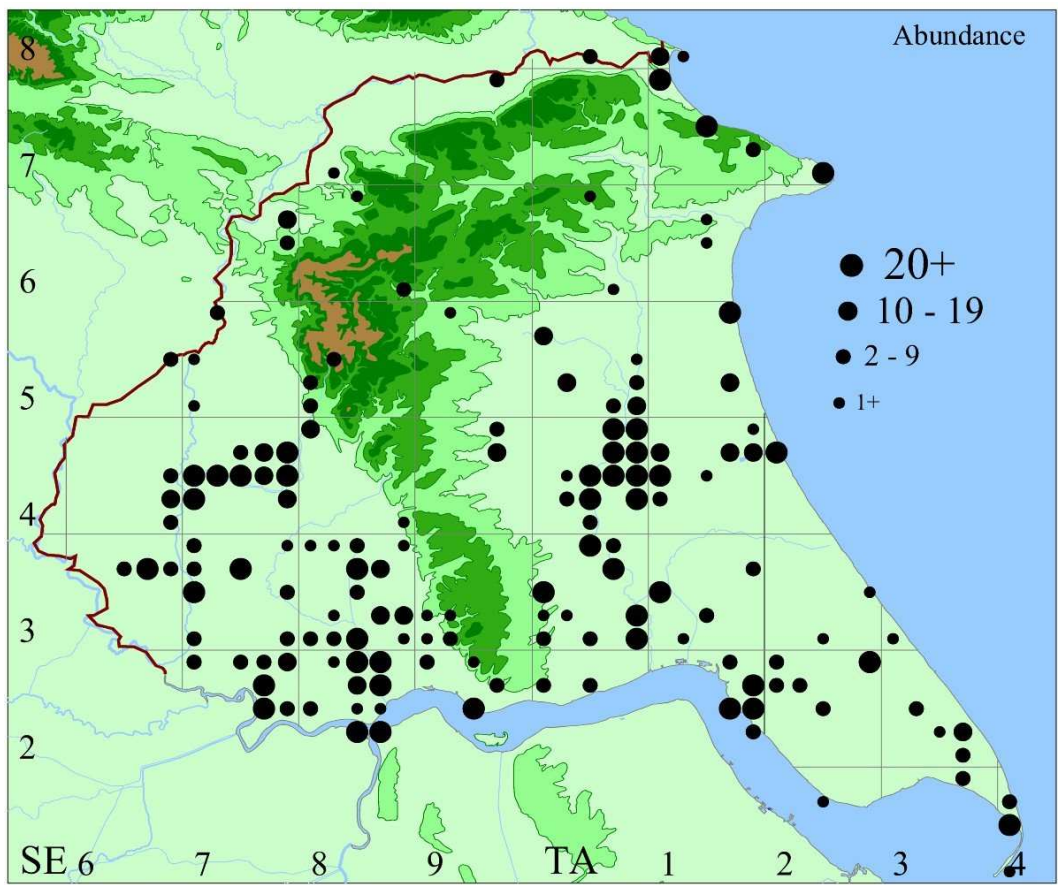
Trend This is the most widespread species in South-east Yorkshire. Due to its wide habitat preference, including poorer water quality, it is likely to remain abundant.

Dates First Recorded:
1952

Earliest:
25th April 2011

Latest:
2nd November 2002





Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans*



Top right
Male

Top left
Female - form: typica



Upper centre
Female - form: infuscans
(Barry Warrington)



Lower centre
Female - form: violacea

Bottom left
Female - form: rufescens



Bottom right
Female - form: rufescens-obsoleta



Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*

Male



Female



Copulating pair



Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*

Flight Period Late April to late September, peaking late May to end of August.

Habitat Large ponds and lakes are the main preference for this species. Can also be found along canals and rivers, but will also tolerate brackish conditions. The most abundant *Zygoptera* found in open areas.

Distribution Widespread throughout the vice-county, being present in all the natural areas, though scarce on the Wolds. In the Vale of York, it is abundant along Pocklington Canal, frequently found resting on water lilies *Nymphaeaceae*. North Cave Wetlands in the Humberhead Levels is a key site, as thousands can be encountered at the peak of the season. Abundant at many sites in Holderness, where at Tophill Low it prefers the more open areas at the south end. Readily found on the ponds at Brandesburton and along Leven Canal. In the Humber area, good numbers can be encountered at Spurn and Welton Waters.

Breeding Status Widespread resident breeder, though scarce on the Wolds.

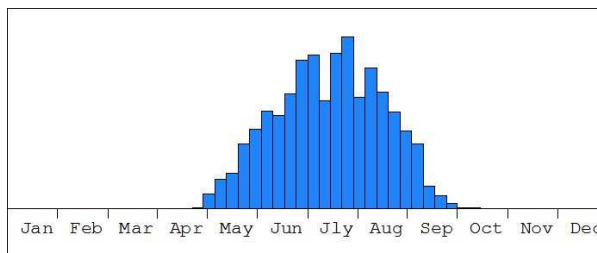
Behaviour The most dominant species on large lakes and reservoirs, swarming over the waters surface far from the banks in sunny conditions. Readily settles on emergent vegetation and is aggressive towards others, even driving away larger species. Copulation lasts for around 20 minutes, frequently away from water. Oviposits into submerged and emergent vegetation, usually in tandem. If the female submerges the male will uncouple, guarding the area waiting for her to re-emerge. Females can submerge for up to an hour. Larvae live amongst submerged vegetation emerging after 1-3 years. They mature in surrounding areas over a period of around 12 days.

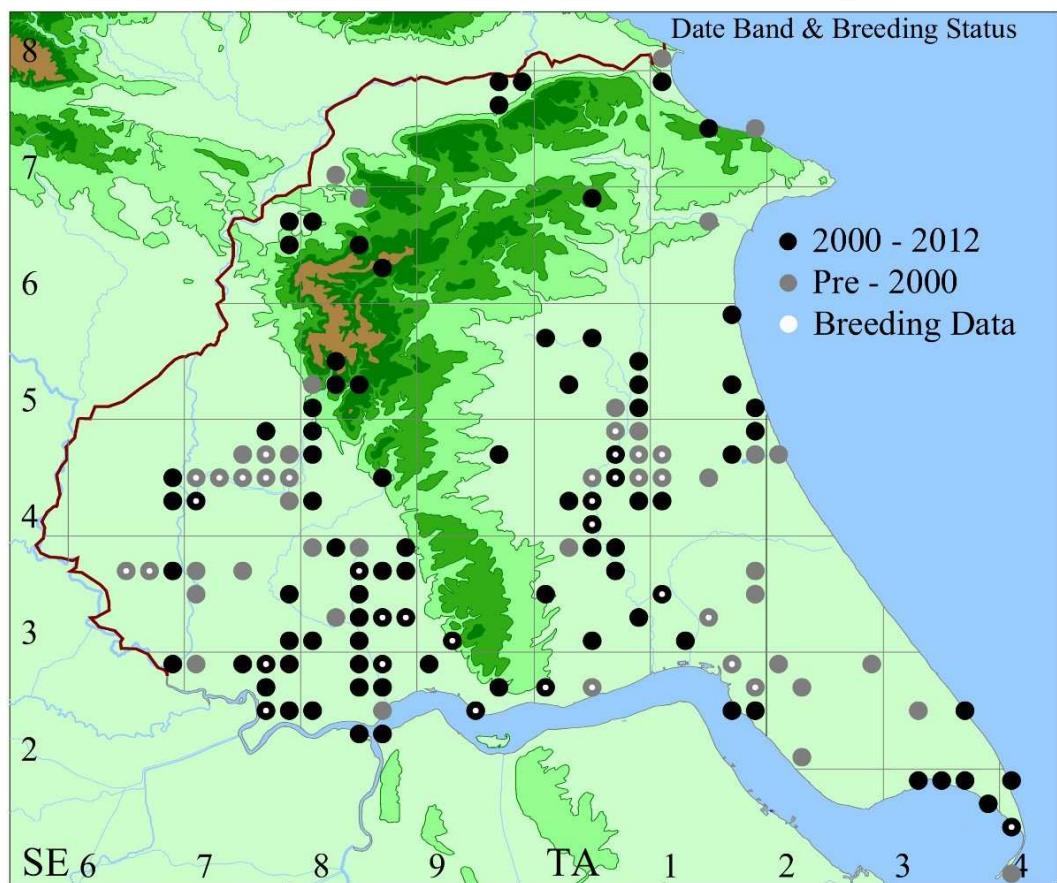
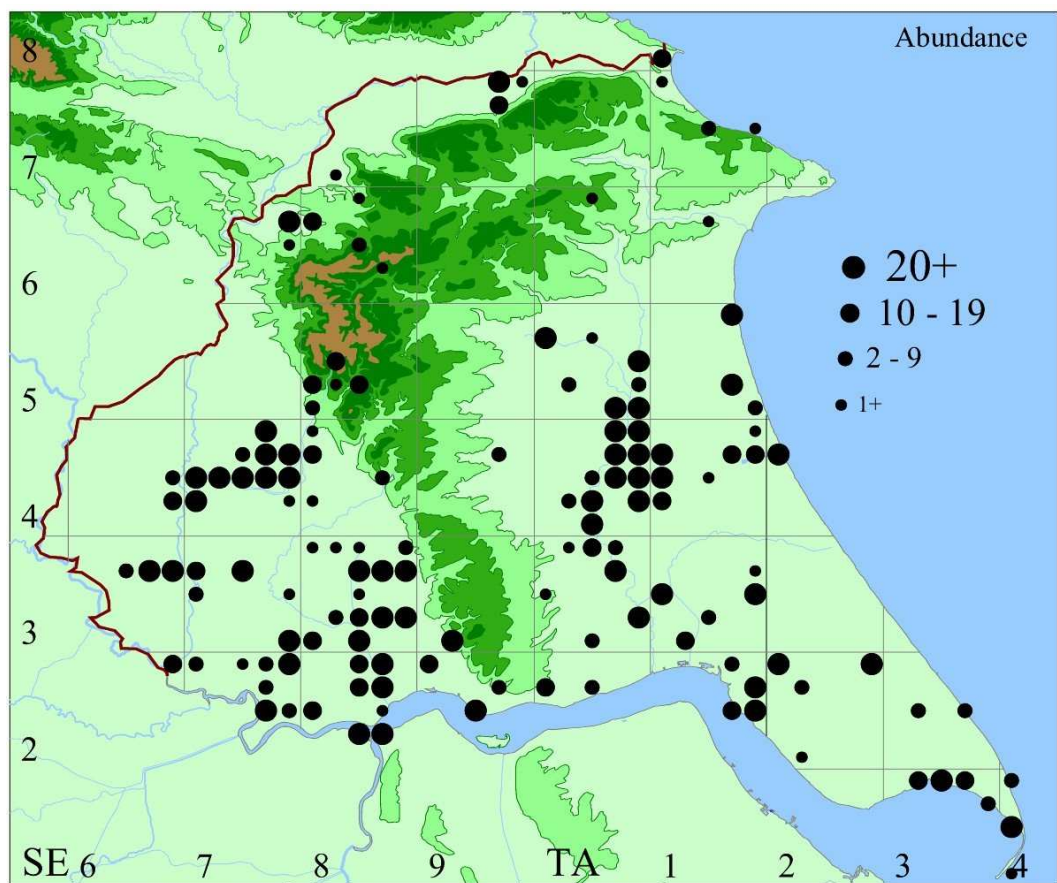
Trend Likely to remain abundant, the only real threat is sites becoming overgrown with emergent vegetation.

Dates First Recorded:
1909

Earliest:
25th April 2011

Latest:
2nd October 2011





Variable Damselfly *Coenagrion pulchellum*

Flight Period Late April to mid-July, peaking mid-May to mid-June.

Habitat Fens, ponds, lakes, slow-flowing dykes, canals and peaty pools. Dependant on plenty of emergent vegetation. After emergence, tenerals require sheltered areas to mature, often being found in adjacent grasslands and in the lee of shrubbery and hedgerows.

Distribution Nationally this species has a scattered distribution. It can be absent from sites that appear ideal. There are historical records from a handful of locations in the other Yorkshire vice-counties. First recorded in 2007 from Broomfleet Washlands in the Humberhead Levels, then subsequently confirmed in the wider complex of ponds. A single record late in the season at Faxfleet, probably relates to a wandering individual from the Broomfleet area.

Breeding Status Scarce breeding species, though can be the most abundant *Coenagrion* species at the few sites it occupies. The only species in the vice-county designated by the British Dragonfly Society as of national importance.

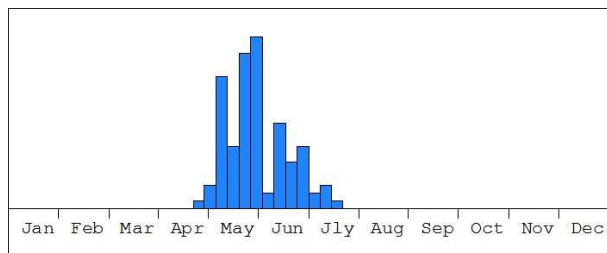
Behaviour Males are none territorial. Copulation last around 10-15 minutes. Once copulation has taken place the pair will oviposit in tandem, into stems of floating water plants, or remains of rushes and common reed. The larvae develop in one year living among submerged vegetation.

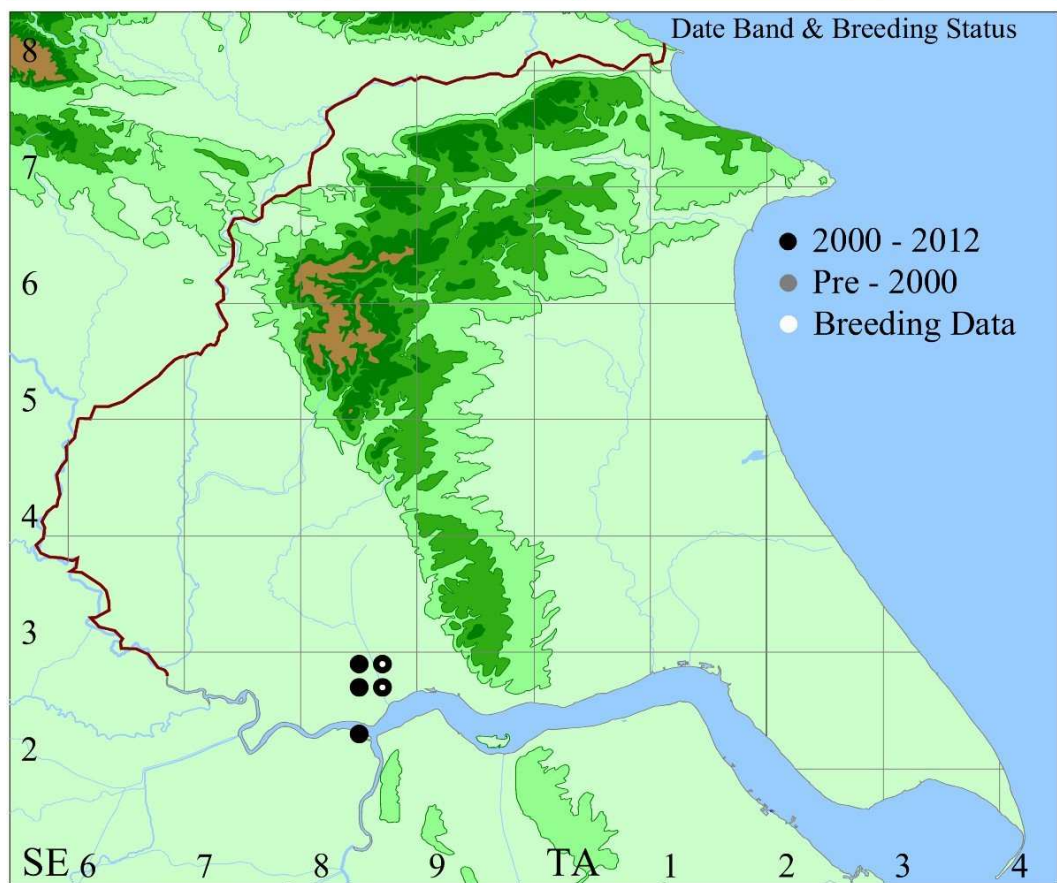
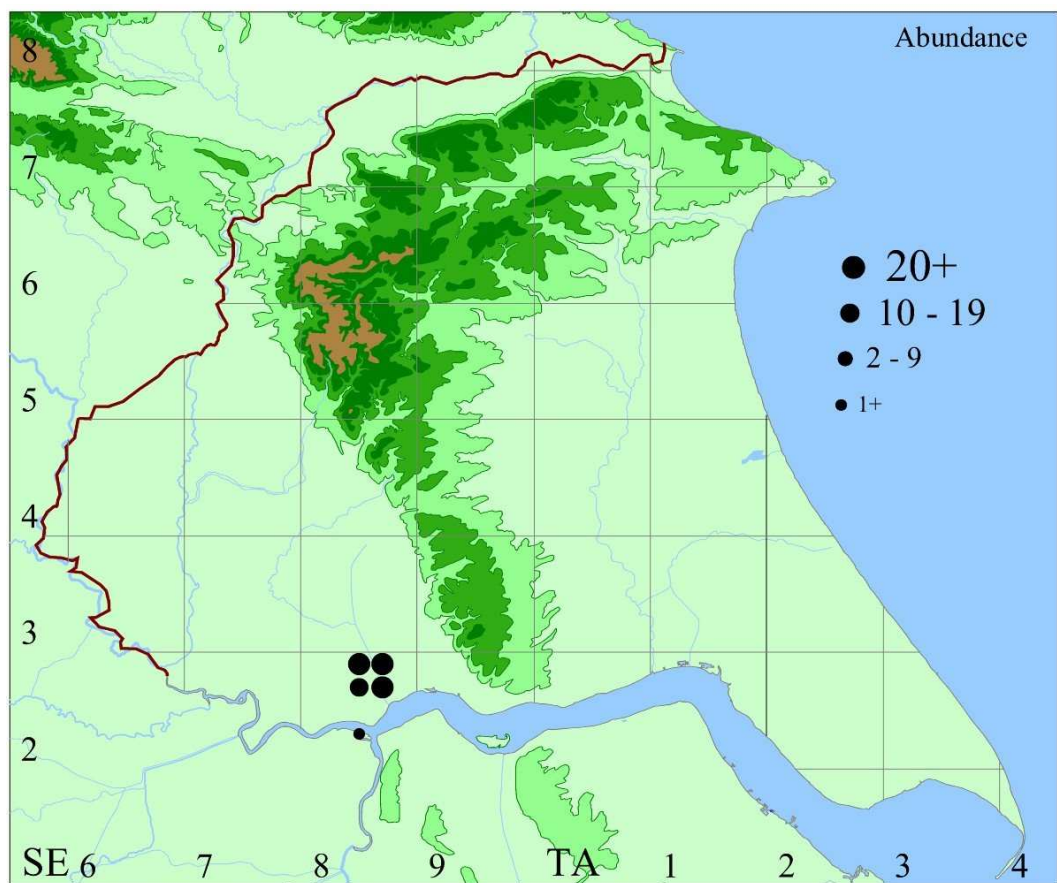
Trend Unlikely to be a widespread species. Due to the number of ponds it inhabits in the area, it is likely to survive any single catastrophic event that may happen at a single pond. However, on a national level, colonies can suddenly disappear without any real apparent reason.

Dates First Recorded:
2007

Earliest:
22nd April 2011

Latest:
12th July 2011





Variable Damselfly *Coenagrion pulchellum*



Male



Female 'blue form'



Female 'dark form'

Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella*

Male



Female 'blue form'



Female 'dark form'



Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella*

Flight Period Early May to early August, peaking late May to end of June.

Habitat Wide range of habitats from garden ponds, lakes, ditches, streams, canals and rivers to peaty pools. The main requirement is plenty of marginal vegetation in sheltered locations. Frequently settles on floating vegetation, as well as being readily found in adjacent grasslands and sheltered woodland edges.

Distribution Commonly found at suitable sites in the Vale of York, especially along the Pocklington Canal. In the Humberhead Levels, there is the opportunity to compare this species to the similar Variable Damselfly *C. pulchellum*, with which it is often confused. In Holderness, good numbers can be found in the sheltered areas at Tophill Low and along Leven Canal. At the nearby Brandesburton Ponds, it is scarce due to the open aspect of the ponds and lack of marginal vegetation. Rare on the Wolds, where it is found on only a handful of ponds. Small numbers have been recorded at sites in the Vale of Pickering. Appears scarce or under recorded in the Humber area.

Breeding Status Abundant resident breeder where the right habitat occurs. No documented breeding data from the Wolds or the Vale of Pickering.

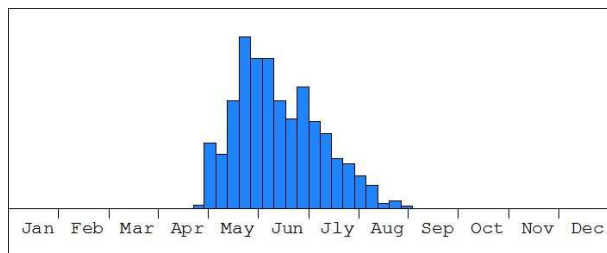
Behaviour Not territorial. Copulation is prolonged on warm sunny days. Pairs oviposit in tandem into soft plant tissue, often submerging to do so. Larvae live among submerged vegetation and emerge after one year. Emergence takes place on marginal vegetation or flower spikes in the centre of water bodies. Females emerge first, followed a few days later by the males.

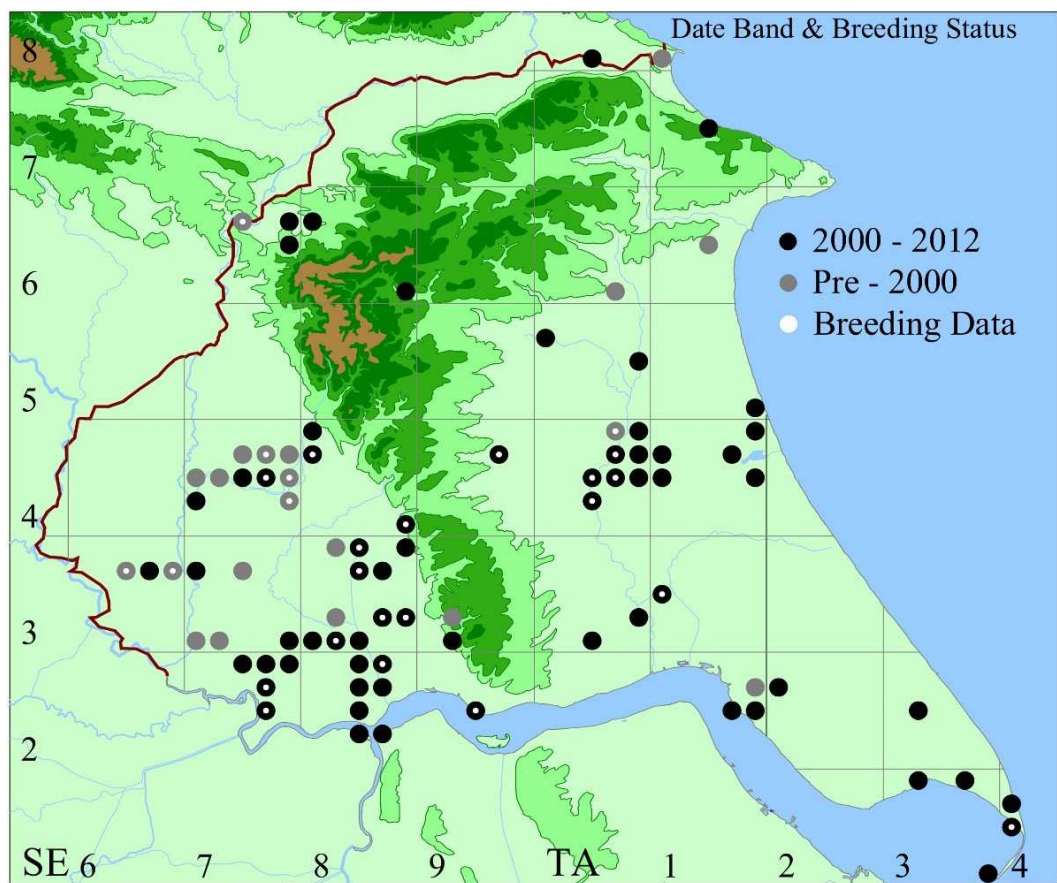
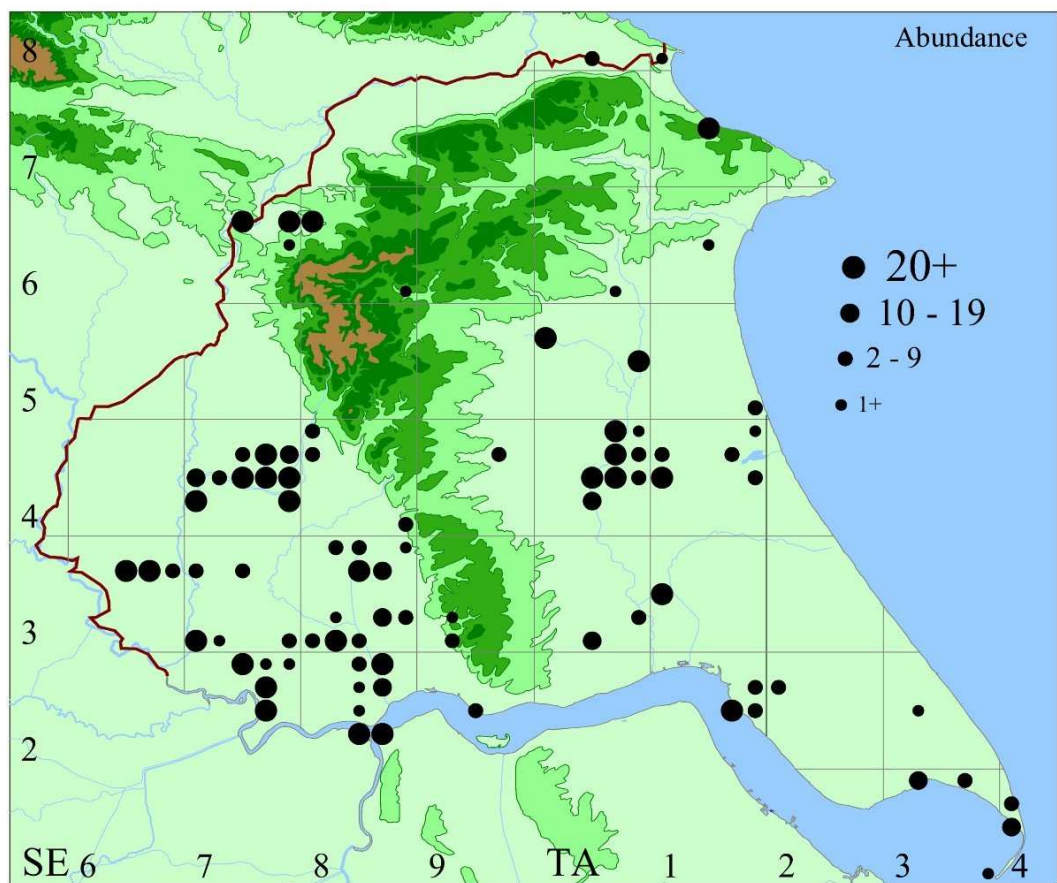
Trend Likely to remain widespread. The only real threat is the clearance of vegetation making sites more exposed.

Dates First Recorded:
1922

Earliest:
25th April 2011

Latest:
1st September 2007





Common Hawker *Aeshna juncea*

Flight Period Early July to mid-October, peaking late July to late August.

Habitat Prefers acidic conditions, consisting of bog pools, ponds and lake margins on moorland and heathland. Will also use slow-flowing sections of upland streams. Requires areas of emergent vegetation to breed.

Distribution Chiefly confined to the Vale of York and Humberhead Levels in the south-west of the vice-county. Skipwith Common, Allerthorpe Common, North Cliffe Wood and Houghton Wood are the four key sites where this species can be encountered. It has been recorded at several other locations in the area that do not fit the preferred habitat preference, these sightings probably relating to wandering individuals from the key areas, or locally undiscovered acidic sites. A small number of records from the Vale of Pickering, around the Filey area, probably relate to wandering individuals from the North Yorkshire Moors, where it is one of the commonest *Aeshnidae* species encountered.

Breeding Status Scarce resident breeder, confined to the Vale of York and Humberhead Levels.

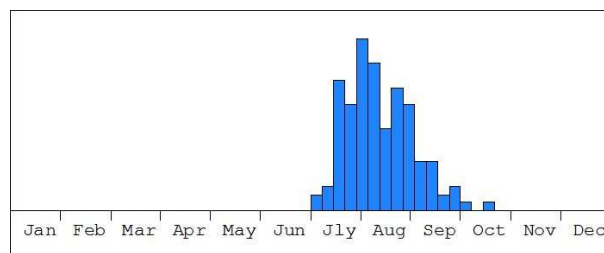
Behaviour Males are territorial, regularly chasing off intruders of any species. They are relentless flyers and can often be found active in dull conditions. Copulation takes from 60-75 minutes, with pairs usually settling amongst the heather, shrubs or trees. The female oviposits alone, inserting the eggs into submerged vegetation. Oviposition may take place in dull weather, when the first sign of activity is the sound of rustling wings in low vegetation. Larvae develop over a period of two or more years amongst the submerged vegetation. They emerge, usually at night, on emergent plant stems. They regularly wander away from breeding sites to feed in sheltered areas, such as woodland rides.

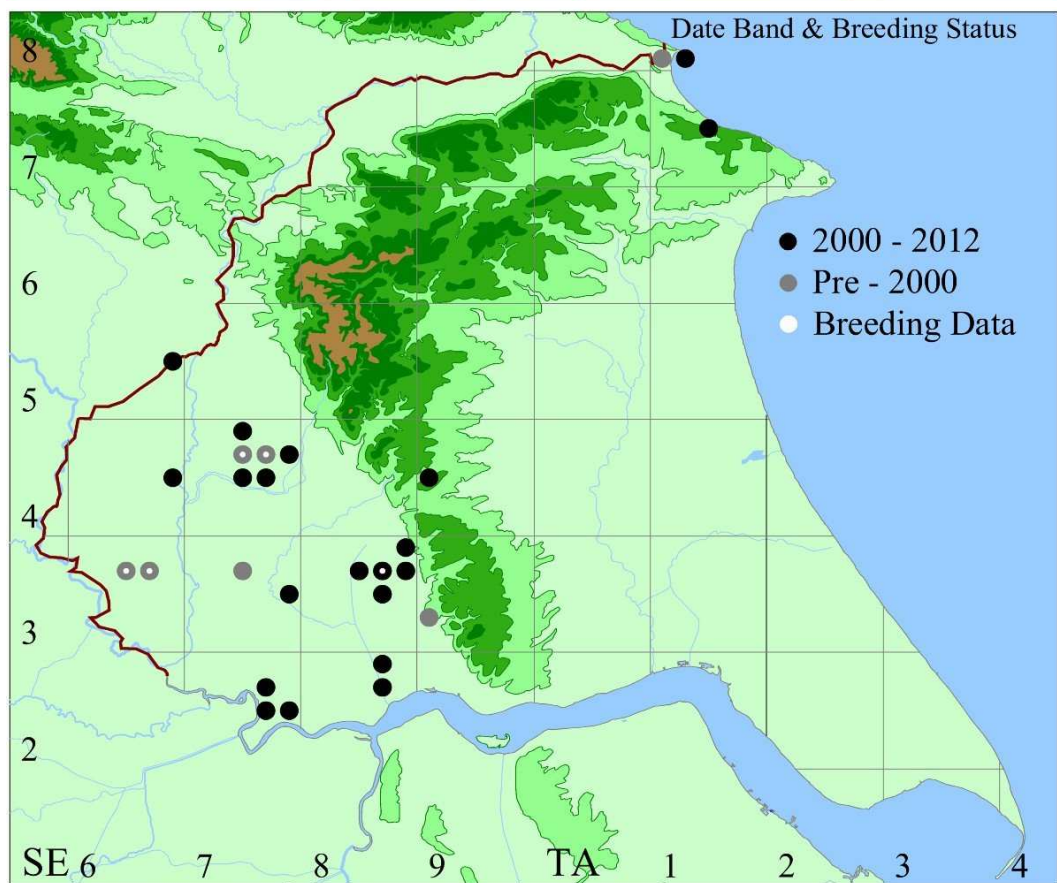
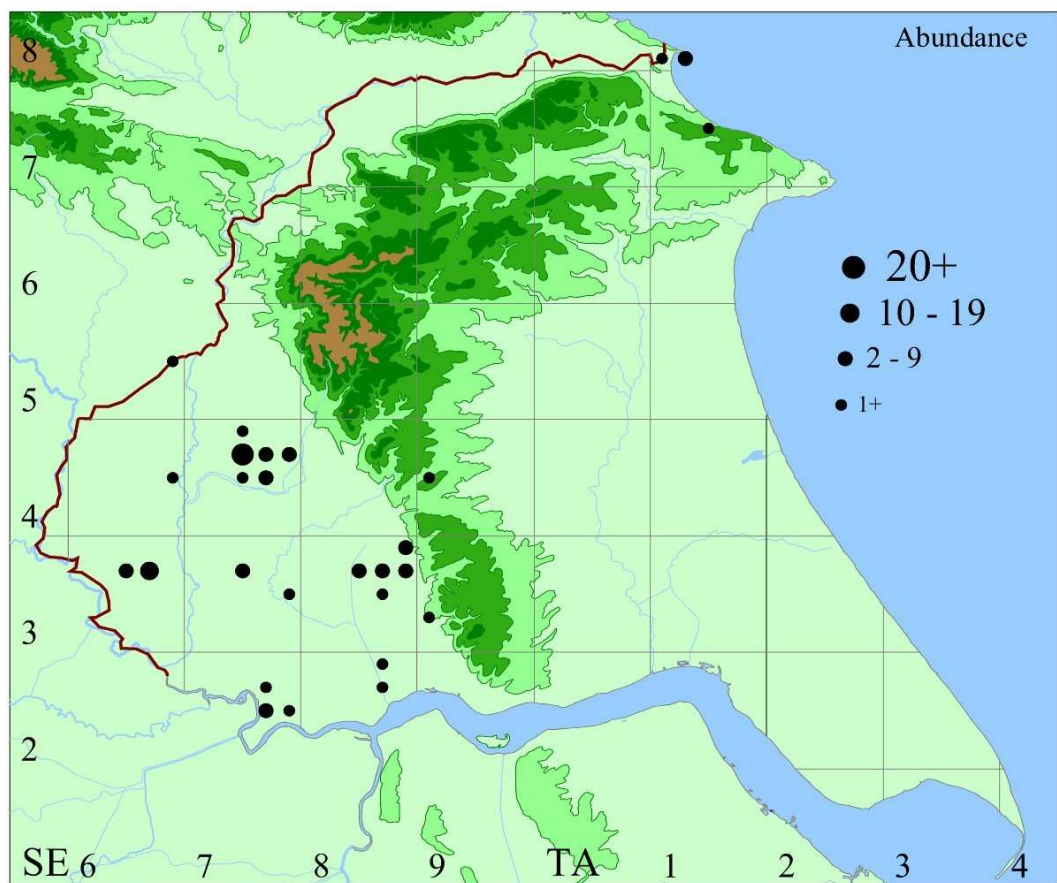
Trend Likely to remain a scarce breeding species, confined to the key sites. There are many small pockets of remnant heath with isolated ponds where this species is likely to be breeding, so there are still potential new sites to be discovered.

Dates First Recorded:
1907

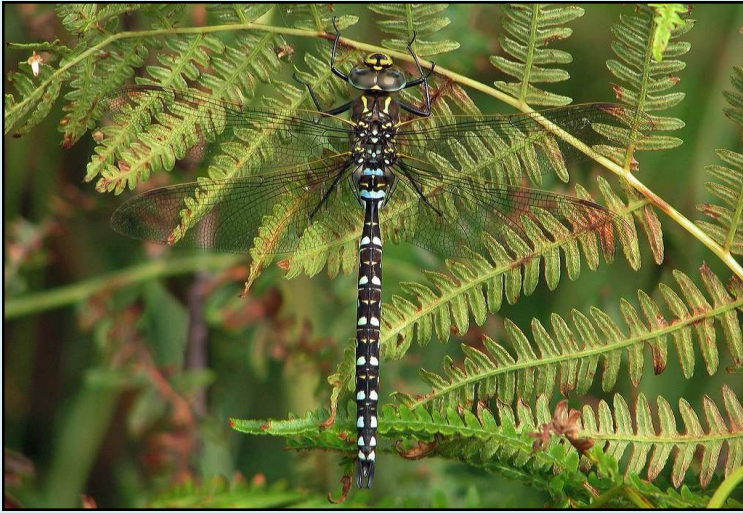
Earliest:
4th July 2006

Latest:
14th October 2011





Common Hawker *Aeshna juncea*



Male



Female



Copulating pair

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*

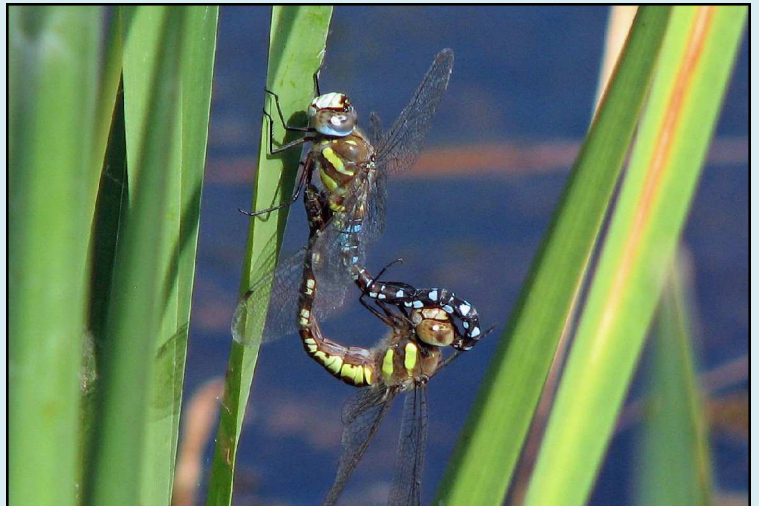
Male



Female



Copulating pair
(Diane Wakelin)



Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*

Flight Period Mid-July to mid-November, peaking early August to late September.

Habitat Still or slow-flowing waters including ponds, lakes, sand and gravel pits, reservoirs, slow-flowing rivers, canals and ditches. Will tolerate brackish conditions, though avoids acidic water.

Distribution This is a species of late summer, being encountered in all the natural areas of South-east Yorkshire. The numbers of locally bred individuals are swollen in August by arrivals of migrants from the continent. In good years some locations have recorded hundreds. Sites with adjacent woodlands, providing plenty of cover, usually host the largest congregations. Can be found well away from water, being one of the most likely *Aeshnidae* species to be encountered on the water starved Yorkshire Wolds. Tophill Low, with its varied water bodies and surrounding woodland, regularly attracts this species in good numbers. Generally unmistakable east of the Wolds, though can be confused with Common Hawker *Aeshna juncea* to the west.

Breeding Status Resident breeder and migrant.

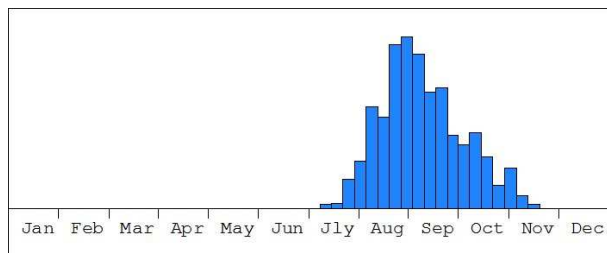
Behaviour None territorial and often present in high densities with little sign of aggression. Frequently hovers, searching for females in marginal vegetation. Both sexes can be found well away from water in sheltered locations, such as woodland rides and hedgerows. Regularly found perched in the open. Copulation is lengthy and once complete, the female will oviposit alone. Oviposition usually occurs into emergent plants above the water, though occasionally in bare mud. Emergence usually occurs the following year, often during the night. Despite being abundant late in the season, few exuviae have been found. Those that have been recovered are usually found low down in thick vegetation. Due to the lack of breeding data, it would suggest that the majority of adults observed are migratory individuals.

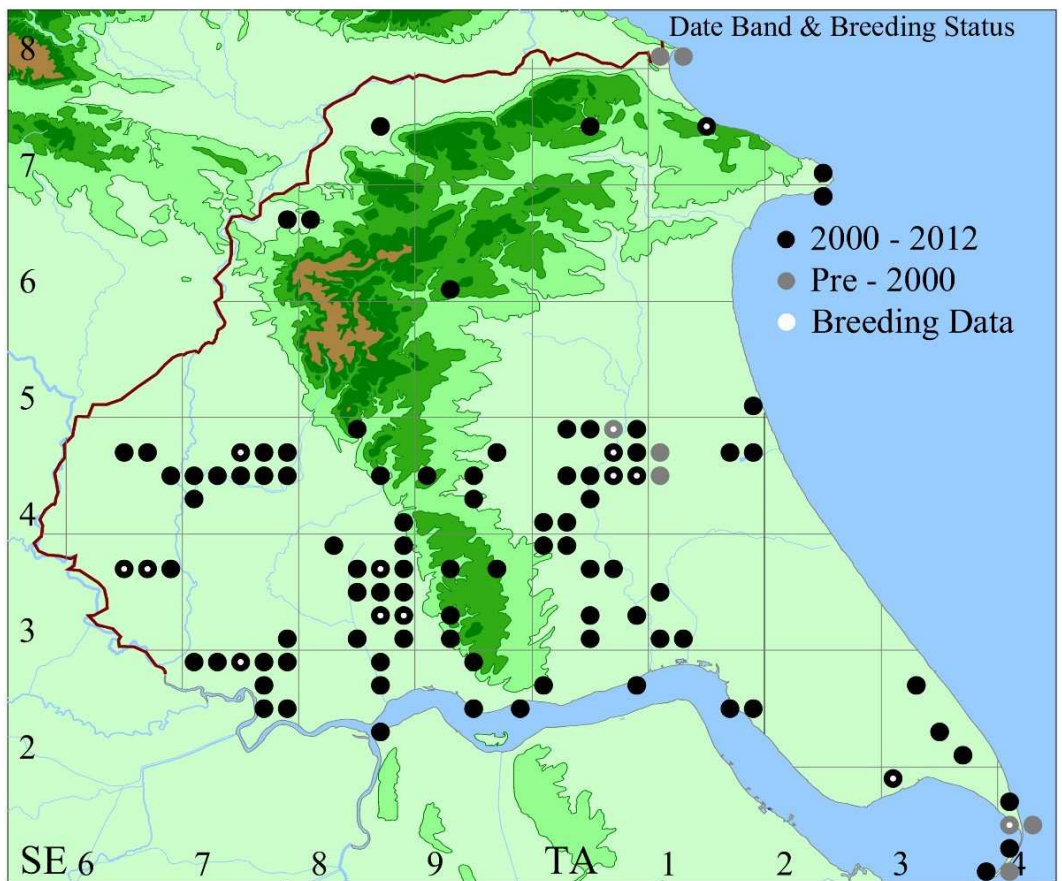
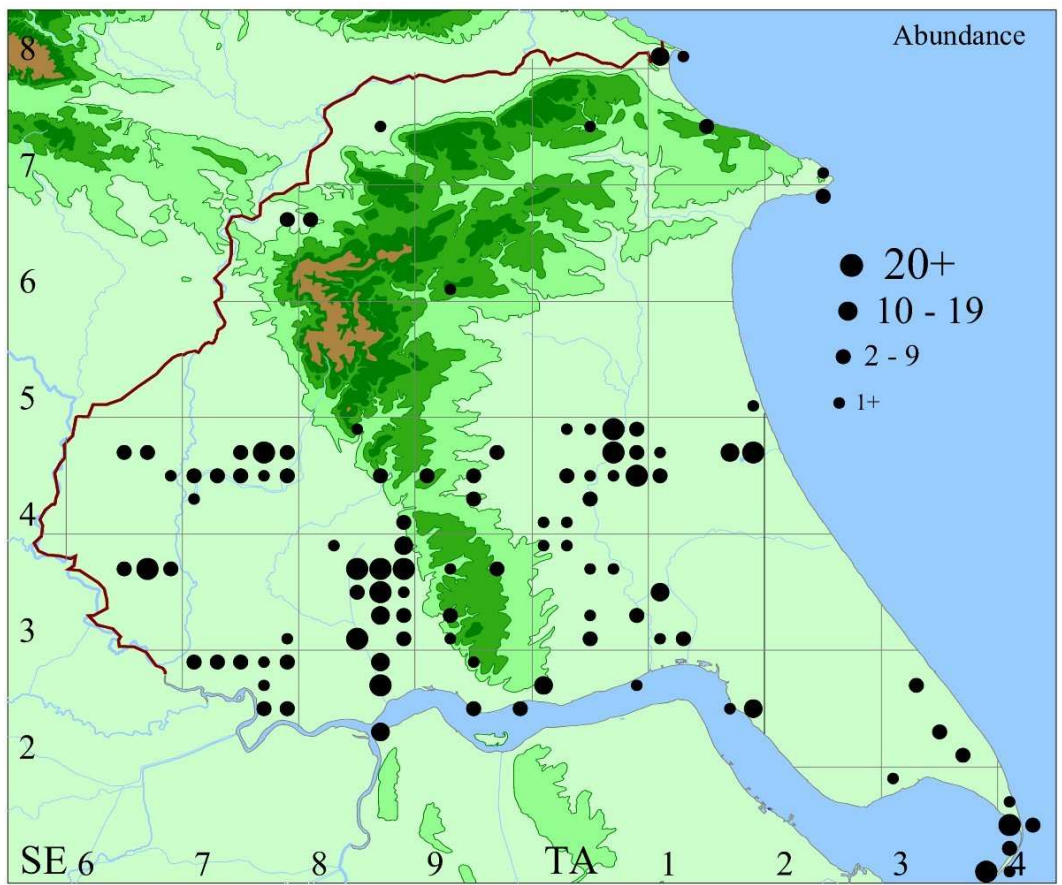
Trend Likely to remain a resident breeder, with continued input from migratory individuals.

Dates First Recorded:
1983

Earliest:
11th July 2007

Latest:
12th November 2005





Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea*

Flight Period Mid-June to late October, peaking mid-July to early September.

Habitat Lakes and ponds, including small garden ponds where it is the most likely *Aeshnidae* to be encountered. Also found along canals and ditches. Will feed away from breeding sites, sometimes being encountered in sheltered areas, such as woodland rides and hedgerows.

Distribution Found in all the natural areas of South-east Yorkshire, though scarce on the Wolds and Humber. Individuals can be found almost anywhere there is suitable habitat. The best sites containing plenty of shelter. In Holderness, at Tophill Low this species is readily found hawking along the woodland rides. This site also has many areas suitable for breeding, though surprisingly, the most productive area, in recent years, has been a small sump of around six square metres in size. The high productivity rate, probably due to the lack of predators in this small body of water.

Breeding Status Resident breeder, with the exception of the Humber, where no associated breeding behaviour has been observed.

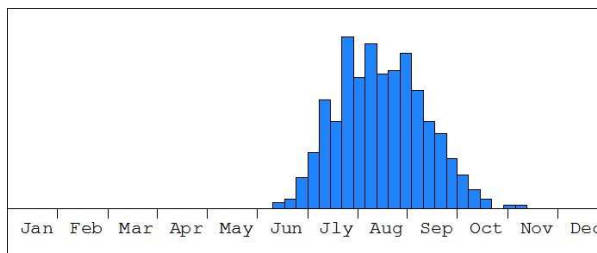
Behaviour Males are territorial, with a single male usually found at a small pond. There is however a constant change of males throughout the day. This is an inquisitive species, often approaching close to the observer. They can be active in dull weather, often on the wing late into the evening, even hunting when it is raining. Copulation takes place away from water, lasting for around two hours. The female oviposits into waterside vegetation, moss or bare soil above water, often in poor weather. Larvae emerge after two to three years on tall marginal vegetation. They mature away from water over a four to six week period, before returning to suitable sites to breed.

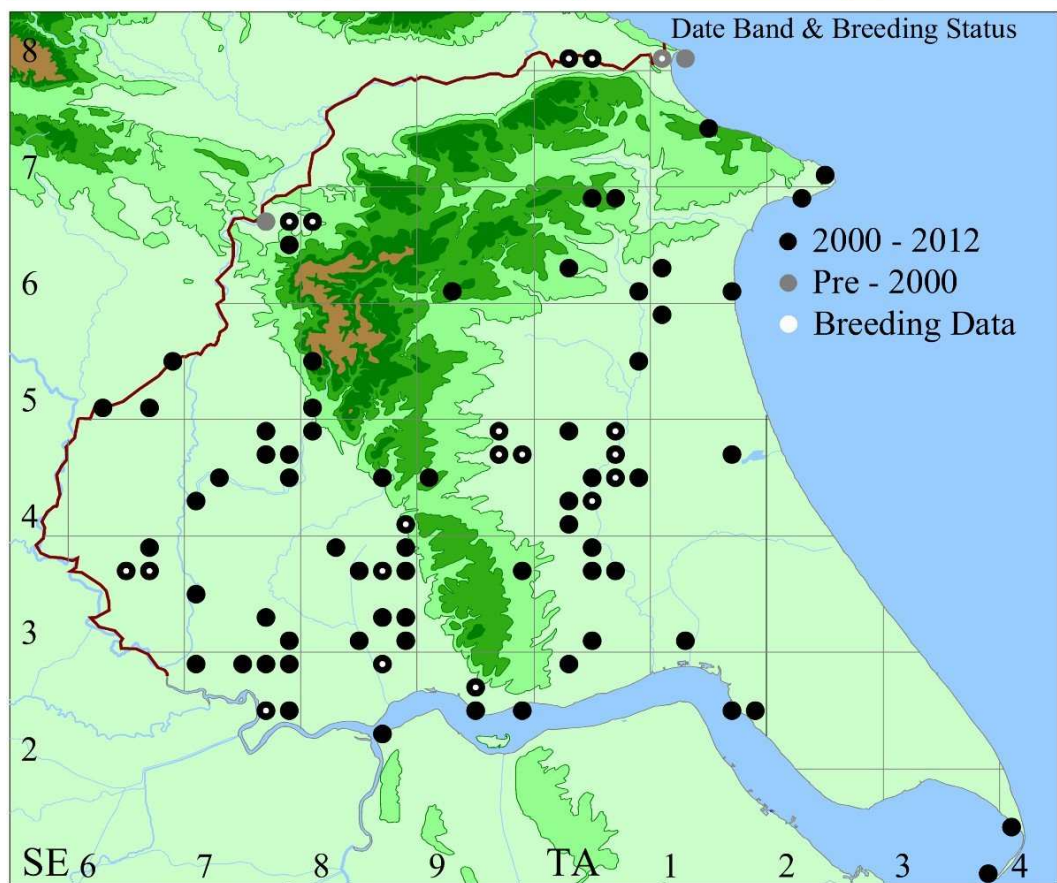
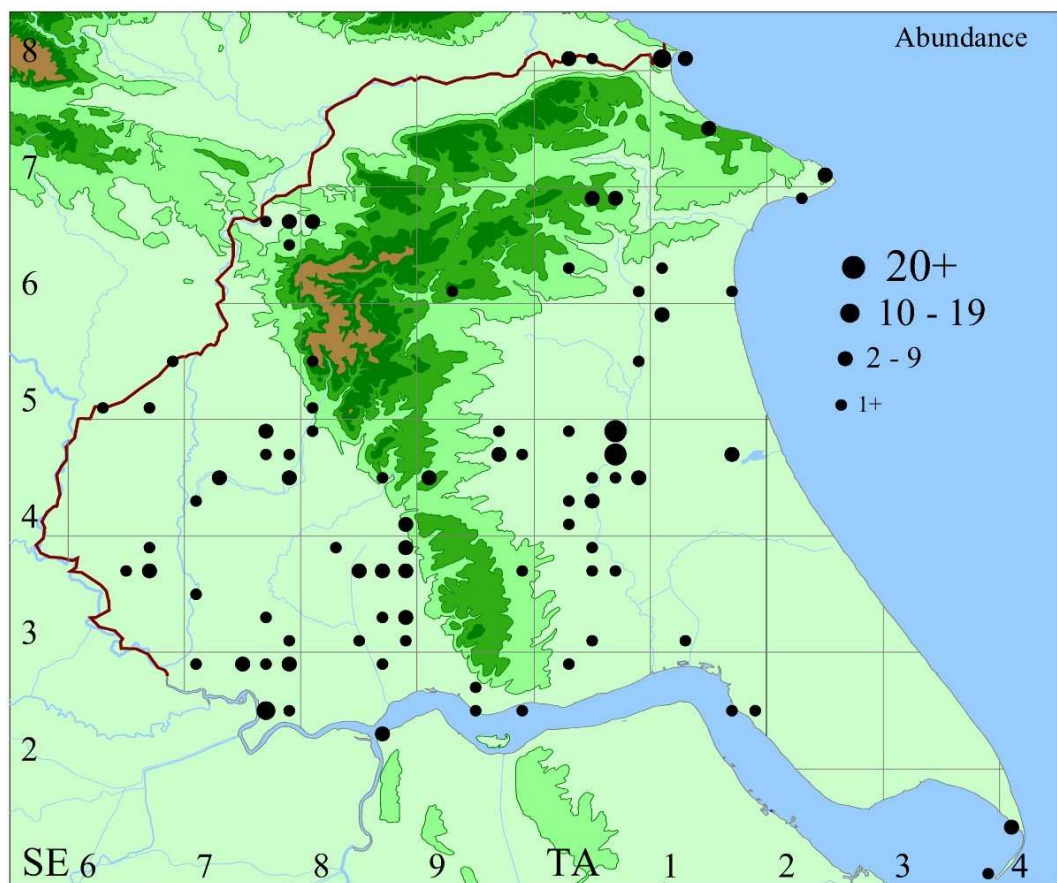
Trend After first being recorded in 1994, there had been sporadic records up to the new millennium. Since then, the species has spread north rapidly and is likely to increase in numbers at many sites.

Dates First Recorded:
1994

Earliest:
11th June 2006

Latest:
4th November 2009





Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea*



Male



Immature Male



Female

Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis*

Male



Female



Copulating pair



Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis*

Flight Period Early June to late September, peaking early July to late August.

Habitat Lakes, ponds, gravel pits, canals, ditches and slow-flowing rivers. Will tolerate moderate levels of pollution.

Distribution Recorded throughout the Vale of York and Humberhead Levels, easily being encountered along Pocklington Canal. In Holderness, it is mainly concentrated along the River Hull Valley, especially around the Tophill Low, Brandesburton Ponds and Leven Canal complex. Elsewhere in Holderness it appears to be a scarce species, with only two documented records from Spurn. Isolated records have occurred on the Wolds, showing that this species, as with several *Aeshnidae*, will wander away from breeding sites. In the Vale of Pickering, small numbers can be encountered near the coast on ponds, at sites such as Filey Dams.

Breeding Status Resident breeder, scarce in the Humber area. No documented breeding behaviour from the Wolds.

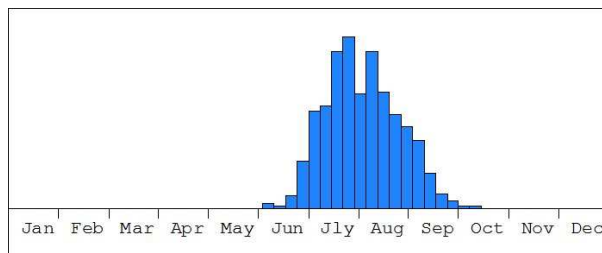
Behaviour Males are territorial, even defending territories away from water. They are often observed hawking along woodland rides and hedgerows. This is a difficult species to approach when settled, the first sign of their presence is usually the rustling of wings, as the fly up from roosting places in tall grasses. Copulation is lengthy, the female then ovipositing into emergent floating vegetation, or decaying floating logs, where several females may oviposit together. Larvae emerge two to four years later at night, with the maiden flight taking place before dawn.

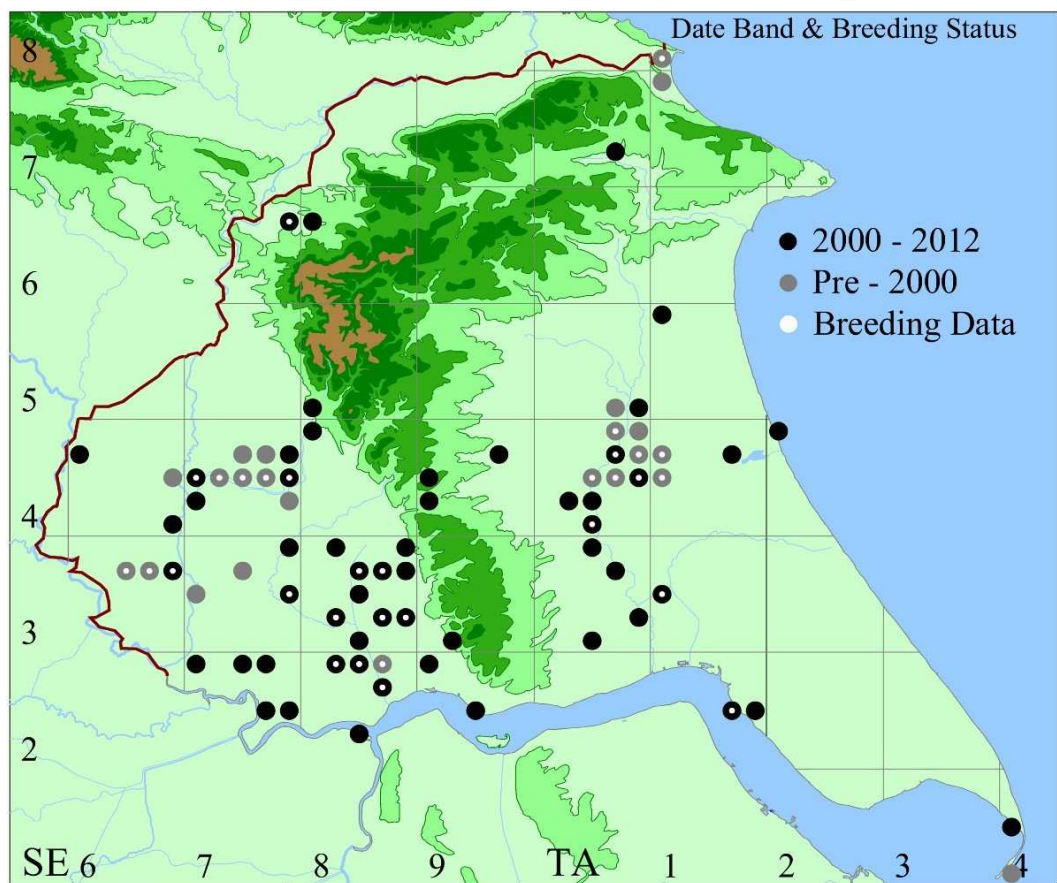
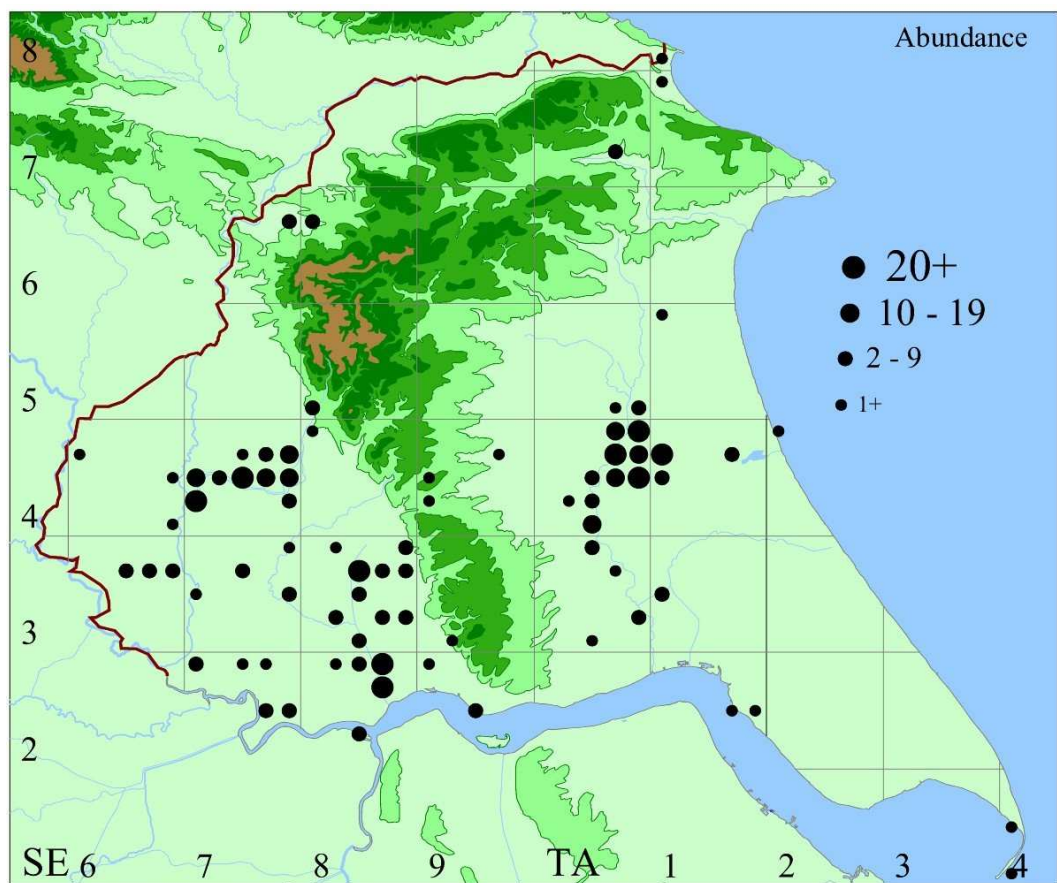
Trend There has been little change in distribution since being first recorded in 1965. The increase in the number of sites recording this species is most likely due to increased observer coverage.

Dates First Recorded:
1928

Earliest:
3rd June 2007

Latest:
2nd October 2005





Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*

Flight Period Late May to late September, peaking mid-June to mid-August.

Habitat Ponds, lakes, gravel pits, dykes, canals and slow-flowing rivers with rich marginal vegetation, also tolerant of brackish conditions. Seldom found far away from water.

Distribution Has a strong presence in the Vale of Pickering along the coastal strip, at sites such as Filey Dams. Equally abundant in the Vale of York, Humberhead Levels, Holderness and the Humber at sites with suitable habitat. As the species does not wander far from water, it is virtually absent from the Wolds, the only site of note being Reighton Ponds, with only isolated records from other locations. The best places to observe this species are Clubley's Scrape at Spurn, where the small area concentrates numbers; Brandesburton Ponds complex, where many males can be found holding territory; Pocklington and Leven Canals, where a walk along the banks will reveal several males holding territory, along with views of females ovipositing into submerged vegetation.

Breeding Status Widespread resident breeder, though scarce on the Wolds.

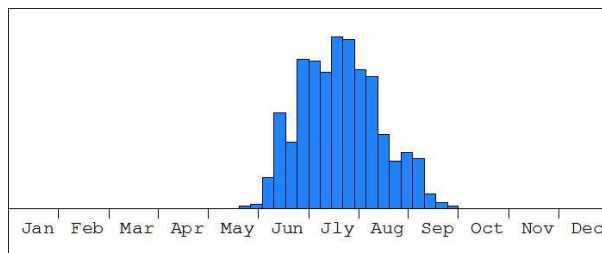
Behaviour Males are territorial, rarely more than one male is present at small locations. Constantly patrols its territory, which it defends vigorously. Will take prey as large as Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata*. Copulation takes place away from water and lasts around ten minutes. The female then oviposits alone into submerged vegetation. Larvae emerge after two years on to tall emergent vegetation. Emergence is usually synchronous at site level.

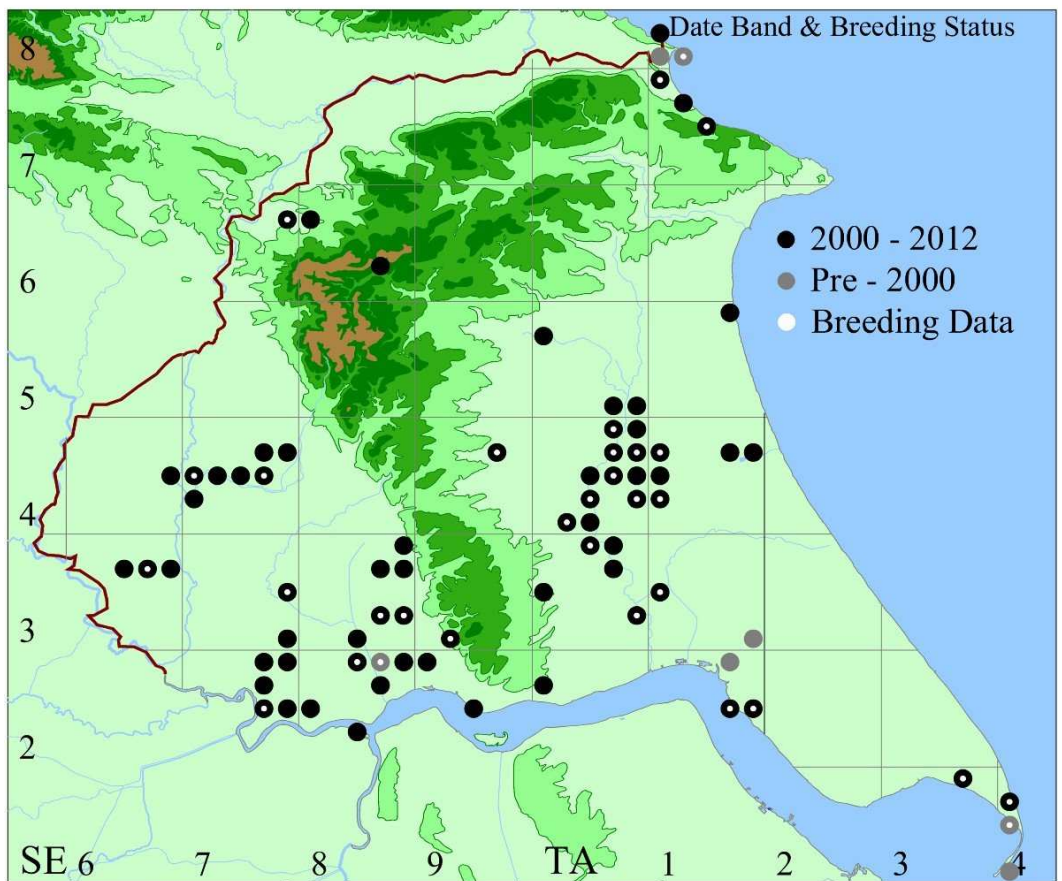
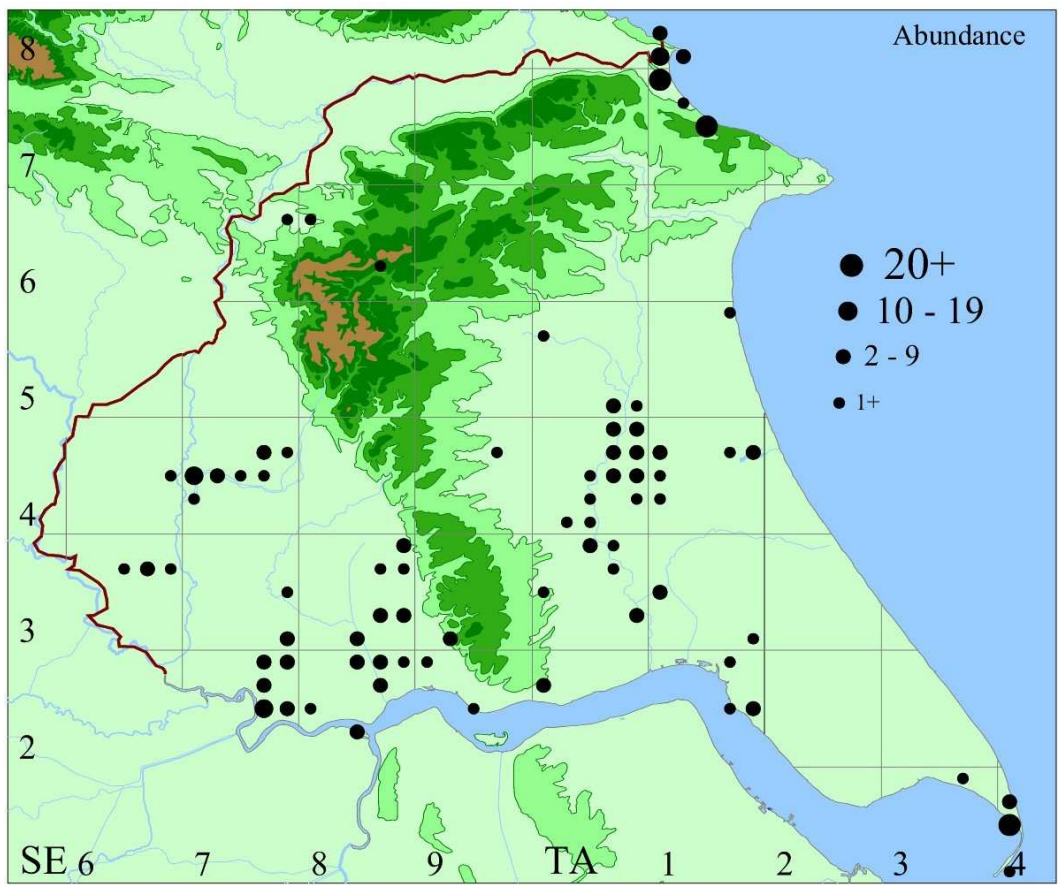
Trend First recorded to site level in 1995 though there is an isolated record from 1989 at an unknown location. Prior to the new millennium this was a scarce species, with Spurn being the only place to note this species in double figures. Since then it has rapidly spread northwards and can be found at most sites containing suitable habitat.

Dates First Recorded:
1989

Earliest:
26th May 2007

Latest:
23rd September 2000





Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*



Male



Female



Copulating pair

Hairy Dragonfly *Brachytron pratense*

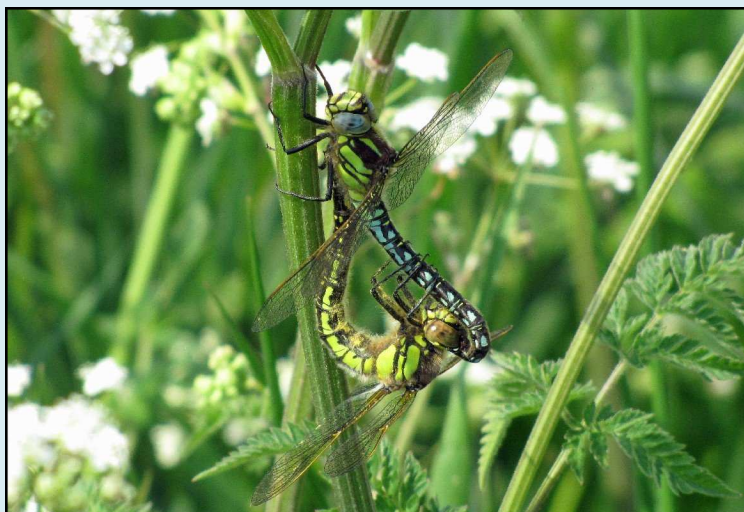
Male



Female



Copulating pair



Hairy Dragonfly *Brachytron pratense*

Flight Period Early May to mid-July, peaking mid-May to mid-June.

Habitat Ponds, lakes, canals, ditches, dykes and marshy fens with tall emergent vegetation, such as rushes, reeds and sedges. Requires abundant floating vegetation for oviposition.

Distribution A recent addition to the *Odonata* fauna of South-east Yorkshire, the first was seen in a Beverley garden in 2007. Confirmed as present at Broomfleet Washlands in 2008, then subsequently in the wider Broomfleet area during 2009. It had been suspected as present at Tophill Low with some brief, but inconclusive, views over a number of years. It was finally confirmed in 2009, when several were seen, including an ovipositing female. It has also been discovered along Leven Canal, which is the key site for this species, and may be the source of those found at Tophill Low.

Breeding Status Rare breeder, mainly confined to Holderness and the Humberhead Levels. Locally important, occurring in less than 10% of recorded tetrads within the vice-county.

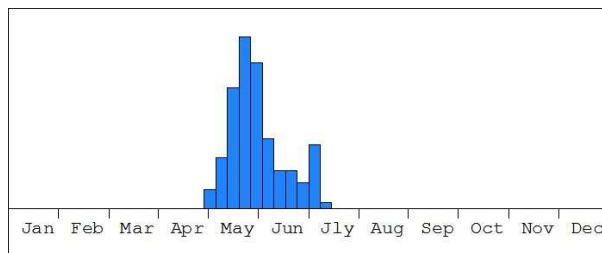
Behaviour Early flight period is characteristic. Quickly settles when the sun goes in, compared to other *Aeshnidae* species, making it less easy to find in dull conditions. Males are territorial and patrol in and out of vegetation at low level. Can be found away from water in sheltered areas, though males will generally not wander far. Females only come to water to find a mate and oviposit. Copulation is long, taking place in nearby trees and shrubs, or long vegetation along the banks. The female oviposits into decomposing floating vegetation.

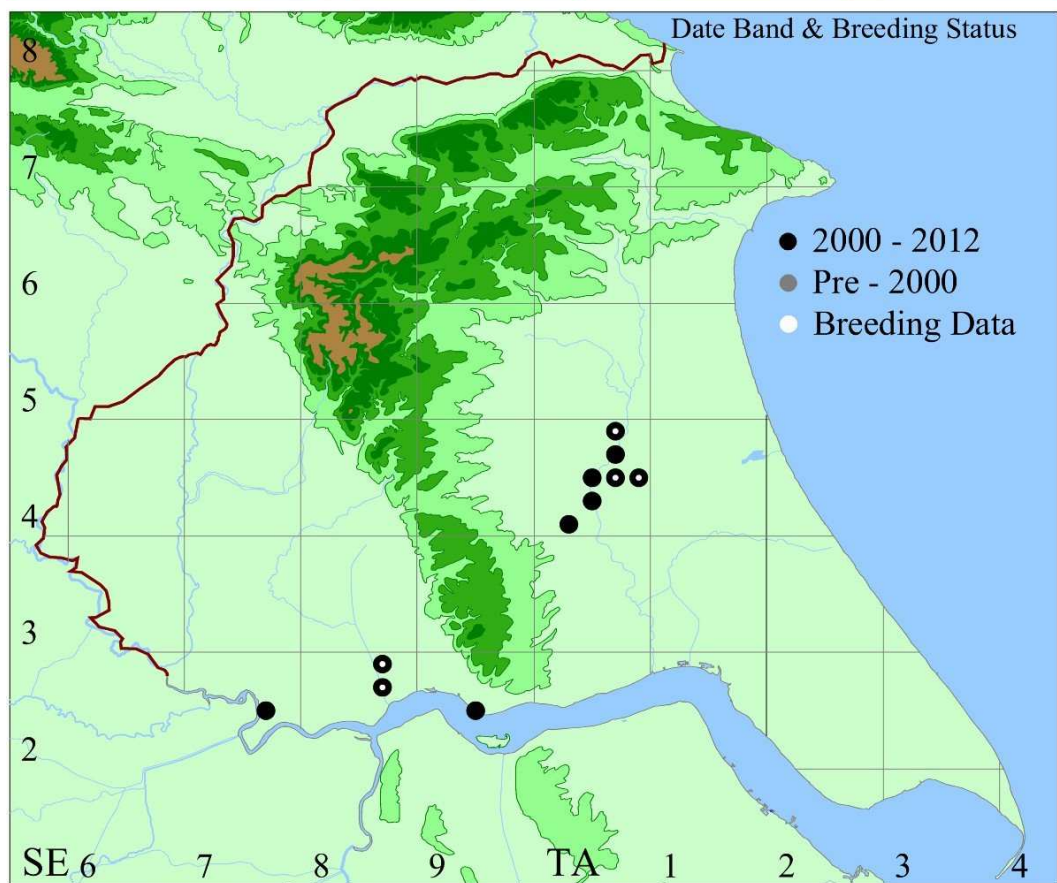
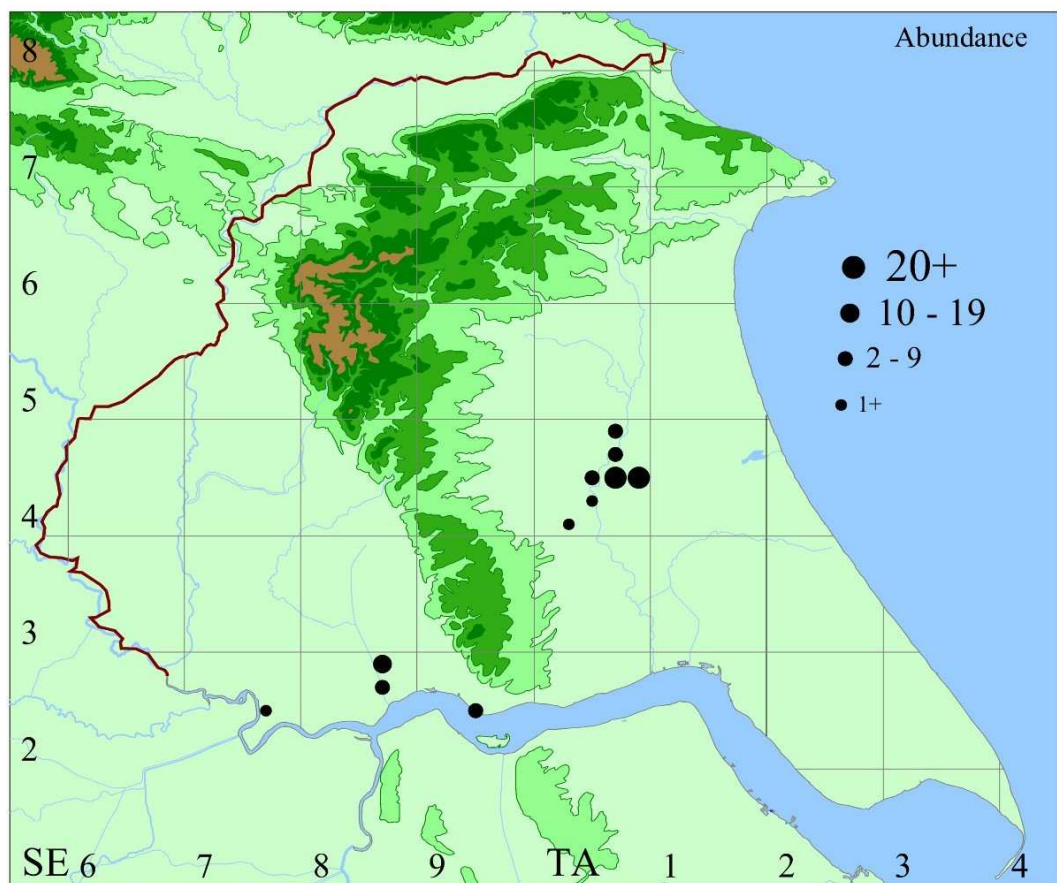
Trend First recorded as recently as 2007. Despite being 'suspected as present' for several years, it has been difficult to confirm. Without a doubt, there are more locations where the species could be found, where careful searching of suitable habitat should produce more records.

Dates First Recorded:
2007

Earliest:
24th April 2011

Latest:
10th July 2010





Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata*

Flight Period Late April to late August. Of note is an isolated record at Skipwith Common, of an adult in good condition, as late as the 26th September.

Habitat Prefers sites of still water consisting of lakes, ponds, bog pools, canals and dykes. Will tolerate brackish conditions. The largest concentrations are associated with acidic ponds and pools.

Distribution Most numerous in the Humberhead Levels, where the acidic conditions of some sites, such as Skipwith Common, are to its liking. Also found in good numbers at Broomfleet Washlands, along with relatively new sites like North Cave Wetlands. Numerous at several locations in the Vale of York, having a presence along Pocklington Canal. In the Vale of Pickering, it is chiefly confined to the ponds along the coastal strip. Common at many sites along the River Hull Valley in Holderness. Along the Humber it is numerous at Spurn where conditions here are brackish. With the exception of Reighton Ponds, this species is absent from the Wolds.

Breeding Status Widespread resident breeder, with associated behaviour recorded in all six natural areas

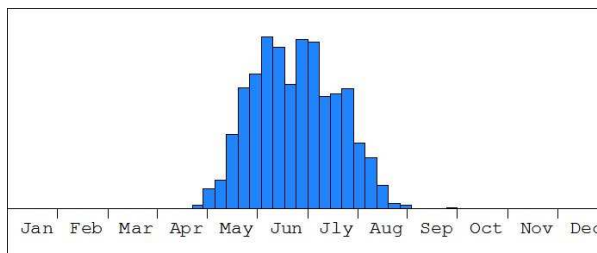
Behaviour Males are territorial, their noisy clashes are obvious where densities are high. Readily returns to the same perch on emergent vegetation, after sparring with other males, or after short patrols along the waters edge. Copulation is short taking place in flight, only lasting for 5-20 seconds. Female oviposits by flicking the abdomen tip downwards into the water. The eggs then sink and adhere to submerged vegetation. Males may stay close by to guard females during oviposition. Larvae live among the bottom debris, then emerge after two to four years. Emergence takes place amongst marginal vegetation during daylight hours.

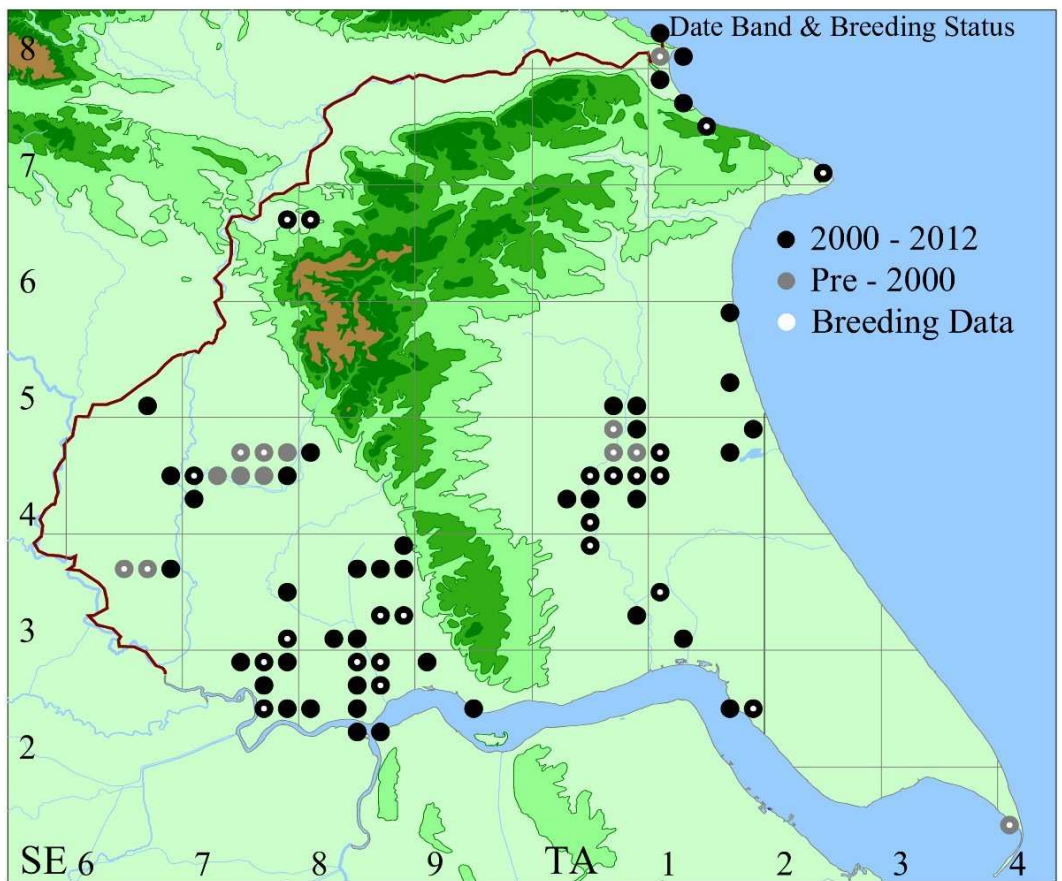
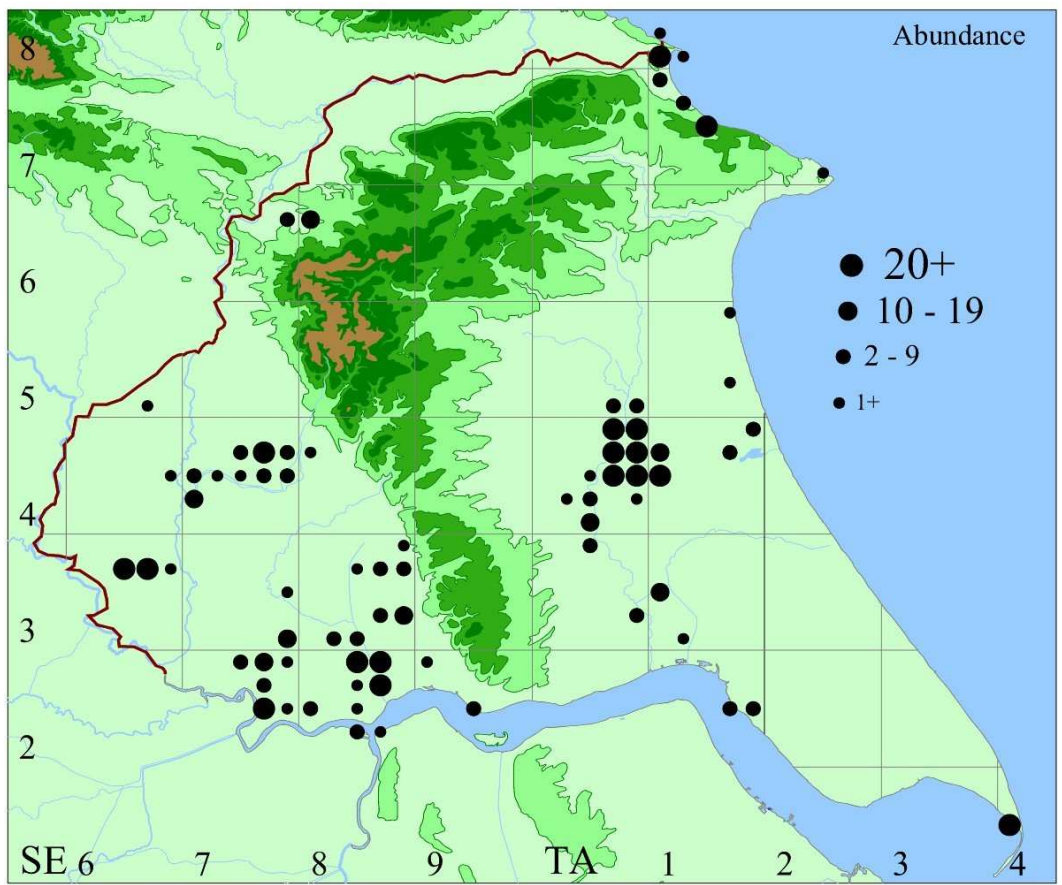
Trend First recorded in 1917, though confined to the Humberhead Levels and Vale of York for many years. Since 1990, this species has expanded its range and is widespread throughout South-east Yorkshire.

Dates First Recorded:
1917

Earliest:
22nd April 2011

Latest:
26th September 2009





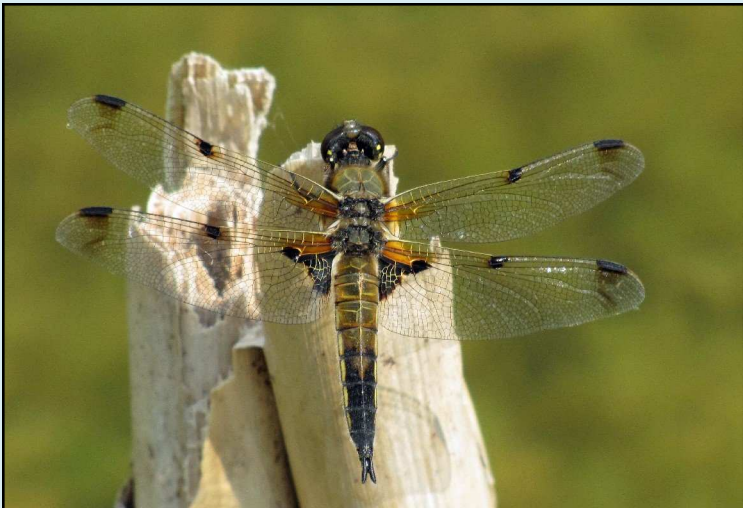
Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata*



Male



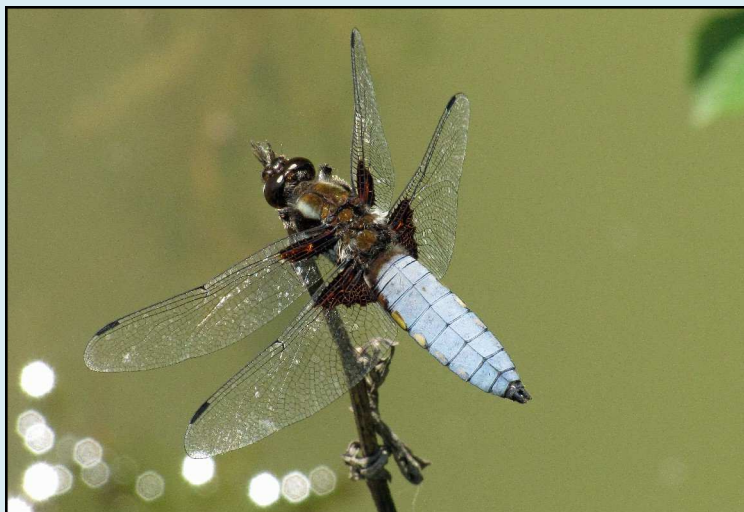
Female



Male - form: praenubila

Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa*

Male



Female



Left: Immature male

Right: Mature female
(David Ashton)



Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa*

Flight Period Mid-May to mid-August.

Habitat Small lakes, ponds, garden ponds, ditches and canals with well-vegetated margins and sheltered sunny locations. Will use bog pools if they are not too acidic. Often, one of the first species to colonise new water bodies.

Distribution This is a relatively recent species to arrive in the area, spreading north nationally. It is thinly distributed and usually encountered in single figures. It has been recorded in all the natural areas within South-east Yorkshire. Surprisingly, the Wolds contains the site with the largest recorded abundance. A series of ponds was created near Reighton to relocate Great Crested Newt *T. cristatus* from nearby development sites. These ponds were planted with pondweed brought in from High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. It would appear that eggs, or larvae, were transported with this weed, which has resulted in a high density of this species at this location. With the lack of water-borne predators here, they have bred in good numbers since first being recorded in 2005.

Breeding Status Scarce breeder, though increasing in numbers.

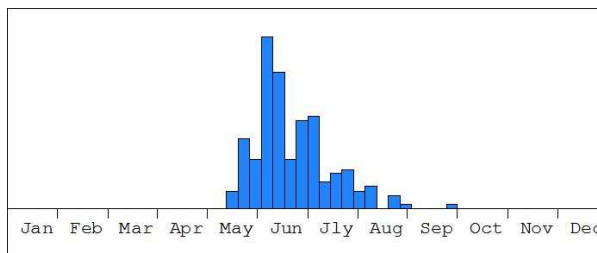
Behaviour Males are aggressively territorial, there seldom being more than one male at any small pond. They perch on stems of tall emergent vegetation, or on the ground, chasing off any intruding males that appear within their territory. Copulation takes place in flight, lasting for only a few seconds. The female oviposits by flicking the tip of her abdomen into the water rapidly, occasionally with the male guarding her nearby. Larvae live amongst the bottom debris, emerging after two to three years. Emergence at sites is usually synchronous on marginal and emergent vegetation.

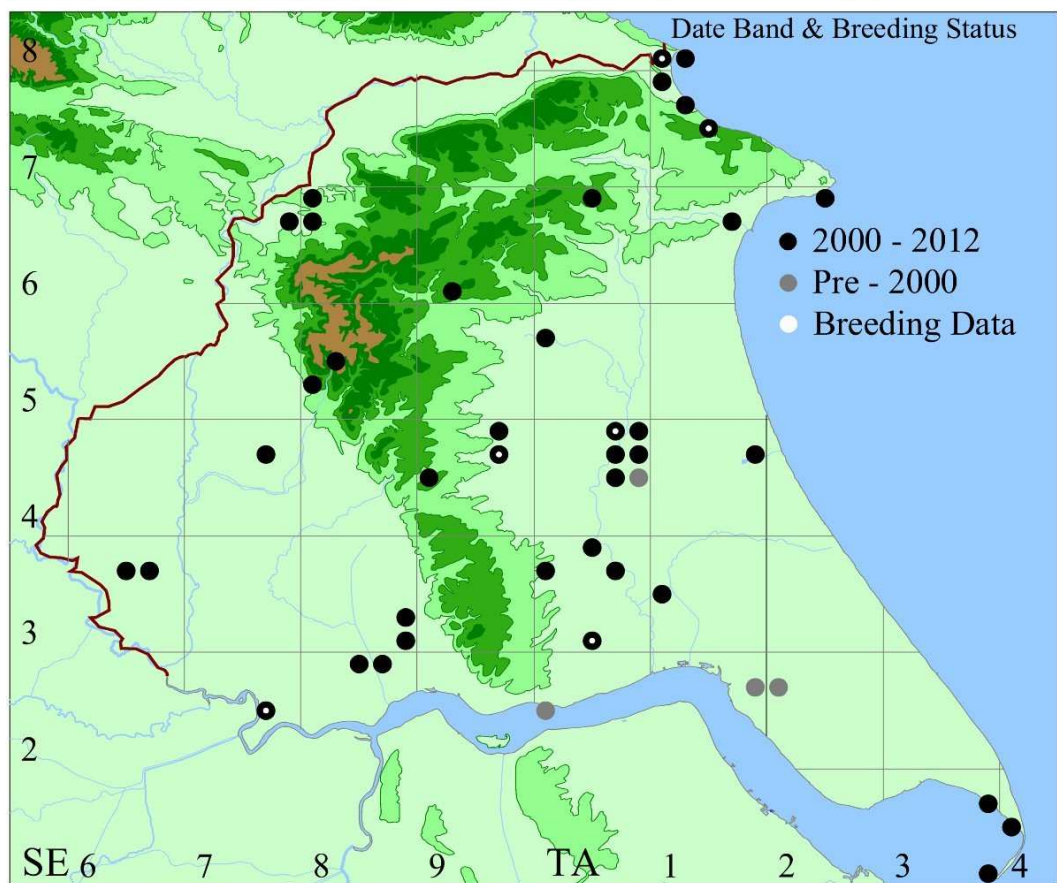
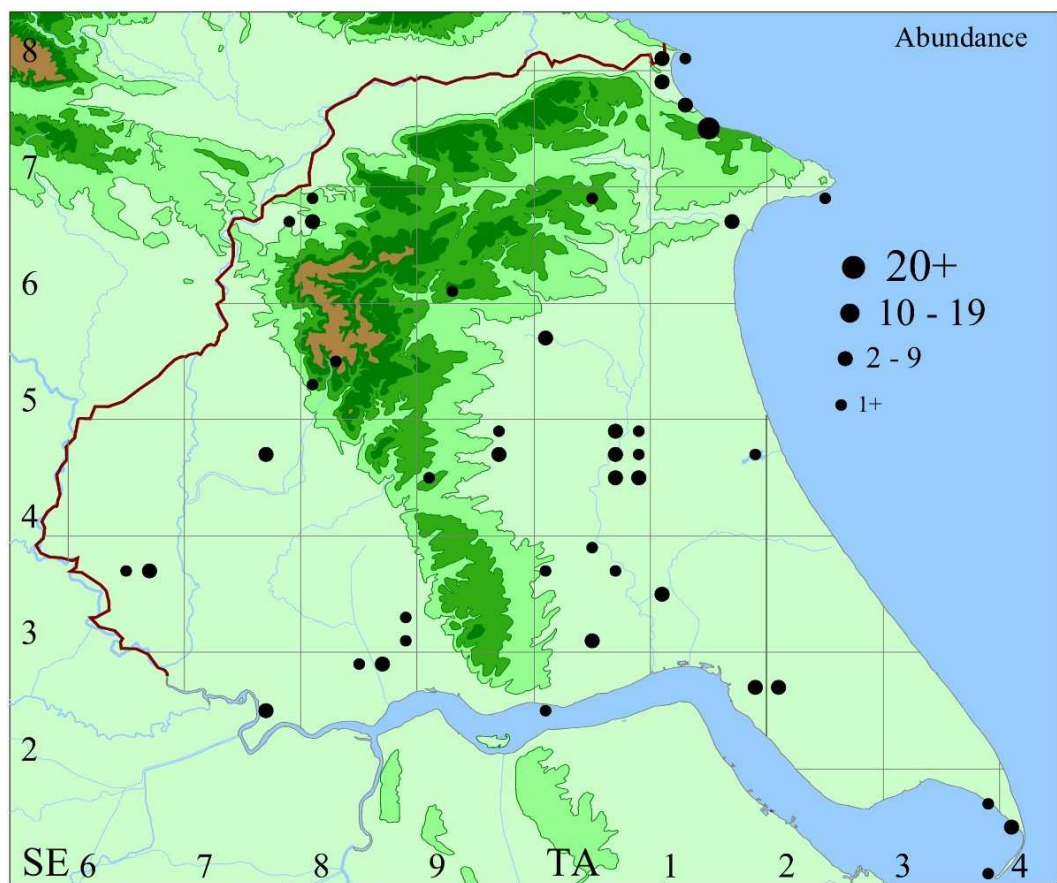
Trend Since first being recorded in 1995, this species has slowly increased its range northwards. With the exception of Reighton Ponds, it is only recorded in single figures at other locations. This trend is likely to continue as the species spreads to new sites in South-east Yorkshire.

Dates First Recorded:
1995

Earliest:
11th May 2011

Latest:
24th September 2010





Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*

Flight Period Mid-May to mid-September.

Habitat Ponds, lakes, sand and gravel pits, slow-flowing rivers and dykes. Will tolerate brackish conditions. One of the key requirements is exposed margins or bare ground with open aspects.

Distribution The Humberhead Levels are the main stronghold, with North Cave Wetlands, a former sand and gravel pit complex, being a key site. There are also easily observable populations at Broomfleet Washlands, Eastrington Ponds and Skipwith Common. In Holderness, Tophill Low and Brandesburton Ponds form the nucleus of activity for the natural area. In the Humber area, fishing ponds in Hull are an attraction, where use is made of the angling pontoons for basking. At Spurn, the bare margins of Clubley's Scrape are a good location to find this species. Recorded at single sites in the Vale of York and on the Wolds. In the Vale of Pickering, it has been recorded in double figures at the Filey Dams complex, also being noted in small numbers at several nearby coastal ponds.

Breeding Status Scarce, though increasing resident breeder.

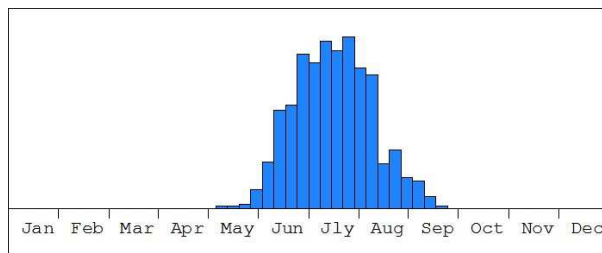
Behaviour Highly territorial, males perch on bare areas of ground, typically on slightly raised areas such as stones, logs or bare soil, on the lookout for females and rival males. When patrolling over water they fly low, skimming over the surface. Copulation can take place in flight, where it will only last for a few seconds, though sometimes this can take place in vegetation where it may last up to 15 minutes. Oviposition occurs by dipping the abdomen into water, with the male often remaining nearby. Larvae live amongst the bottom silts, emerging after two to three years. Emergence usually takes place on vegetation, often several metres away from water.

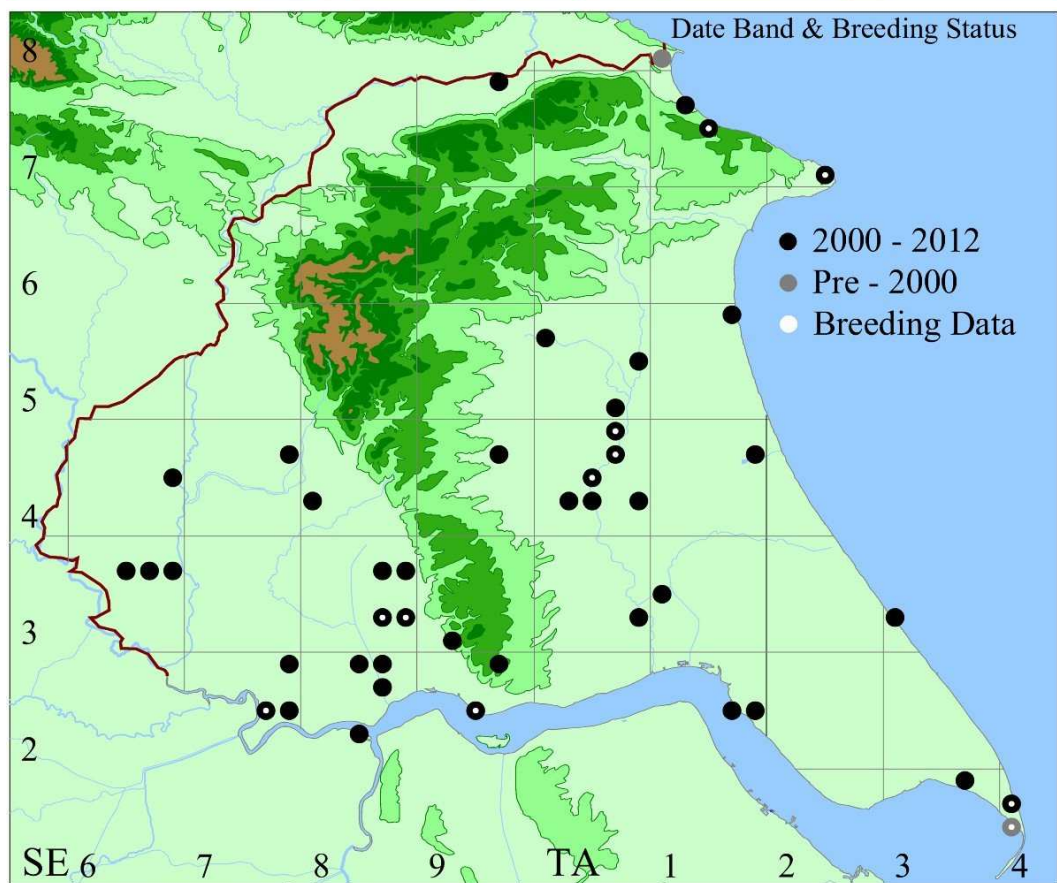
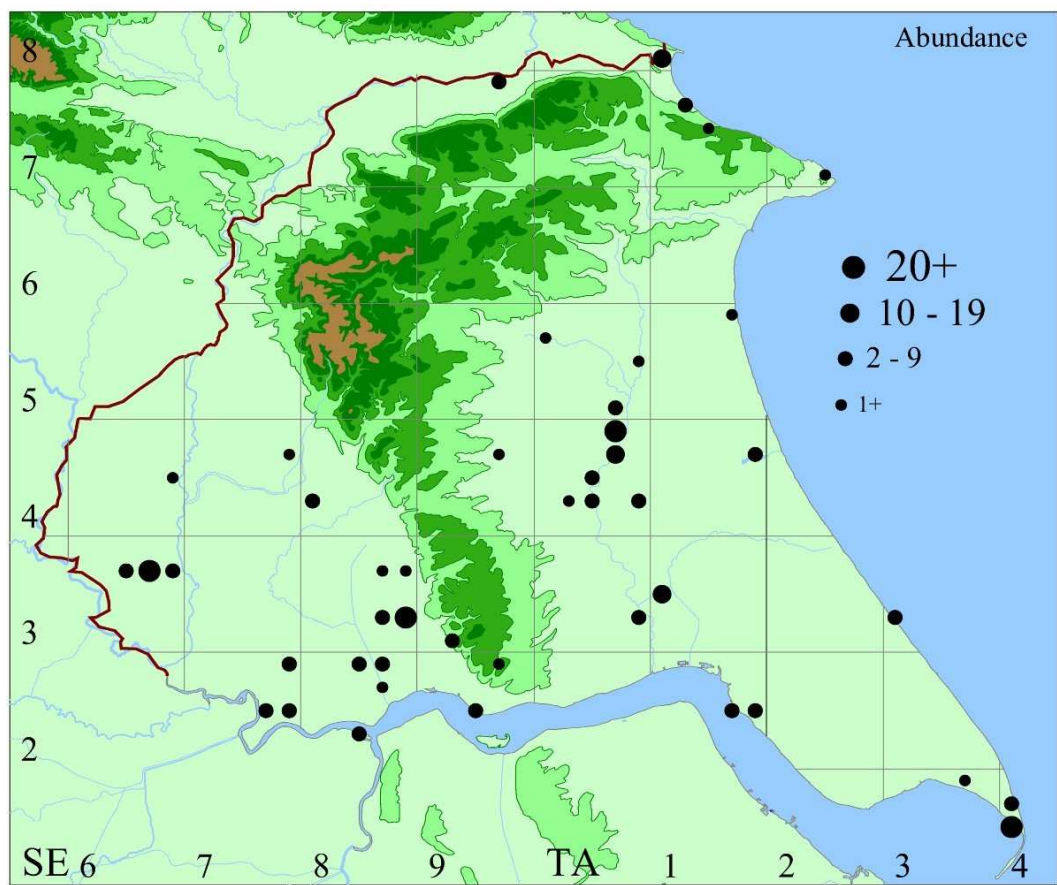
Trend After first being recorded in 1997, it has slowly increased its range where habitat is suitable. Often one of the first species to colonise a new site. Over a period of several years some water-bodies may be vacated due to the succession of vegetation, depriving them of the bare areas that they require.

Dates First Recorded:
1997

Earliest:
8th May 2009

Latest:
21st September 2007





Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*



Male



Immature male



Female

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

Male



Female



Copulating pair



Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

Flight Period Early June to mid-November.

Habitat Preferences are quite catholic, including ponds, lakes, canals, ditches and slow-flowing rivers. It is tolerant of brackish conditions and peaty bog pools. Can be found away from breeding sites feeding in sheltered locations, like woodland rides and hedgerows.

Distribution With the exception of the Wolds, this species is equally abundant across all the other natural areas of South-east Yorkshire. In the Humberhead Levels it can easily be observed at North Cave Wetlands, where it can be found sheltering along the western boundary of the reserve. In Holderness, good numbers can be found at Tophill Low, along with the adjacent Brandesburton Ponds and Leven Canal complex. Due to its migratory nature, it can be very abundant at coastal locations such as Spurn and Filey in good years. On the Wolds, it is thinly distributed, however it is the most likely *Sympetrum* to be found, visiting artificial lakes and garden ponds.

Breeding Status Widespread common breeder, with numbers swelled by migratory individuals from the continent.

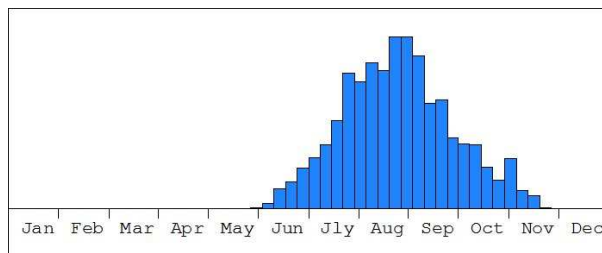
Behaviour Males are territorial, spending a lot of time perched, only making short flights when disturbed or chasing off intruders. Basks on the ground, especially late in the season when temperatures are lower. Frequently found away from water in sheltered areas, especially females wanting to avoid attention from males. Copulation takes place at rest, lasting around 10-15 minutes. Oviposition regularly takes place in tandem, where the eggs are flicked into the water by dipping the abdomen onto the surface. Females will also oviposit alone. Larvae emerge after one year, this taking place during the morning, onto bare bank sides or emergent vegetation.

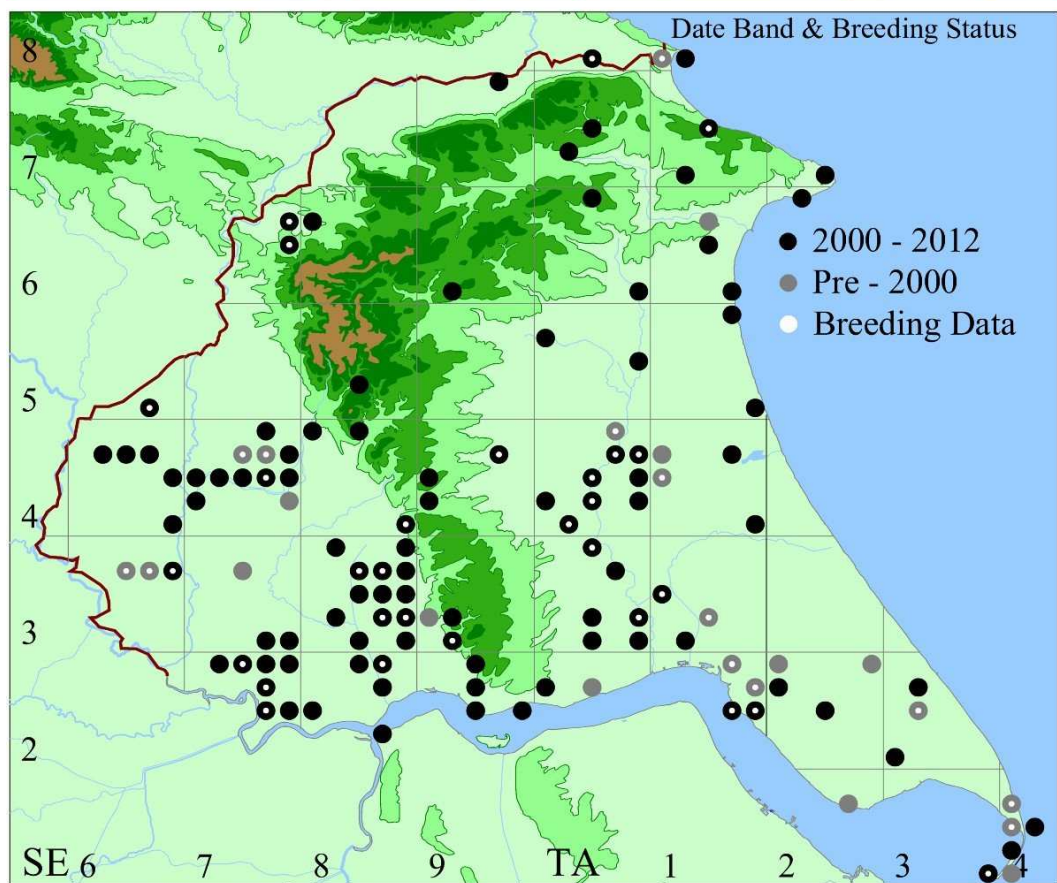
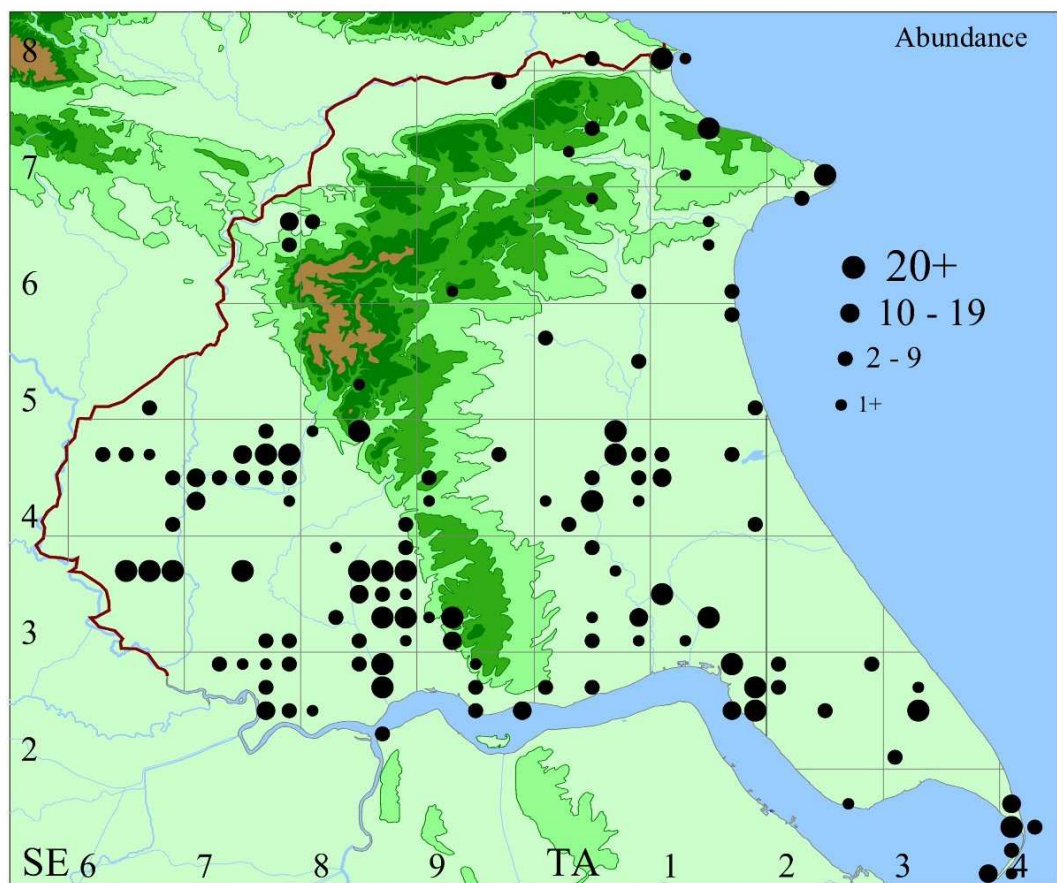
Trend Due to having a varied habitat preference and migratory nature, it is likely to remain a common species in the area, turning up where suitable breeding habitat is present.

Dates First Recorded:
1951

Earliest:
31st May 1984

Latest:
17th November 2004





Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*

Flight Period Late May to late October.

Habitat Shallow ponds and lakes with submerged water-plants, normally with well-vegetated margins. Will tolerate brackish conditions.

Distribution Despite there being records from all the natural areas in South-east Yorkshire, this is a scarce species. It is chiefly a migrant to our shores, though breeding has occurred. It is a fairly regular visitor to key coastal sites such as Spurn and Filey. At Spurn there are records of individuals emerging from Clubley's Scrape, following the year of their arrival. There was a strong arrival of this species in 2006, many records relating to this influx. At Filey, breeding was confirmed when a second generation emerged in September of the same year. Though few adults were seen, several hundred exuviae were collected, showing the true scale of emergence. There were expectations that this species would emerge here in 2007, however it appears that all emerged in their arrival year, with not a single adult being recorded in 2007.

Breeding Status Scarce, irregular breeder, mainly migratory.

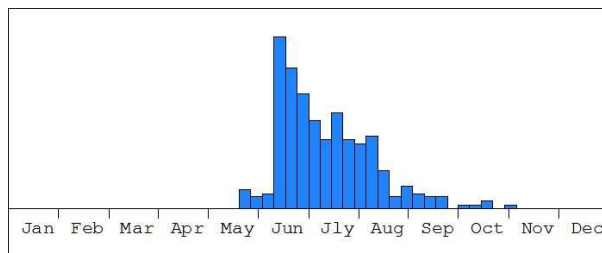
Behaviour Males are territorial, perching on the ground or adjacent vegetation, only flying off to intercept intruders. Frequently hovers over open water. The pair usually oviposit in tandem in areas of shallow water. The warmer water in shallow conditions helps the larvae develop quickly, sometimes resulting in a second generation emerging in the same year. They are strongly migratory, with strong influxes in some years, then none in others. These irregular influxes make it difficult to assess if this species is breeding on a regular basis.

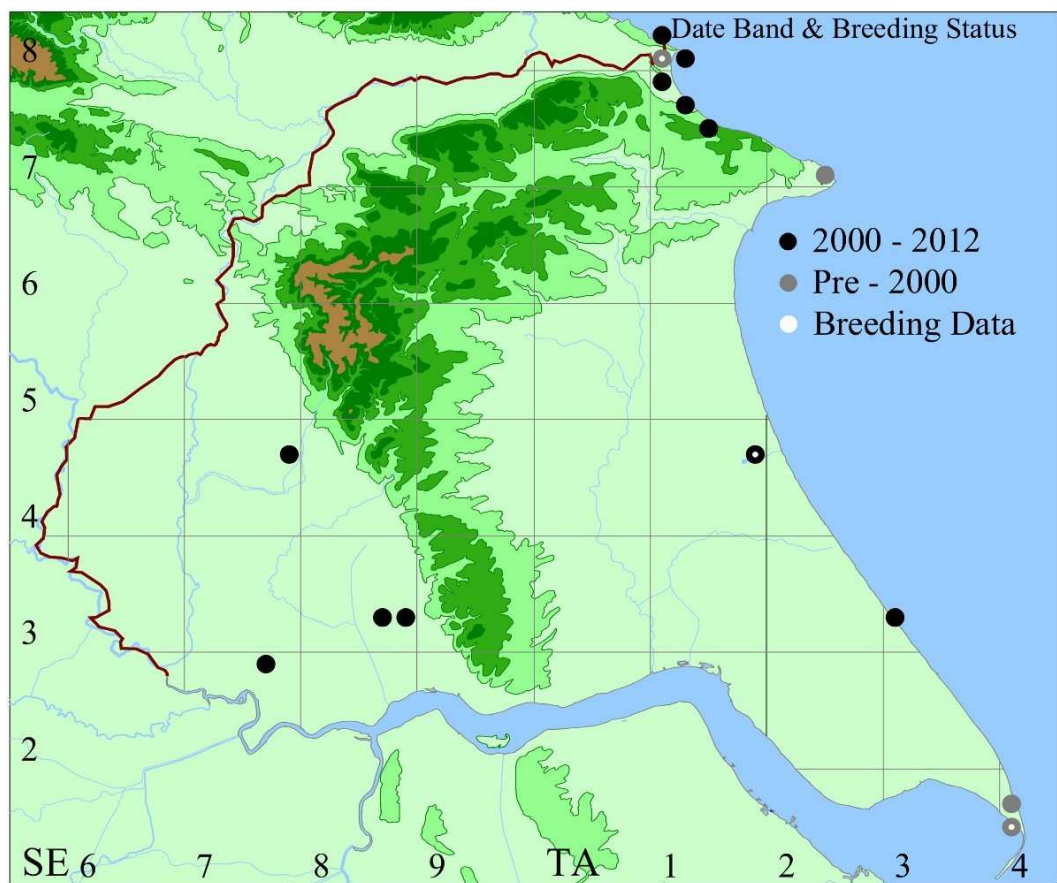
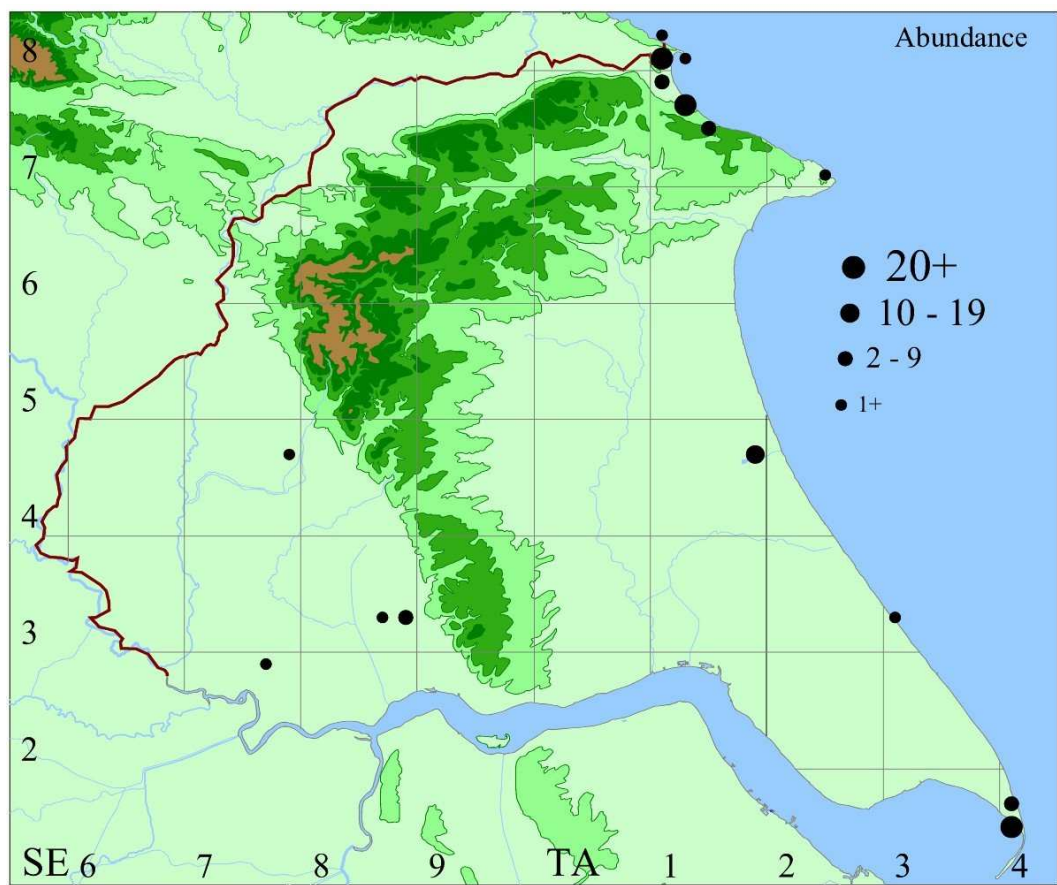
Trend Currently reliant on inward migration. With climate change it is possible that this species could become a regular breeder. The large second generation emergence at Filey in 2006 showing what is possible.

Dates First Recorded:
1952

Earliest:
19th May 1999

Latest:
29th October 2006





Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*



Male



*Immature male
(John Harwood)*



*Female
(John Harwood)*

Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*

Male



Female



Copulating pair



Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum*

Flight Period Early June to early October.

Habitat Marshes, ponds, lakes, canals and ditches, with plenty of tall emergent vegetation. Will tolerate brackish conditions, using woodland near to water bodies for shelter.

Distribution Widespread in the Humberhead Levels, particularly abundant at Skipwith Common, where there is plenty of tall emergent vegetation. In Holderness, it is found in good numbers in the Tophill Low, Brandesburton Ponds and Leven Canal area. Tophill Low provides plenty of shelter, where they favour the woodland rides. Found in smaller numbers in the Vale of York and Vale of Pickering, where in the latter area, Filey Dams is a key location. Along the Humber it can be found in small numbers, easily being observed within the Hull City boundary at Noddle Hill and Oak Road Lake. As with many species, the Wolds are an unproductive area, with Reighton Ponds providing the majority of observations.

Breeding Status Widespread resident breeder.

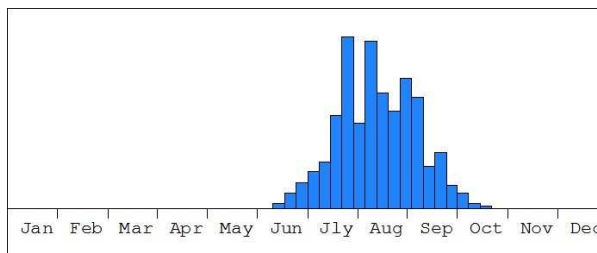
Behaviour Males are less aggressively territorial than Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*. They have a 'skippy' flight, being less direct than the latter species. Copulation lasts only a few minutes whilst perched on vegetation or the ground. The female will then oviposit either alone, or in tandem, amongst shaded vegetation. Larvae live among submerged plants and emerge after one year.

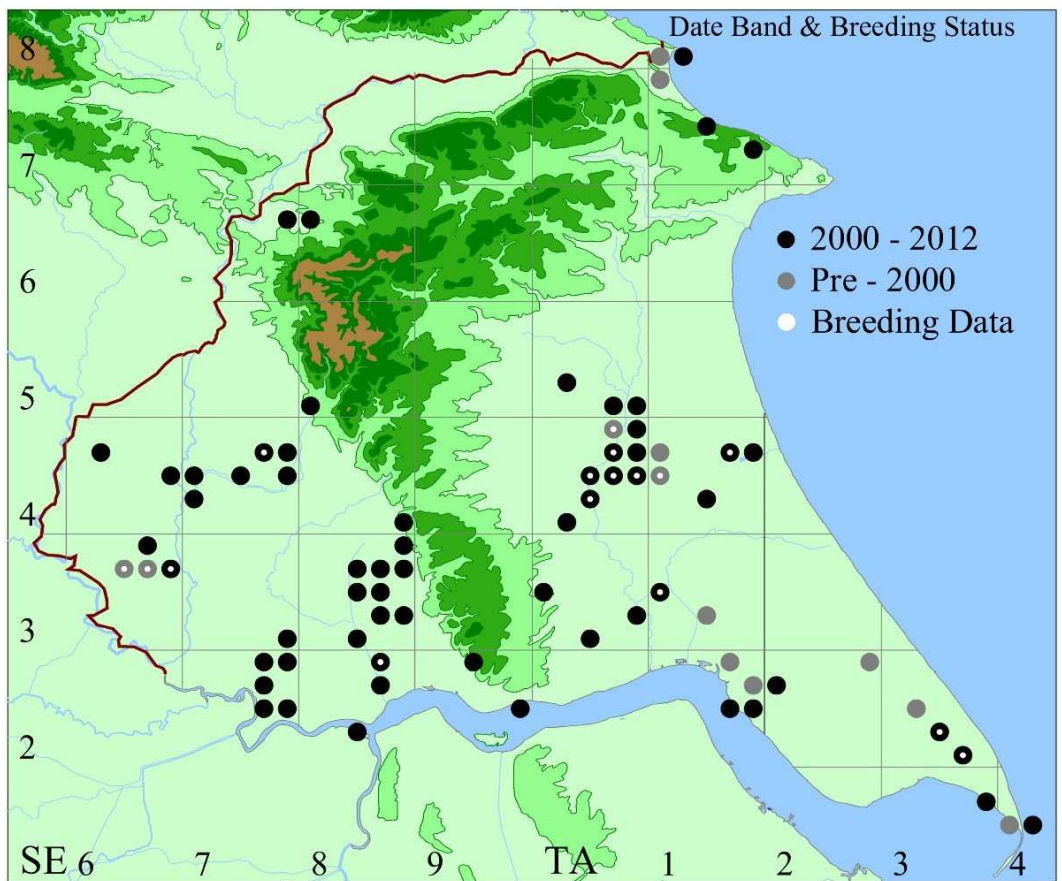
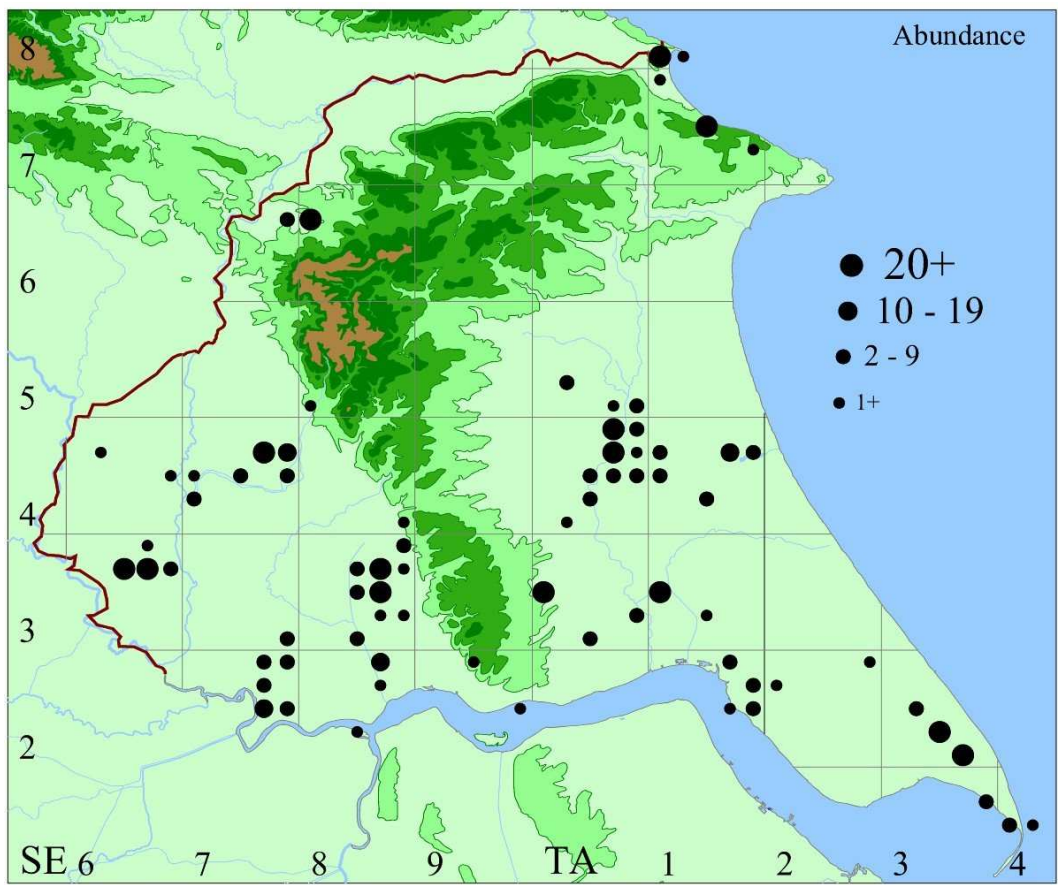
Trend After first being recorded in 1991, the species has slowly spread its range throughout South-east Yorkshire. There is no reason to doubt that it will continue to be found at new sites, where suitable habitat occurs. Likely to remain scarce on the Wolds, where ponds and lakes are mainly artificial and well maintained, lacking the required abundant vegetation.

Dates First Recorded:
1991

Earliest:
12th June 2004

Latest:
10th October 2012





Black Darter *Sympetrum danae*

Flight Period Mid-June to early November.

Habitat Mainly heaths containing boggy pools, peaty ponds and lakes with abundant emergent rushes and sedges. Sheltered sites produce the highest numbers. Sometimes disperses into atypical locations.

Distribution The main populations centre around the Humberhead Levels, where Skipwith Common is the key site for this species. There is also a small breeding population in the Vale of York at Allerthorpe Common. Away from these two sites there have been no records of breeding activity, though some sites holding more than single individuals would indicate possible breeding sites close by. There are a number of records of single adults, mainly males, away from known colonies, in late August and September, most of these probably relating to dispersal. There is also the possibility that these ad-hoc sightings are migrants, with coastal sites at Spurn and Filey turning up individuals with some regularity. The latter site however may just be local dispersal from the North Yorkshire Moors.

Breeding Status Resident localised breeder in Vale of York and Humberhead Levels.

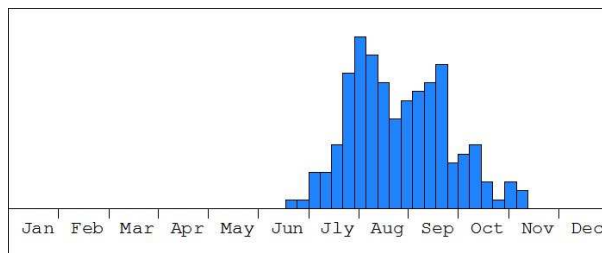
Behaviour Males are not very territorial, with large numbers being present at some sites. Males hover over emergent vegetation, seeking females to mate with. They will frequently settle, especially on open ground and stones. In hot weather they will rest in the obelisk position, with abdomen pointing upwards, to reduce the surface area presented to the sun. Copulation lasts for several minutes, with oviposition taking place in tandem or alone. Oviposition takes place either directly into water, or into mud and mats of vegetation. Larvae emerge after one year and can survive the temporary drying out of their habitat.

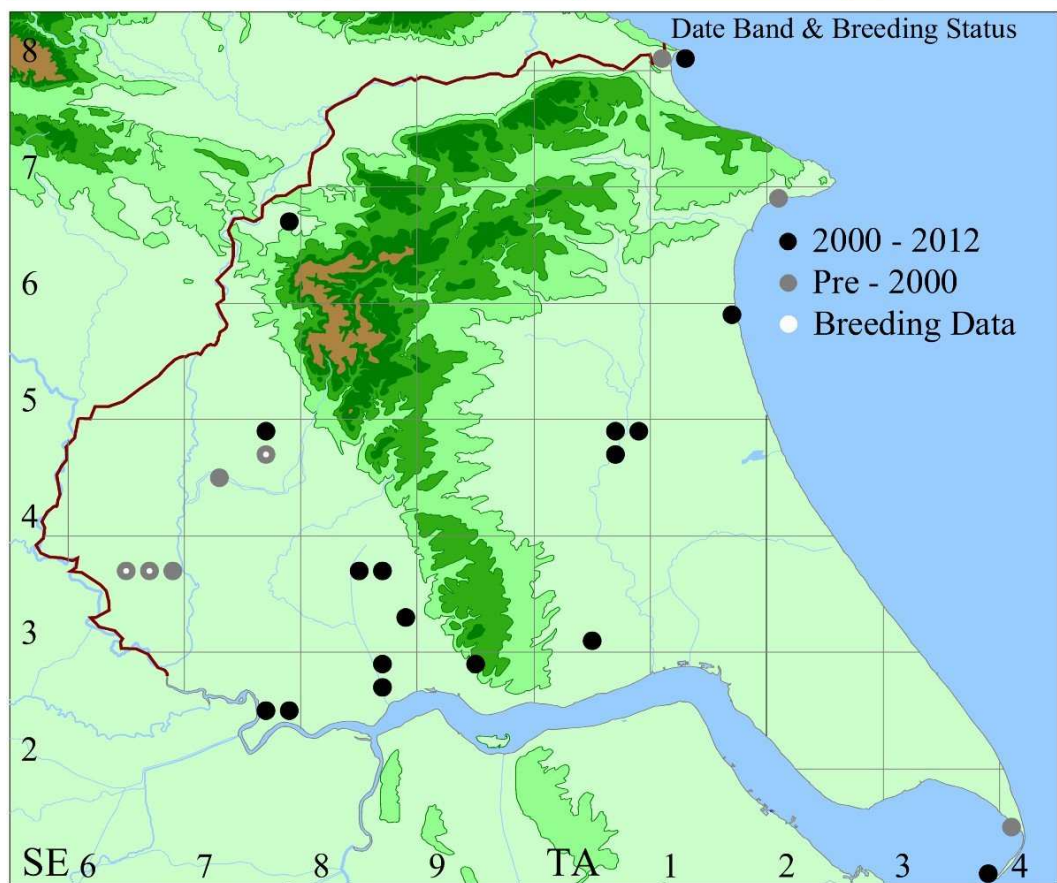
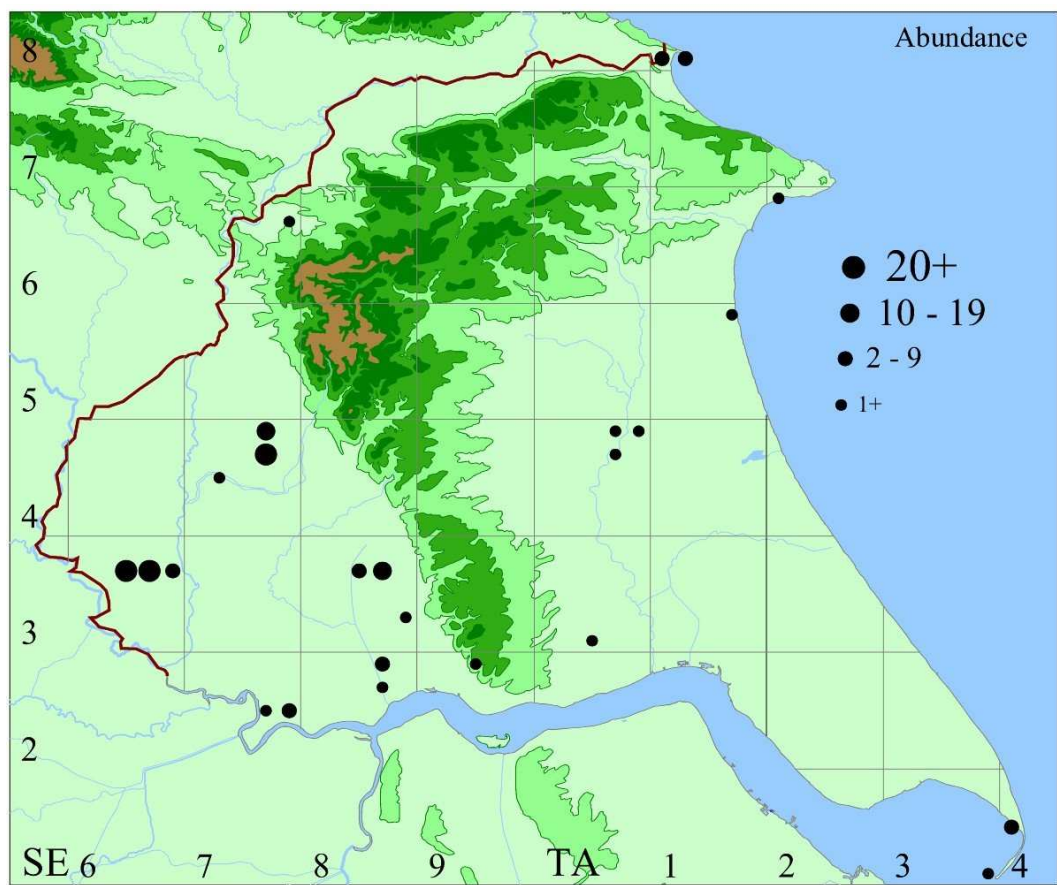
Trend Likely to remain a very localised species due to habitat requirements. With its migratory and dispersive nature, individuals could turn up at almost any location, especially late in the season, when individuals have passed their breeding peak.

Dates First Recorded:
1945

Earliest:
17th June 2007

Latest:
6th November 2007





Black Darter *Sympetrum danae*



Male



Immature male



Female



Migrants, Vagrants and Historical Records

Scarce Emerald Damselfly *Lestes dryas*

Currently extinct in South-east Yorkshire, at one time in the 1970's, presumed extinct from the whole of Britain. Documented records are from Long Bank Dyke at Kilnsea between 1951 and 1952.

Norfolk Hawker *Aeshna isosceles*

One was caught at the Warren, Spurn Point, on 20th July 2003. This species is chiefly confined to the County of Norfolk where this individual could have come from. It is also possible that this was a migrant from the continent.

Lesser Emperor Dragonfly *Anax parthenope*

This species appears to be slowly colonising Britain. Breeding behaviour has been recorded in other Yorkshire Vice-counties, where there appears to be a three year life cycle at three sites. In South-east Yorkshire there have only been two documented records of single individuals. A male was at Brandesburton Ponds on 3rd July 2005, found during a Yorkshire Wildlife Trust dragonfly walk. The other record is from Clubley's Scrape, Spurn Point, on 30th July 2000.



Keeled Skimmer



Yellow-winged Darter (John Harwood)

Downy Emerald *Cordulia aenea*

A single was observed at Canal Zone, Spurn Point, on 22nd July 2003 and was seen by several observers.

Keeled Skimmer *Orthetrum coerulescens*

A male was present at Skipwith Common on 23rd July 2010.

Yellow-winged Darter *Sympetrum flaveolum*

This is a scarce migrant found mainly along the coast. All records fall within the date range of 22nd July to 6th September during the years 1995, 1997, 2004, 2006 and 2009. Most involve single males, though three were at Filey Dams on 31st July 1995. With the exception of an inland

specimen at Pulfen Nature Reserve, all are from the well watched coastal spots at Filey, Flamborough Head and Spurn.

Vagrant Darter *Sympetrum vulgatum*

There is a historical record from Kingston upon Hull in 1836. A single record involves a male trapped at Spurn Point on 5th August 1995.



Site Guide

The following site guides aim to provide suitable locations, with public access, to observe *Odonata*. The ten sites chosen will allow observers to connect with all of the regular breeding species within the county.

Some sites, such as the Rivers Derwent and Hertford, do not have a prolific species list. They are included as they may be, the only reliable sites to see specific species or, the only location providing public access.

Other places, such as Tophill Low are good all round sites, having one of the largest number of breeding species present. Each site page includes a species list, along with an abundance rating as detailed below.

By using this and the flight charts in the

species accounts, it will enable readers to ascertain the likelihood of finding specific species when they visit a site.

Abundance Rating

- A - 1
- B - 2-5
- C 6-20
- D 21-100
- E 101-500
- F 500+

Grid references for all other sites mentioned in the species summaries can be found in the index.

Broomfleet Washlands

Managed by

Environment Agency.

Grid Reference

SE866278 (Parking) Walk north along the canal, passing through the walkway under the railway.

Directions

Leave the M62/A63 at Junction 38, following signs for Newport/Gilberdyke. Shortly after leaving the M62/A63 turn left along Wallingfen Lane, to Broomfleet. On reaching Broomfleet turn right, follow road to the canal and park near bridge.

Summary

Broomfleet Washlands is a key site for two species scarce in the county, offering the only accessible site to see Variable Damselfly, which is only present in the Broomfleet area and Hairy Dragonfly. Visit in late May to early June for the best chance of connecting with these two species.

The sheltered southern edge of the site is the most productive area, giving the best opportunity to see Variable Damselfly close up. There are also small numbers of Azure Damselfly which enables close comparison of these two similar species side by side.

It is worth exploring both Broomfleet Drain and Clegdike Drain where pairs of Large Red Damselfly, Variable Damselfly and Azure Damselfly can all be observed ovipositing in tandem. This area also offers a good chance of picking up Hairy Dragonfly, as the males patrol up and down these stretches of water. Black-tailed Skimmer can be found along the banks of Market Weighton Canal, basking on bare areas

of ground. It is worth scanning the lilies along the canal for Red-eyed Damselfly, which can also be found on the southern ponds.

Emerald Damselflies are present in small numbers and careful scanning of emergent vegetation may reveal one or two. Broad-bodied Chaser are occasionally encountered, along with Black Darter which have probably dispersed from more typical sites nearby.

Please note that cattle and sheep may be grazed on this site, and the site may occasionally be used for shooting. All ponds west of the canal are on private land.

Site List

A - Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens* B - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa*
D - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
E - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
D - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
E - Variable Damselfly *C. pulchellum*
D - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
D - Red-eyed Damselfly *E. najas*
C - Hairy Dragonfly *B. pratense*
A - Common Hawker *A. juncea*
C - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
A - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
C - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
B - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
B - Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*
C - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
C - Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*
D - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
B - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*
B - Black Darter *S. danae*

Broomfleet Washlands



Filey Dams



Filey Dams

Managed by

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Grid Reference

TA106806

Directions

Leave the A165 along the A1039 to the south-west of Filey. The reserve is accessed via Wharfedale Road through the housing estate.

Summary

Filey Dams is a small nature reserve on the western side of Filey town. It is primarily known for its bird life, but dragonflies can be observed along the footpaths, and from the hides.

For a small site, with restricted access, the species list is impressive. Though numbers of individuals are not high, its location close to the coast ensures it records occasional scarce migrants. There is always the chance of finding Red-veined Darter in good years. In 2006 there was a large influx of this species with plenty of breeding activity. A second generation emerged later in the year giving the opportunity to observe this species in its immature form. Yellow-winged Darter is another rarity that has occurred on a handful of occasions, therefore always worth looking out for later in the season.

The close proximity of Filey Dams to the North Yorkshire Moors also means it picks up occasional species that have dispersed from there. Common Hawker and Black Darter have both been recorded at the reserve, despite being more usually associated with acidic water bodies.

Site List

A - Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*
A - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa*
A - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
C - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
C - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
A - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
A - Common Hawker *A. juncea*
B - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
A - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
C - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
C - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
B - Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*
D - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
C - Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*
D - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
D - Red-veined Darter *S. fonscolombii*
D - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*
B - Black Darter *S. danae*

Vagrants

B - Yellow-winged Darter *S. flaveolum*

Leven Canal

Managed by

Privately managed.

Grid Reference

TA100450 Sandholme Bridge

TA070450 Waterloo Bridge

Directions

From the main road through Leven, head west along West Street. Sandholme Bridge can be reached by turning left into Carr Lane.

Summary

Leven Canal is a SSSI running west from Leven village to the River Hull over three miles away. It is not now used as a navigable waterway, no longer being connected to the River Hull. There is also a break halfway along where the canal has been in-filled to allow the Holderness Drain to run through.

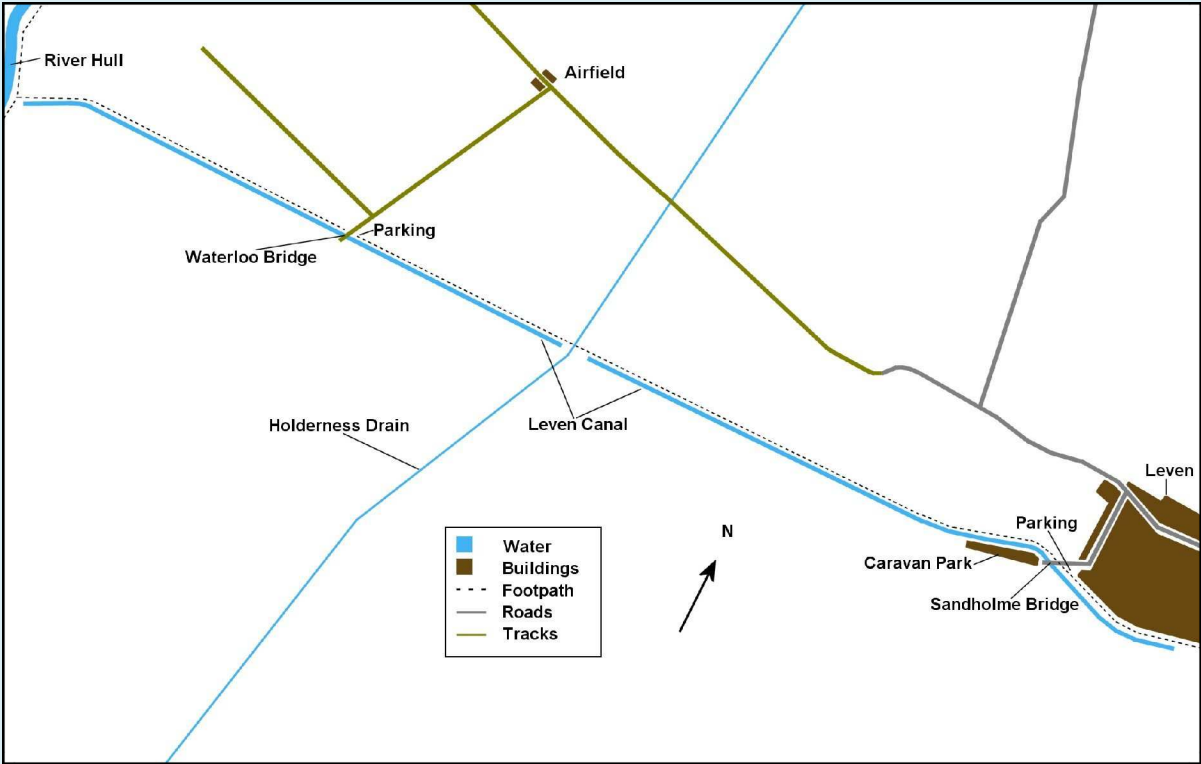
The signature species for this site was long considered to be Red-eyed Damselfly, but this has recently changed with the discovery of a healthy population of Hairy Dragonfly.

Most species can be observed from Sandholme Bridge, the small section running east from here is easily viewed. Walking west, much of the water is obscured by trees along towpath, with only limited open areas allowing for observation. Once the break in the canal has been reached, the bank sides become more open for viewing. At this point there is a better chance of observing Hairy Dragonfly, though they can be elusive, flying low over the water, close to the banks amongst the emergent vegetation. To see plenty of activity it is best to visit this site on a calm sunny day, as it can be quite exposed to the wind.

Site List

C - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
E - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
E - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
E - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
F - Red-eyed Damselfly *E. najas*
D - Hairy Dragonfly *B. pratense*
D - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
C - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
D - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
B - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
B - Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*
D - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
C - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
B - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*

Leven Canal



North Cave Wetlands



North Cave Wetlands

Managed by

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Grid Reference

SE886328 (Car park)

Directions

Leave the M62/A63 at Junction 38 heading for North Cave. The reserve is sign-posted from the B1230 as you travel towards North Cave.

Summary

North Cave Wetlands is a relatively new reserve, created from former sand and gravel workings. Today the area to the south has recently been extracted, with extraction currently taking place immediately west of the site. Once completed this will form a major addition to the reserve.

This site is one of the best in the county to see Black-tailed Skimmer, with the path from Island Lake to Far Lake providing ample opportunity to encounter this species. The large lakes make this an excellent site for Common Blue Damselfly, which can be observed in huge numbers out over the open water.

Some of the scarcer species can be difficult to see, most of these being found around the Dragonfly Ponds. Although these ponds only cover a small area, it is always worth spending time here, scanning the vegetation for Emerald Damselfly, or anything unusual that may have dropped in.

Red-eyed Damselfly has recently appeared. Though not easy to observe, it can be found by scanning floating vegetation on Carp Lake.

In 2006, several Red-veined Darter were observed on Reedbed Lake. Later that year, a single second generation male was observed along the western edge of the site. As with many other sites, this species has not maintained a population in subsequent years.

Local dispersal from other sites can sometimes turn up Black Darter late in the season and Banded Demoiselle has also been recorded.

Site List

A - Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*
C - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa*
A - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
D - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
F - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
C - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
C - Red-eyed Damselfly *E. najas*
B - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
A - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
C - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
C - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
A - Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*
D - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
E - Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*
D - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
C - Red-veined Darter *S. fonscolombii*
B - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*
A - Black Darter *S. danae*

Oak Road Lake

Managed by

Hull City Council

Grid Reference

TA089319

Directions

Via Beresford Avenue, from the A1079,
Beverley Road.

Summary

Oak Road Lake is a borrow pit created when the banks of the River Hull were strengthened. It was a relatively little known, under-recorded site, until it sprung to fame when Small Red-eyed Damselfly were found in 2006. At the time, this was the most northerly site known in the country for this species. Four years later, Oak Road Lake remains the stronghold, being the best place to observe this damselfly.

August is the main month that Small Red-eyed Damselfly has been recorded, so target this month if you wish to see it here. In sunny conditions they will be extremely active out over the lake, so binoculars are essential to view them.

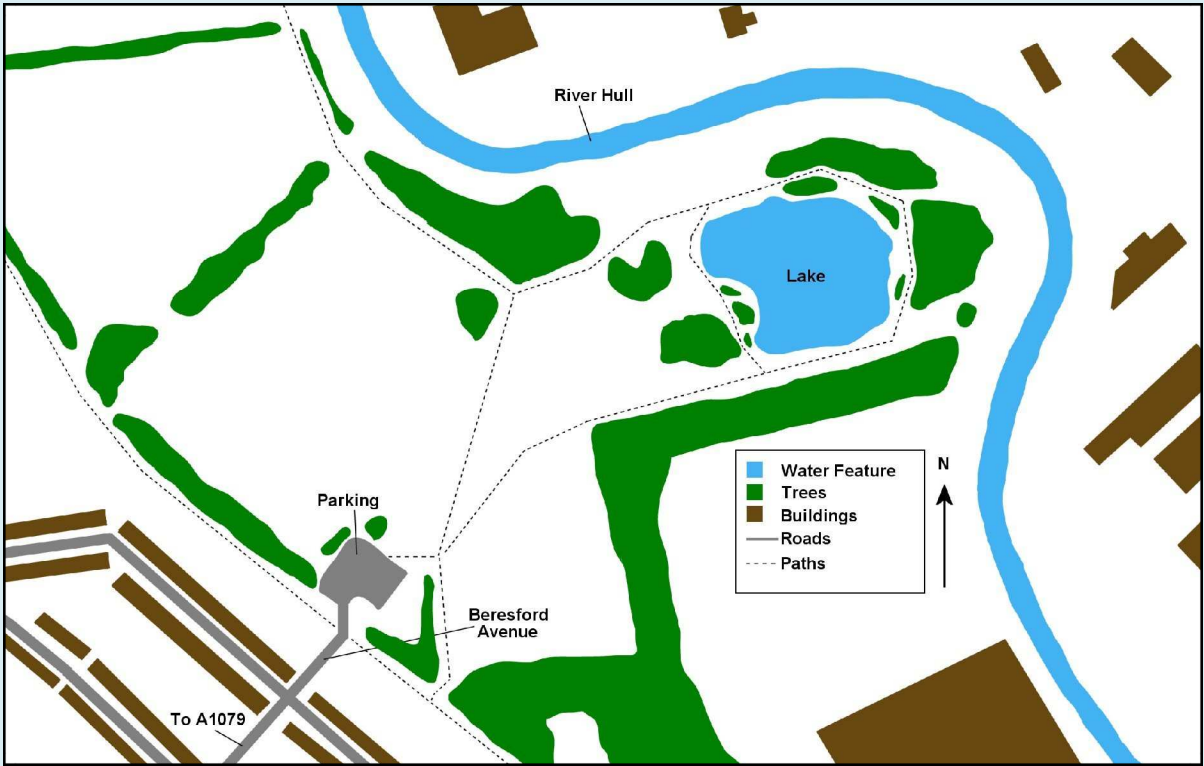
Cooler conditions offer the best chance to observe this species at close quarters in the vegetation surrounding the lake, the sheltered area in the trees to the north being the favoured location. The damselflies tend to roost high up in the canopy, so finding them is a challenge.

Black-tailed Skimmer can be found resting on the fishing pontoons, whilst all other species can be found in small numbers around the perimeter of the lake.

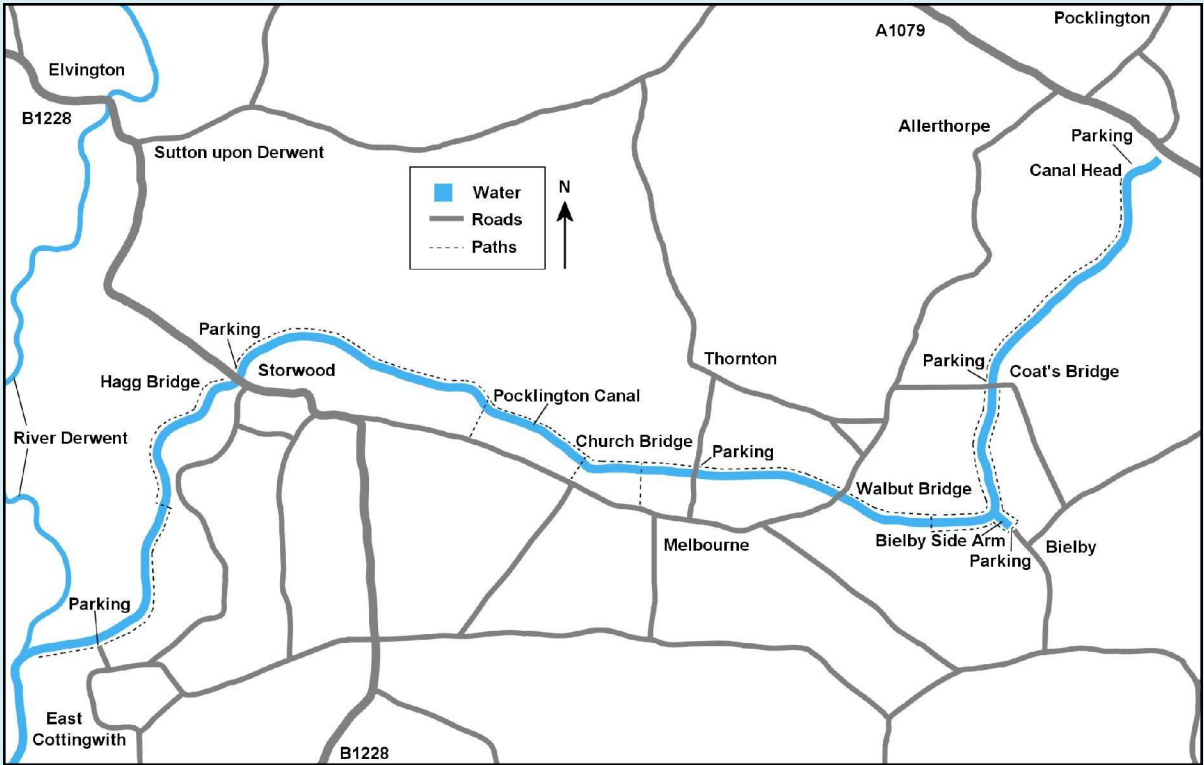
Site List

B - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa*
D - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
D - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
B - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
D - Small Red-eyed Damselfly *E. viridulum*
B - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
C - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
B - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
B - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
B - Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*
C - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
B - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*

Oak Road Lake



Pocklington Canal



Pocklington Canal

Managed by

British Waterways

Grid Reference

SE798427 Canal Head, SE786439 Bielby,
SE717451 Hagg Bridge, SE704427 East
Cottingwith

Directions

Eastern end can be reached from the A1079 near
Pocklington.

Western end can be reached from the B1228
south of Elvington, near York.

Summary

Pocklington Canal, at 15 miles long, offers many different access points from where to view. The stretch from Melbourne to the River Derwent at East Cottingwith is the best area to search as the vegetation along this part of the waterway has been managed to prevent it taking over the canal. The stretch north from Coat's Bridge to Canal Head has recently been cleared of rank vegetation, which should improve the dragonfly numbers on this stretch of the canal in future years.

Hagg Bridge offers parking in a lay-by, just west of the bridge along the road, or on the canal side adjacent to the bridge, accessed by a small track. With the exception of Emerald Damselfly, Common Hawker and Black Darter, all the species on the site list can be encountered along this stretch.

Parking can also be found at East Cottingwith, which offers similar opportunities as Hagg Bridge.

Further east, good parking can be found at Bielby Side Arm. From here it is possible to take in a circular walk around the canal. Red-eyed Damselfly is less numerous along this stretch, but can still be found in small numbers. The sheltered areas either side of the Arm are a good area to find Banded Demoiselle. Common Hawker visits the canal to feed along the tree lined edges, though breeding is confined to nearby heathland sites. Black Darter is another species that may be encountered once they start to disperse from breeding areas later in the season.

Site List

D - Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*
B - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa*
D - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
D - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
F - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
F - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
E - Red-eyed Damselfly *E. najas*
B - Common Hawker *A. juncea*
D - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
A - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
C - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
C - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
C - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
C - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
B - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*
A - Black Darter *S. danae*

Rivers Derwent and Hertford

Managed by

Muston and Yedingham Drainage Board

Grid Reference

SE980789

Directions

From the A64 at Ganton, take the minor road north passing the golf course on the left. Park safely on the roadside before the level crossing. Walk north along the track over the level crossing, to reach Hay Bridge.

Summary

The confluence of the Rivers Derwent and Hertford does not hold a large number of species. However, the area is the best place to see Beautiful Demoiselle, this species only being present here and eastwards along the River Hertford.

Viewing the area is difficult, due to the steep river banks, though it may be possible to get down to water level, with extreme care.

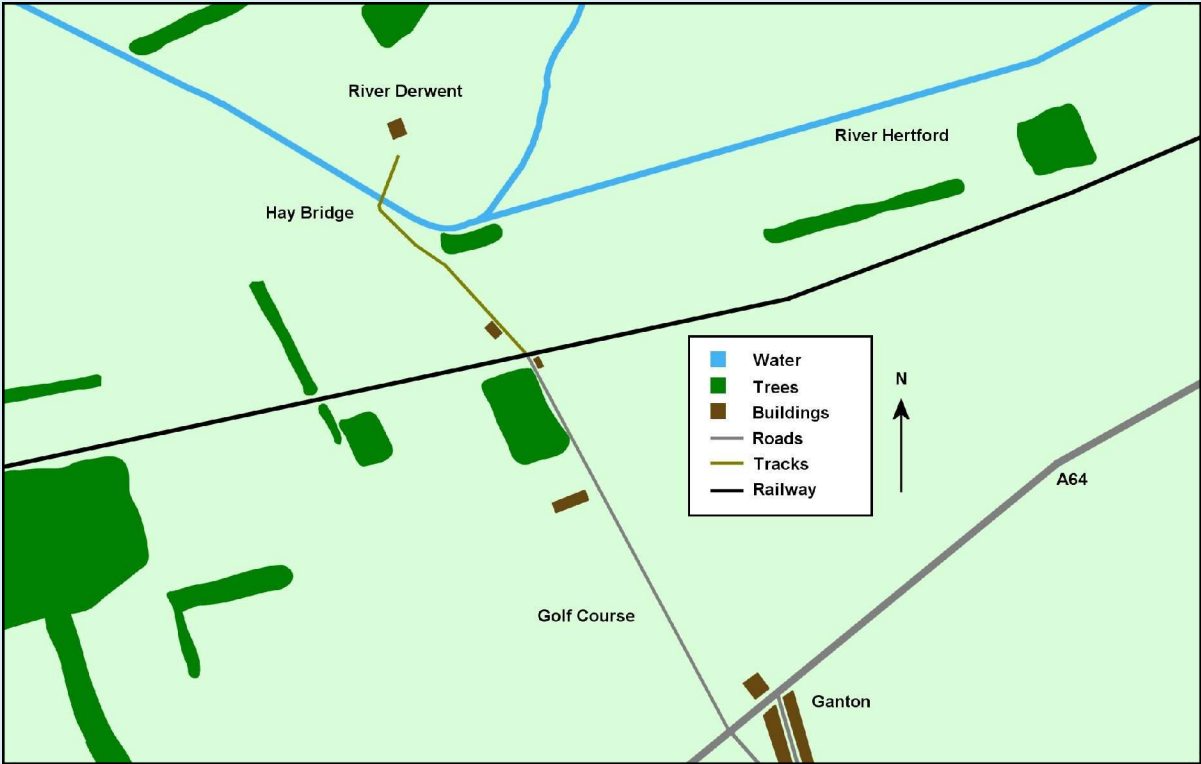
This area holds both Beautiful and Banded Demoiselle, giving the opportunity to compare these species side by side, especially the subtle differences of the females.

Beautiful Demoiselle can be observed at several other locations along the River Hertford, usually in smaller numbers. Further accessible points can be found at TA020808 where the A64 crosses the river, a large lay-by north of the river providing ample parking. Further east at TA056805 a minor road crosses the river at Folkton Carr. Here there is a small lay-by north of the river, with space for a couple of cars.

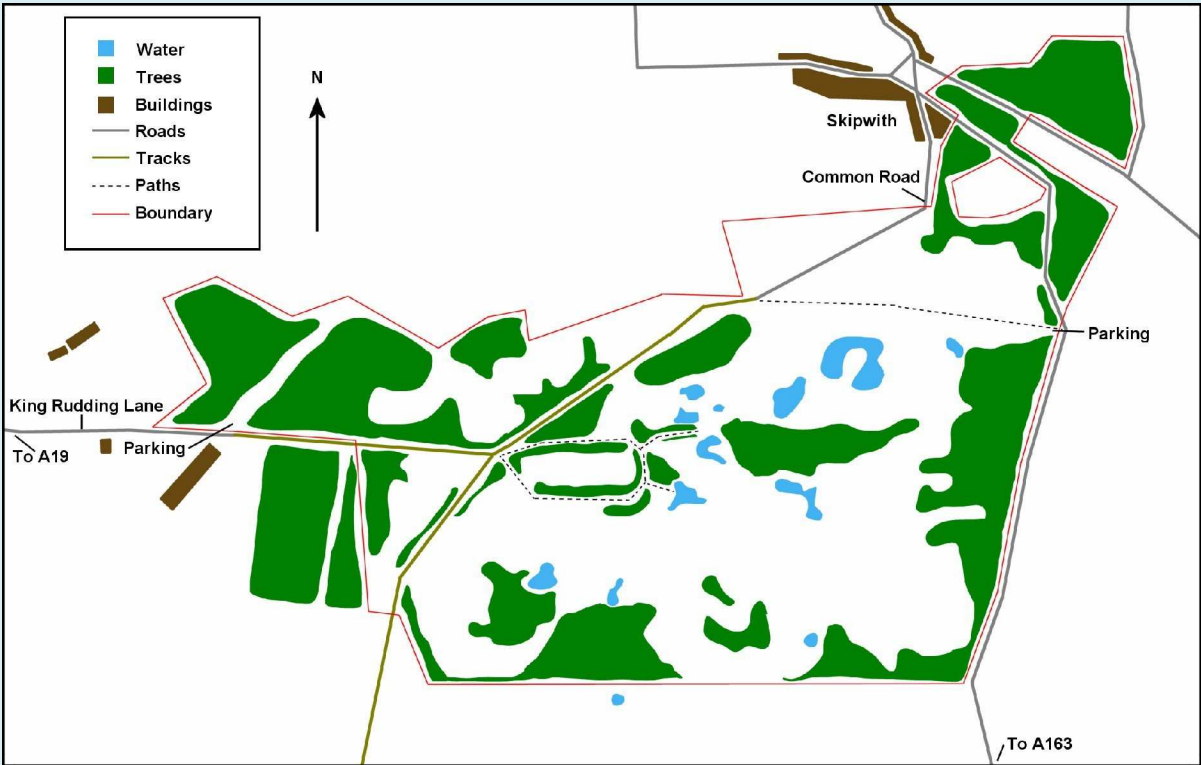
Site List

C - Beautiful Demoiselle *C. virgo*
C - Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*
C - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
B - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
A - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
B - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
B - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*

Rivers Derwent and Hertford



Skipwith Common



Skipwith Common

Managed by

Escrick Park Estate and Natural England

Grid Reference

SE669377 Eastern car park
SE644373 Western car park

Directions

Access from the A19 to the west along King Ruddings Lane at Ricall to reach the Western car park.

North from the A163 along Cornelius Way to reach the Eastern car park.

Summary

Recently designated as a National Nature Reserve, Skipwith Common is a good example of lowland heath. This habitat is scarce in the county, making it a key site for the species that prefer acidic conditions, including Common Hawker and Black Darter. The acidic conditions also mean Emerald Damselfly and Four-spotted Chaser are abundant.

The eastern end of the common is the best place to observe the majority of species. Check the ponds and pools to the south of the path running west from the car park. Emerald Damselfly and Black Darter can usually be found in good numbers amongst the rank vegetation around the edges of the ponds.

Skipwith Common offers good opportunities to observe all the *Aeshnidae* species side by side. The surrounding perimeter woodland edges are the best places to search for settling individuals, as at water they will usually be very active.

Ruddy Darter is numerous at this site, usually outnumbering Common Darter early in the

summer, whereas the opposite is true as the season draws to a close.

Black-tailed Skimmer and Broad-bodied Chaser can be found around the ponds, with the former species the most numerous.

There is open access to this site, so wandering away from the main paths is allowed. However, please avoid disturbance to ground nesting birds during the breeding season.

Site List

E - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa*
E - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
C - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
F - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
D - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
C - Common Hawker *A. juncea*
B - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
B - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
D - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
C - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
B - Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*
E - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
D - Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*
D - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
D - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*
F - Black Darter *S. danae*

Vagrants

A - Keeled Skimmer *O. coerulescens*

Spurn Point

Managed by

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Grid Reference

TA416154

Directions

West of Hull, leave the A1033 at Patrington along the B1445 following signs for Easington. At the T-junction in Easington, follow the tourist signs for Spurn.

Summary

Spurn is primarily a birding hotspot, with many rare migrants and vagrants occurring every year. As can be seen from the species list opposite, it is also the best area for picking up scarce migrant and vagrant dragonflies.

Over the years Spurn, has been a reliable site for Red-veined Darter, with evidence proving that it has successfully bred over a numbers of years. Proven breeding has not been confirmed every year, so it is difficult to ascertain if this is a sustainable population, or being supplemented by fresh migrants annually. Small Red-eyed Damselfly may be encountered around the Canal Zone, this being one of only six sites in the county where this species has been recorded.

Clubley's Scrape is the best place to get close views. This area can be accessed through a gate opposite the car park. Black-tailed Skimmer can be found basking on the bare areas surrounding the ponds as they dry up in summer. Emperor Dragonfly can be observed easily, with males constantly fighting for territory.

The following species are all scarce and not guaranteed to be present:- Banded Demoiselle,

Azure Damselfly, Brown Hawker, Southern Hawker, Broad-bodied Chaser and Black Darter.

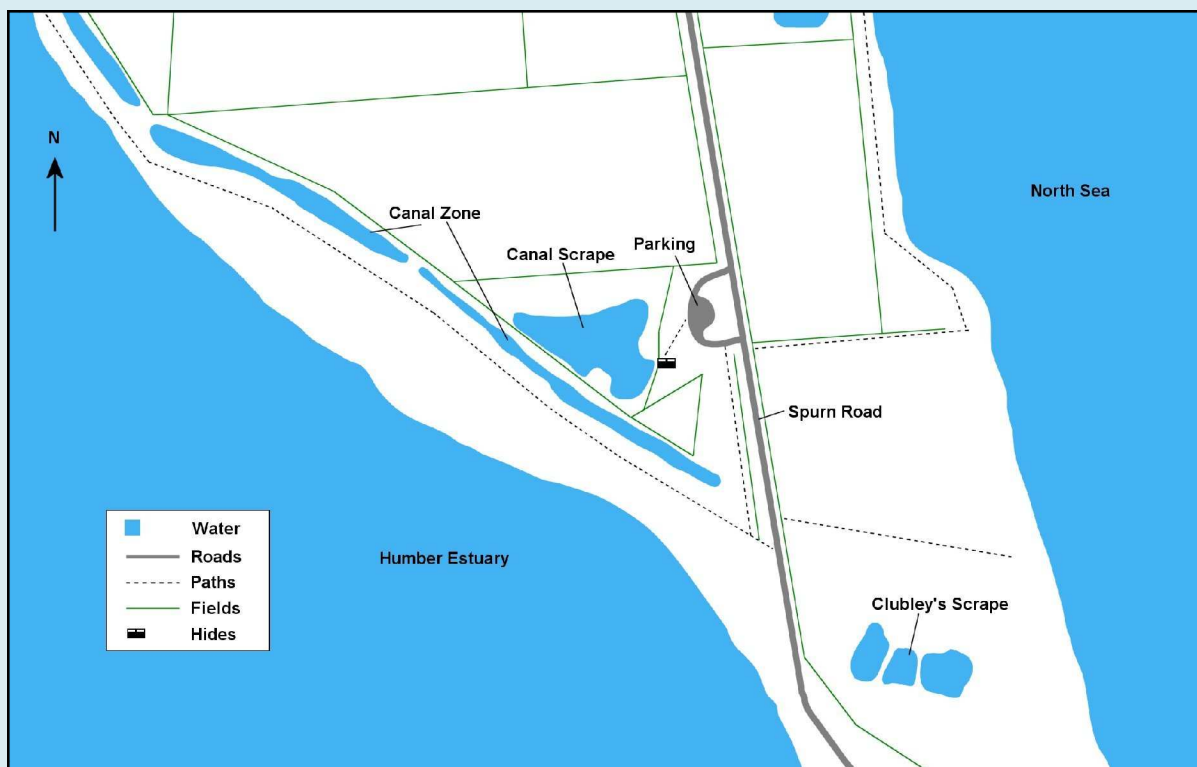
Site List

B - Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*
B - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa* F - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
F - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
C - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
C - Small Red-eyed Damselfly *E. viridulum*
A - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
B - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
D - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
D - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
B - Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*
D - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
D - Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*
E - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
D - Red-veined Darter *S. fonscolombii*
C - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*
B - Black Darter *S. danae*

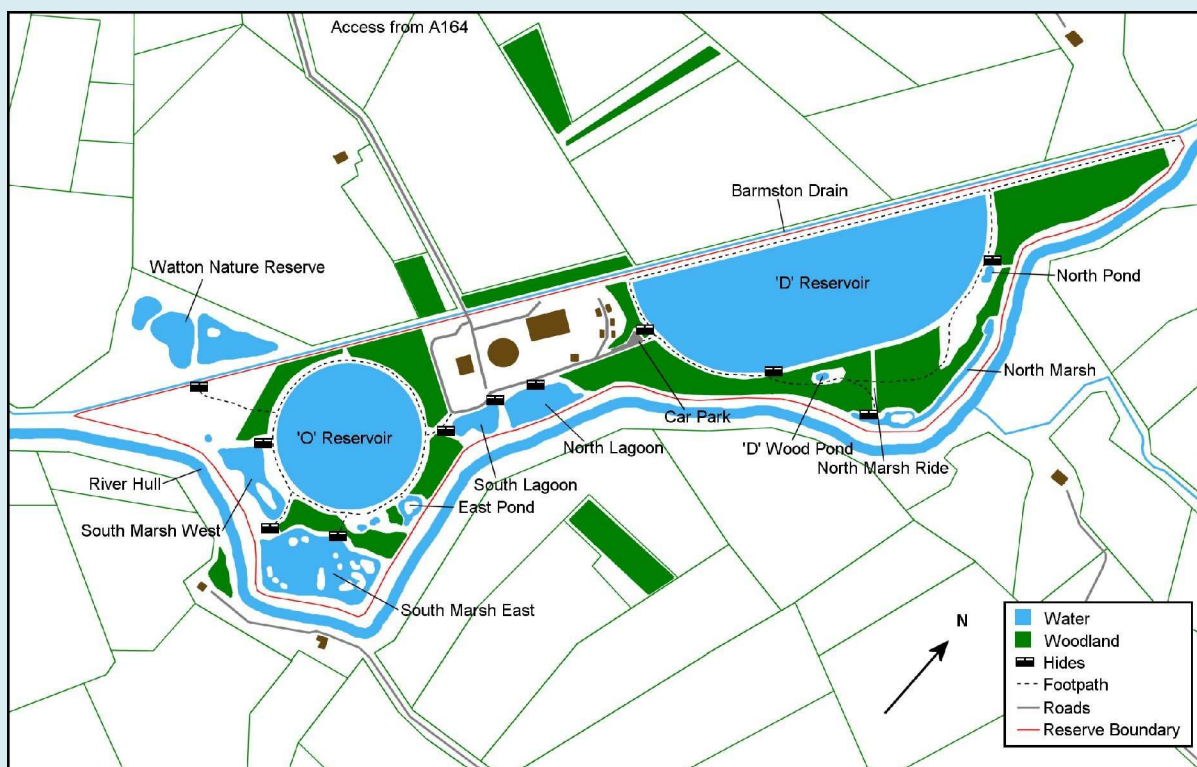
Vagrants

A - Norfolk Hawker *A. isosceles*
A - Lesser Emperor Dragonfly *A. parthenope*
A - Downy Emerald *C. aenea*
A - Vagrant Darter *S. vulgatum*
B - Yellow-winged Darter *S. flaveolum*

Spurn Point



Tophill Low



Tophill Low

Managed by

Yorkshire Water

Grid Reference

TA073486 (Car park)

Directions

Reached from the A164 running between Beverley and Driffield. Sign-posted from the A164 at Watton where a 6km drive along a narrow country lane will bring you to the reserve car park. Access fee payable.

Summary

Tophill Low is a key site in the county due to the high number of breeding species occurring there. The most recent addition to this list is Hairy Dragonfly. Oviposition has been recorded, but the species is still not recorded annually, despite the proximity of Leven Canal, and it is thought to have not yet colonised the site.

This is a large site, where it is possible to spend the full day. A walk north from the car park will bring you to 'D' Wood Pond. where the recent colonist, Broad-bodied Chaser may be encountered. North Marsh Ride is a good sheltered area where both Azure Damselfly and Large Red Damselfly can easily be seen early in the season. After leaving 'D' Wood, North Pond can be found near North Hide, a good area for Emerald Damselfly, Four-spotted Chaser and occasional Emperor Dragonfly.

The southern half of the site is best for Red-eyed Damselfly, where it can be observed on floating vegetation on South Marsh West. In some years, during mid to late-May, good numbers of immature individuals can be found in the grasses surrounding 'O' Reservoir.

Black-tailed Skimmer is easily found on the marshes, often being flushed from the footpaths and tarmac areas.

Hawkers and Darters can be encountered throughout most of the site, feeding along the woodland edges.

Ruddy Darter appears to prefer the more sheltered areas at the north end of the site, whilst Common Darter prefers the southern half.

Banded Demoiselle and Black Darter are scarce visitors.

Site List

B - Banded Demoiselle *C. splendens*
E - Emerald Damselfly *L. sponsa*
E - Large Red Damselfly *P. nymphula*
D - Blue-tailed Damselfly *I. elegans*
E - Common Blue Damselfly *E. cyathigerum*
F - Azure Damselfly *C. puella*
E - Red-eyed Damselfly *E. najas*
B - Hairy Dragonfly *B. pratense*
D - Brown Hawker *A. grandis*
D - Southern Hawker *A. cyanea*
E - Migrant Hawker *A. mixta*
C - Emperor Dragonfly *A. imperator*
B - Broad-bodied Chaser *L. depressa*
D - Four-spotted Chaser *L. quadrimaculata*
D - Black-tailed Skimmer *O. cancellatum*
E - Common Darter *S. striolatum*
E - Ruddy Darter *S. sanguineum*
A - Black Darter *S. danae*

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Living Record
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iRecord
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Humberhead Levels	7, 10, 26, 30, 36, 38, 42, 44, 54, 56, 60, 62, 68, 72, 78, 80

I

<i>Ischnura elegans</i>	12, 32, 34, 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95, 97, 98, 100
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K

Keeled Skimmer	84, 84, 97
Kilnsea	83

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L

Langton	20, 24
Large Red Damselfly	9, 23, 24, 86, 88, 89, 91, 94, 95, 97, 100
Lesser Emperor Dragonfly	83, 98
<i>Lestes dryas</i>	83
- <i>sponsa</i>	20, 22, 86, 88, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 100
Leven Canal (TA100450)	9, 24, 26, 36, 42, 54, 56, 60, 72, 78, 89, 100
<i>Libellula depressa</i>	9, 12, 65, 66, 86, 88, 89, 91, 97, 98, 100
- <i>quadrimaculata</i>	56, 62, 64, 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 100

M

Market Weighton Beck (SE843374)	18
Market Weighton Canal (SE866278)	8, 26, 86
Migrant Hawker	12, 47, 48, 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 100

N

Newport Ponds (SE853308)	26
Noddle Hill (TA111348)	20, 30, 78
Norfolk Hawker	83, 98
North Cave Wetlands (SE886328)	8, 36, 62, 68, 72, 91
North Cliffe Wood (SE860374)	20, 44
North Yorkshire Moors	11, 44, 80, 88

O

Oak Road Lake (TA089319)	11, 30, 78, 92
<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	8, 9, 68, 70, 86, 88, 91, 92, 97, 98, 100
- <i>coerulescens</i>	84, 84, 97

P

Paull Holme Strays (TA180251)	11, 30
Pocklington Canal (SE717451)	10, 18, 26, 36, 42, 54, 62, 85, 94
Pulfin (TA051439)	84
<i>Pyrrosoma nymphula</i>	9, 23, 24, 86, 88, 89, 91, 94, 95, 97, 100

R

Red-eyed Damselfly	9, 10, 26, 28, 86, 89, 91, 94, 100
Red-veined Darter	11, 74, 76, 88, 91, 98
Reighton	12, 20, 56, 62, 66, 78
River Derwent (SE980789)	7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 18, 85, 94, 95
River Foulness (SE791342)	18, 26
River Hertford (SE980789)	11, 14, 85, 95
River Hull (TA057406)	9, 18, 54, 62, 89, 92
River Ouse (SE705511)	10
Ruddy Darter	77, 78, 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 100

SS Saltmarshe Delph (SE773248)	30
Scarce Emerald Damselfly	83
Sherburn	14
Skipwith Common (SE669377)	8, 20, 24, 44, 62, 68, 78, 80, 84, 97
Small Red-eyed Damselfly	11, 29 , 30 , 92, 98
South Cliffe Carr	20
Southern Hawker	9, 12, 50 , 52, 86, 88, 89, 91, 94, 95, 97, 98, 100
Spurn (TA416154)	11, 30, 36, 54, 56, 62, 68, 72, 74, 80, 83, 84, 98
<i>Sympetrum danae</i>	8, 10, 11, 80 , 82, 86, 88, 91, 94, 96, 98, 100
- <i>flaveolum</i>	84 , 84 , 88, 98
- <i>fonscolombii</i>	11, 74 , 76 , 88, 91, 98
- <i>sanguineum</i>	77, 78 , 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 100
- <i>striolatum</i>	5, 12, 71 , 72 , 78, 86, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 97, 98, 100
- <i>vulgatum</i>	84 , 98
T	
Tophill Low (TA073486)	9, 20, 24, 26, 36, 42, 48, 50, 54, 60, 68, 72, 78, 85, 100
<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	12, 66
V	
Vagrant Darter	84 , 98
Vale of Pickering	7, 11 , 14, 20, 42, 44, 54, 56, 62, 68, 78
Vale of York	7, 10 , 26, 36, 42, 44, 54, 56, 62, 68, 78, 80
Variable Damselfly	6, 8, 38 , 40 , 42, 86
W	
Welton Waters (SE958249)	36
Wheldrake Ings (SE694444)	10
Wheldrake Wood (SE660470)	10
Y	
Yellow-winged Darter	84 , 84 , 88, 98
Yorkshire Wolds	7, 8, 12 , 18, 20, 24, 32, 36, 42, 48, 50, 54, 56, 62, 66, 72, 78





The Dragonflies of South-east Yorkshire brings together the current status, and distribution, of breeding dragonflies and damselflies in the area.

Details of how the differing natural areas of the region influence habitat, and the species which occur there.



Full colour throughout, with photographs of all breeding species, along with text detailing flight periods, habitat, distribution, breeding status, behaviour and trends.

Mapping illustrates the distribution and abundance of species, along with flight phenology charts.



Maps illustrating how species have increased their range since 2000, overlaid with key breeding data.

Site guide to ten easily accessible locations, enabling observers to see all the breeding species within the region.



Summary of a further seven species of scarce migrants, vagrants and historical records.