

Common Dragonflies and Damselflies of the Chicago Region

Volunteer Stewardship Network – Chicago Wilderness

Produced by: John & Jane Balaban, Jennie Kluse & Robin Foster, with assistance of Laurel Ross and support from the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation.
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33 Larva

Dragonflies spend most of their lives in the water as larvae.



34 Eclose process

The animal emerges from the larval skin after metamorphosis as a soft-skinned “teneral” adult.



35 Exuviae

The larval skin left behind when the new adult flies away.

ZYGOPTERA

Damselflies

Males and females dimorphic. Can often identify females by identifying a nearby male of the same species. There are many damselflies in the region, but these eight images allow ID to family, and perhaps to genus. ⇒



36 Calopteryx maculata ♀/♂

Ebony Jewelwing: large size; broad wings; flutters like a butterfly; no stigma; sits horizontally on leaves. Male and female in “wheel” position. 39-57 mm



37 Archilestes grandis ♂

Great Spreadwing: very large; long stigma; wings held wide, dragonfly-like; hangs vertically on stems. 50-62mm



38 Lestes dryas ♂

Emerald Spreadwing: emerald green; wings held open but swept back; long stigma; hangs vertically on stems. 32-40mm



39 Lestes rectangularis ♂

Slender Spreadwing: male with long abdomen relative to wings; vein pale at wing tip. 37-53mm



40 Argia apicalis ♂

Blue-fronted Dancer: small stigma; wings folded over back but held above the body; lands horizontally; can be found dancing among sunny spots in trails. 33-40mm



41 Enallagma civile ♂

Familiar Bluet: many species, mostly blue-black; wings held down alongside body; “helicopters” up and down along stems. 28-39mm



42 Enallagma cyathigerum ♀/♂

Northern Bluet: male and female mating in “wheel” position. 29-40mm



43 Ischnura verticalis ♂

Eastern Forktail: very small, jewel-like; flies among low vegetation like Bluets. 21-29mm