

30 May 2019

Dear OK Oders,

Welcome to summer! Here is a summary of spring odonate news from Oklahoma and nearby.

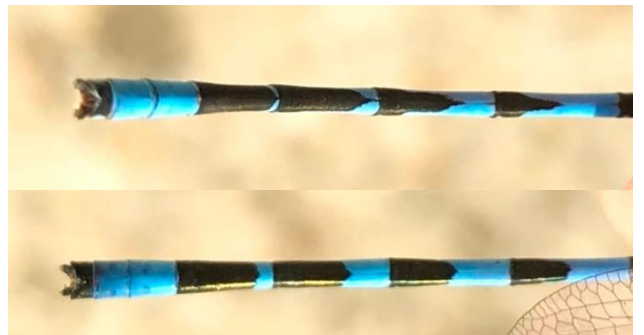
Let's start with a new state record! One not added to Oklahoma, but rather to our sister state of Texas. The long-sought-after prize of the Western Red Damsel (*Amphiagrion abbreviatum*) was finally taken when Mike Dillon photographed a male at Lake Marvin, Hemphill County on 21 May (Odonata Central [OC] record 495053; photo, below). Many of us have been lured into the Texas panhandle by the red damsel only to return home emptyhanded. So kudos to Mike for finding that little bugger!



So as not to let Oklahoma be outdone, Michael Patten reported 110 Western Red Damsels from Doby Springs Park, Harper County, on 26 May (OC495623). Though not the highest count for the species in Oklahoma—that's 150 from Ellis County Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on 28 May 2016—it is only the second time the species has been counted in triple digits in the state. Other

records of note from his trip (all from 25 May near Kenton, Cimarron Co.) are 2 male Western Forktails (*Ischnura perparva*; OC495612), which was an early flight date by one day and indicates there is an extant population of that species in the Oklahoma panhandle; an aberrant Familiar Bluet (*Enallagma civile*; SP2773, photo, below) that has an abdominal pattern reminiscent of the Big Bluet (*E. durum*); and a female Western Pondhawk (*Erythemis collocata*; SP2772), making for the 9th confirmed record of the species in Oklahoma.

On the other end of Oklahoma, at Red Slough WMA in McCurtain County, David Arbour reported an early flight date for Oklahoma of 14 May for the Duckweed Firetail (*Telebasis byersi*; OC494769), bringing the state more in line with the flight season elsewhere (OK: 14 May–11 Oct; GA: May–Sept; FL: Jan–Nov). Another early flight date came when Michael Patten captured a teneral male Burgundy Bluet (*Enallagma dubium*; OC494656) at a new location northeast of Broken Bow on 6 May. That pond is the 6th known locality for the species in the state. A new record for the county came when I captured two male Atlantic Bluets (*Enallagma doubledayi*) on 24 May. That record makes for only the third county in Oklahoma from which the species is known. The location, a quarry pond



Aberrant Familiar Bluet (*Enallagma civile*; SP2773, top) that has an abdominal pattern nearer to a Tule or Big Bluet (*E. carunculatum*, pictured bottom; *E. durum*, not pictured). Photo by Michael Patten, 25 May 2019, 4 km ENE of Kenton, Cimarron County, Oklahoma.

along Union Valley Trail, appears to have a breeding population, given the presence of at least one pair. Recall that this species is easily mistaken for the Familiar Bluet, so specimens or at least in-hand, close-up photos of the terminal appendages are a must if one hopes to confirm the identification. Also at that pond was a Little Blue Dragonlet (*Erythrodiplax minuscula*) that I really wanted to take home with me. Fortunately on that trip I was accompanied by Mike Dillon and David Arbour, so they kept an eye on it while I was distracted by other things. I was also a bit off my game that morning with catching odes so I was oh so happy to pull the little guy out of David's net when he was kind enough to capture it for me. Part of the reason I wanted the specimen (SP2747) was because it has black terminal appendages rather than the white ones traditionally thought to be characteristic of the species. Do make sure that you do not use the appendages as a key character for the species since that does not generally hold in Oklahoma and sometimes elsewhere—look instead for the diminutive size, the dark thorax, the dark metallic face, and mostly clear wings.

These records came with much excitement, but the real thrills came a week earlier when David and I were out and about in eastern McCurtain County on 16 May. David spotted a roadside seep—now dubbed “Arbour Seep”—at which we encountered three male Ouachita Spiketails (*Cordulegaster talaria*). This is the first time this elusive species (known from fewer than 20 records, all from the Ouachita Mts. in Arkansas and Oklahoma) has been encountered in Oklahoma more than one individual at a time. David captured some stunning photos of a male eating a cranefly (photo, right). On a natural high from our spiketail encounter, we proceeded onward to Pine Mt. Spring, the location the spiketail was found at last year as Oklahoma's second state record. There we found Oklahoma's 175th species, the long-predicted and long-eluded state record of the Aurora Damsel (*Chromagrion conditum*; David Arbour's photo, below). Since that find the Aurora Damsel has been documented multiple times at Arbour Seep, too, up to 50 individuals (MA Patten), indicating a healthy population in the state. Note, in Dennis Paulson's eastern field guide, that the species is thought to have a disjunct population in southwestern Arkansas (and now it is finally confirmed in neighboring Oklahoma).



Look for the species at ponds, seeps, or small streams in southeastern Oklahoma into mid and possibly late summer.

The addition of the Atlantic Bluet and the Aurora Damsel to McCurtain County brought its list up to 122 species! That total is tied with the state of Delaware and is larger than 15 other US states and 10 Canadian provinces/territories. And now, Oklahoma, with its 175 known species is nipping at the heels of Georgia, which is but one species ahead.

I've been spending so much time lately in southeastern Oklahoma because I'm once again on the hunt for the Ozark Emerald (*Somatochlora ozarkensis*). My colleagues and I have been looking for the still unknown form the wild nymph (larval form) of this species. This year we continue with our efforts to pinpoint this species' preferred habitat. Please keep an eye out for it in all of eastern Oklahoma and report any encounters to me. Likewise, we hope to find additional records of the Texas Emerald (*Somatochlora margarita*), which is known currently by just one record, a lone male found by David Arbour on 22 June 2017. So definitely watch for emeralds this summer!

I leave you with a reminder that the Dragonfly Society of the Americas annual meeting is coming soon. It will be at McKinney Roughs Nature Park near Austin, Texas on 12–14 July (<https://www.dragonflysocietyamericas.org/2019-meeting-home>) with a pre-meeting field trip to east Texas on 8–11 July. Fun, fun, fun, and lots of interesting topics!

Happy odging, Bee :)
(and Michael)

