

4 September 2012

Hi all,

We've been away for a few weeks, but boy did we have a nice welcome back to Oklahoma—not only a nice weekend odeing but a new state record!

We discovered a population of the Atlantic Bluet (*Enallagma doubledayi*) at two small ponds, only 10 m apart, tucked away in the piney forest of McGee Creek WMA in Atoka County (see habitat photo below). We searched ten other ponds in the area, but these were the only two at which we found the species. As its name implies, this species is a rare find so far west. The first record of it west of the Mississippi River was when Sid Dunkle found it in the 1990s in Collin County, Texas. Later it was found in Anderson and Bastrop Counties, Texas, as well as multiple locations in Louisiana—and now in Oklahoma! Atlantic Bluet is a “look-alike species,” as it is often confused with other bluets. In our region the most likely bluet to confuse it with is the oh-so-familiar Familiar Bluet (*E. civile*), although the Big Bluet (*E. durum*) is also a contender when nearer to the coast. The only way to know for sure which species you have is by closely examining the terminal appendages (see photo below; and John Abbott's *Damselflies of Texas* for comparison illustrations). So keep your eyes peeled and remember that Atlantic Bluets and Familiar Bluets can occur together, so it is always worth the time to check multiple individuals. Get close-up photos of cerci when you can (photos of the body cannot be confirmed typically), or better yet, grab a specimen or two and send them our way. Whether we have been overlooking this species or it is expanding its range, we need to make sure we identify our bluets properly.



Left: Habitat shot of *Enallagma doubledayi* pond.
Right: terminal appendages of *E. doubledayi*

Other news includes adding the Southern Sprite (*Nehalennia integricollis*) to two counties. Until 2009, the species was known only from specimens collected by A. Earl Pritchard in 1934 from Pushmataha County. Berlin Heck and David Arbour re-discovered the species in the state when they found a population at Red Slough WMA in McCurtain County in September 2009. On 2 September, we found some in a boggy spillover of Schooler Lake, Choctaw County, and later that same day at McGee Creek WMA, Atoka County, where we had one male at the first Atlantic Bluet pond and others at one of those additional ten ponds we checked. This is another species that, given its tiny size, is overlooked easily. And something to keep in mind, if you are lucky enough to find a sprite, is do not assume that it is a Southern Sprite, as the Sphagnum Sprite (*N. gracilis*), although not yet recorded in Oklahoma, is a possibility in the state.

Notable finds this weekend and since our last update include:

- Swamp Spreadwing (*Lestes vigilax*) — collected specimens at Schooler Lake, a spot Berlin Heck photographed the species in 2009; only a hand full of specimens known for the state (from 1932 & 1992)
- Azure Bluet (*Enallagma aspersum*) — 2 Sept specimen is latest for state (previously 31 July)
- Lilypad Forktail (*Ischnura kellicotti*) — added to Choctaw County
- Kiowa Dancer (*Argia immunda*) — added to Choctaw County (by us) and Grant County by Jason Heinen
- Common Green Darner (*Anax junius*) — added to Choctaw County — *only one more county to go to get a clean sweep of the state*
- Gilded River Cruiser (*Macromia pacifica*) — added to Choctaw County; extended late date from 16 Aug to 2 Sept
- Four-spotted Pennant (*Brachymesia gravida*) — added to Coal County
- Marl Pennant (*Macrodiplex balteata*) — added to Custer County (5 Aug)
- Golden-winged Skimmer (*Libellula auripennis*) — 3rd specimen for state

I attached an updated state map and spreadsheet. In August we managed to get Blaine and Custer Counties over 40 species, which leaves only 4 counties still under 40! These counties are Kingfisher (with 38 species), Grant (37), Ottawa (39), and Craig (35). Jason Heinen will be working Kingfisher and Grant, but we still need you northerners to get to Craig and Ottawa, the latter of which is the last county to be missing the Common Green Darner. Also, please take a look through the spreadsheet to look for obvious gaps in our data; for example, we are still missing both the Wandering and Spot-winged Gliders in some counties, and this is a great time of year to get those species.

Hope this coming weekend finds the heat breaking, and you out there getting new records!

All the best,
Brenda and Michael

Brenda D. Smith-Patten & Michael A. Patten
Oklahoma Biological Survey, University of Oklahoma