

Long Meadow Dragonfly and Damselfly Report



Large red damselfly



Common darter

Eleven species of dragonflies and damselfies have been seen using the meadow. These are banded demoiselle, common blue damsel, azure damsel, large red damsel, migrant hawker, brown hawker, southern hawker, emperor, four-spotted chaser, broad-bodied chaser, common darter.

During the last 3 years the most common damselfly was the large red damsel seen from April to July and the most common dragonfly was the common darter seen from July to September.

Dragonflies and damselfies need relatively still water for breeding. The absence of ponds or sheltered still water within the meadow will have limited their presence.

In 2014 two backwaters fed by the river Pinn were created to provide suitable breeding habitat. In particular the larger more sunny open one has attracted common blue, azure and large red damsels many of which were paired up laying eggs. A lone male broad-bodied chaser was present for a while and common darters were frequently seen here so may have bred in this backwater. However as it dried out during summer 2016 no eggs or larvae will have survived to hatch into adults.

Dragonflies and damselfies are carnivores and eat other invertebrates, mainly flying insects, which they catch on the wing, so a healthy environment full of insect food is what these predators need. Most of them were seen on the sunnier warmer side of the meadow where their insect prey was feeding on the abundant flowers.

Long meadow is managed to host as many types of insects as practicable.



Southern hawker



Migrant hawker



Emperor