



8 August 2014

Dear OK Oders,

We write to you a little earlier than usual because we've got lots of really good news. It truly is high season and the odes are flying . . . including out of museum cabinets (see below)!

We are delighted to report that every county in the northeast finally has reached at least 50 species. And maybe best of all is that Craig County no longer holds the title of "deadbeat county of Oklahoma." Poor little Craig County has reigned as the loser county almost since the beginning of the Oklahoma Odonata project, but at long last it has a respectable list of 51 species! Many of us have tried desperately to find water in that county and this year we finally did it, by virtue of a clear, shallow creek (Madden Creek) in the west-central part of the county. What a relief!!

While in the northeast we managed to collect a Halloween Pennant (*Celithemis eponina*) in Ottawa County and photograph one in Mayes County, so this species is the latest to be recorded in all 77 Oklahoma counties. This addition makes for 12 species now that have a clean sweep across the state, as it joined the Familiar Bluet (*Enallagma civile*), Double-striped Bluet (*E. basidens*), Blue-fronted Dancer (*Argia apicalis*), Powdered Dancer (*A. moesta*), Common Green Darner (*Anax junius*), Common Whitetail (*Platthemis hydia*), Widow Skimmer (*Libellula luctuosa*), Eastern Amberwing (*Perithemis tenera*), Eastern Pondhawk (*Erythemis simplicicollis*), Blue Dasher (*Pachydiplax longipennis*), and Black Saddlebags (*Tramea lacerata*). That list could be so much better, as there are eight other species that are awfully close to a clean sweep. For example, one trip to Rogers County could clean up the Red Saddlebags (*Tramea onusta*) . . . hint, hint, hint . . . and put the Citrine Forktail (*Ischnura hastata*) within one county (it is also missing from Beckham). Two other species could be cleaned up in a trip to Mayes and Adair Counties, where neither the Variegated Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum corruptum*) nor the Twelve-spotted Skimmer (*Libellula pulchella*) has been record. Please check the spreadsheet for other species.



While still on the topic of northeastern Oklahoma, believe it or not Jim Arterburn added a new species to the Tulsa County list, bringing its list to 86 species. On 5 August he found the Lilypad Forktail (*Ischnura kellicotti*) at Crescent Park (Odonata Central record # 425537). Also in Tulsa County, Abigail and Ruth Mills have been doing a tremendous job at identifying odonates near where they live, including getting a beautiful shot of a Neon Skimmer (*Libellula croceipennis*; photo left) that Abigail caught. Keep your eye out for both Neon and Flame (*Libellula saturata*) Skimmers because it is high season for both. Remember that their ranges overlap so it is possible to see both


depending on where you live. And before we leave the northeast, for those interested in Ozark Odonata, hopefully you have seen George Sim's updated "A Distribution of Ozark Odonates." If not, contact Brenda or George (georgesims@hotmail.com).

From the southeast we are thrilled to report that the Regal Darner (*Coryphaeschna ingens*) was found at the TNC Boehler Seeps Preserve in Atoka County. Previously the species had only been known from the Red Slough area, so it goes without saying that we were surprised to see three males there on 20 July. Although it was a bit eerie that as Brenda was admiring the habitat at Boehler she started thinking that Regal Darner should occur there, and then suddenly one appeared as if she wished it (cue Twilight Zone score). Alas, Michael was frustrated by this species' tendency to fly up high, well out of reach of even his extendable net, but we felt ourselves fortunate that Brenda managed to obtain a good photo of one (OC424926; photo below).



News from the southwest includes having the fortune of meeting Larry Moody in Jackson County, who was kind enough to allow us to survey his family's property that is part of the Coppermines Off Road Park. If any of you are interested in offroading please consider sending the Moodys some business their way (Brenda can put you in touch with them). They are a good bunch of people, and we sure were glad to find some water in the southwest! We had a good bunch of odes, including lots of Marl Pennants (*Macrodiplax balteata*). Later that afternoon, not far from Coppermines in what is known as the "Jackson Salt Plains," at precisely the spot where Michael predicted years ago that the Seaside Dragonlet (*Erythrodiplax berenice*) would occur in the state . . . we found a lovely male (OC425536; photo below). For those of you keeping track, this was species #164 for the state (although keep reading). The nearest population of the species is in east-central New Mexico and the Trans-Pecos region of Texas, so our little guy may have been a mere vagrant, but there may well be a small population in the salt marshes of southwestern Oklahoma (mostly Jackson County, but with a few in w. Tillman County to the east and Harmon and s. Beckham Counties to the north).

And working our way to the northwest, we have to mention that Bill Carrell had a good trip out to the panhandle last weekend, including getting a Great Pondhawk (*Erythemis vesiculosa*; OC 425619) along the way at Salt Plains NWR in Alfalfa County. He also has two Marl Pennants at Optima Dam in Texas County. Bill has been quite the travelling dragonhunter lately, hitting a dozen counties in the past month, including some wicked tough ones. Pretty awesome! Thanks for your hard work.

Odonata: Anisoptera: Libellulidae	UNITED STATES
<i>Erythrodiplax berenice</i> ♂	det: Smith-Patten, BD; Patten, MA
Oklahoma: Jackson County	
6 km S of Eldorado; "Jackson Salt Plains"	
N 34.41817, W -99.63876 datum: NAD83	
3 August 2014	
Collector: Smith-Patten, BD; Patten, MA	
Ledger #: 1377	
Preparation: 12-24 hours 100% acetone soak, then dried	
Notes: FIRST STATE RECORD; Odonata Central record #425536; salt marsh	
Smith-Patten/Patten Collection	

We conclude with a little lesson in the value of specimens, as well as in persistence and patience with them. Specimens can make one sad and can make one happy, but at least they are available for reevaluation.

In the past week we had the ill fortune to find four misidentified specimens of female forktails and thus had to remove the Plains Forktail (*Ischnura damula*) from both Roger Mills and Washita Counties. We have many specimens of the Plains Forktail from western Cimarron County, at the tip of the panhandle, but otherwise, it turns out, we have not encountered it elsewhere in the state. Indeed, apart from a 1970 specimen of a male from Ft. Supply in Woodward County, collected by the venerable George Bick and Lothar Hornuff, the species is unknown in Oklahoma away from western Cimarron County.



But there proved to be a bright side to our specimen adventure. In July of last year we collected a male river cruiser (*Macromia*) at Lake Lloyd Vincent in Ellis County, a location where no species in the genus is expected to occur. That specimen has gnawed at us ever since we collected it because we could not reconcile the identification with any of the three species of river cruisers known from the state. At the time we toyed with an identification as a Bronzed River Cruiser (*M. annulata*), but then we chickened out and labelled it as a Gilded River Cruiser (*M. pacifica*), even if it did not match other Gilded in our collection and we were uncomfortable with that identification, although in important ways it was much nearer to that species than it was to either of the other two *Macromia*

recorded in Oklahoma, the Swift River Cruiser (*M. illinoensis*) and Royal River Cruiser (*M. taeniolata*). Bill's recent Swift River Cruiser (OC424965; photo above) in Delaware County—a male so black dorsally that we thought it could be Oklahoma's first Alleghany River Cruiser (*M. alleghaniensis*), a species we feel is destined to occur in easternmost Oklahoma—reminded us that we ought not be afraid to think outside the box. And so a few days ago Michael pulled our Ellis County specimen from its drawer to have a look at it with fresh eyes. Sure enough the little bugger keyed to the Bronzed River Cruiser using the brand new Needham et al. (2014) *Dragonflies of North America*. Brenda satisfied herself with this identification, and like Michael she was impressed with its mostly pale vertex (a raised bit just in front of where the eyes meet; see OC425615). We had species #165 for Oklahoma! Or rather, number #164, as the Seaside Dragonlet really was #165. What a week it has been!

Happy oding,

Brenda and Michael

PS We've attached a new checklist of the species of Oklahoma as well as a map of the state and the documentation spreadsheet.



Bronzed River Cruiser, *Macromia annulata*;
species #164 for Oklahoma,
or #165 depending on how you choose to count.