

Additional Information

Tips For Observing and Photographing Dragonflies

Dragonflies can be loosely lumped into categories of “perchers” or “flyers”. Perchers, such as some of the skimmers, have a usual or favorite perch which they return to repeatedly. Some flyers have a usual route, a beat which they fly back and forth in the same area. You can pre-focus your camera or binoculars on that area to get a close look. Some have a large, long beat and are more difficult to predict, so some luck and persistence are required to find them perched. Most odonates are most active in the middle of the day, but some are more active early and late, roosting most of the day in the shade. Be prepared, research and study your subjects first to know the preferred habitats. Binoculars, especially close-focus binoculars are a great aid for observing all nature subjects.

Approach slowly, getting closer and snapping away as you go (with today’s digital cameras, you can always delete later), a good distant shot is better than none and will be of some aid in identifying later.

Try to align planes of focus; for example, a side view is usually good, so move to the side for a clear side view of the dragonfly. A “3/4 view” can show face and eyes as well as the side. Some field marks are more important than others in differentiating one species from another. Get more than one angle if possible.

Sun at your back is always good for photographic detail but be ready to use flash to “fill” in the detail on the shadow side if the subject is back-lit or in any dark situation.

About ATBI

This brochure was compiled and developed by the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) group. ATBI is an on-going project in Tennessee State Parks and State Natural Areas. The goal of ATBI is to document all species in Tennessee State Parks, monitor long-term trends in specific taxonomic groups, and promote education about and preservation of all biodiversity with increased science and citizen education efforts. To access the ATBI database, go to www.tn.gov/environment/parks/atbi.

For more information about ATBI, please contact David Hill, 7th Floor, L & C Tower, 401 Church St., Nashville, TN 37243. Email david.r.hill@tn.gov. Phone 615-253-2455.

Notes: _____

Dragonfly References

Beaton, Giff. 2007. Dragonflies and Damselflies of Georgia and the Southeast. A Wormsloe Foundation Nature Book.

Dunkle, Sidney. 2000. Dragonflies through Binoculars: A Field Guide to Dragonflies of North America. Oxford University Press.

Nikula, Blair et al. 2002. Stokes Beginner’s Guide to Dragonflies. Little, Brown & Company.

<http://www.odonatacentral.org/>. Dragonfly Society of the Americas. This site has checklists of dragonflies by county.

Collecting of plants or animals in state parks and natural areas is prohibited. Please help preserve Tennessee’s natural heritage by leaving plants and animals for others to enjoy.

OLD STONE FORT STATE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

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www.tn.gov/environment/parks/OldStoneFort/

TENNESSEE STATE PARKS
DIVISION OF RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT



All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI)

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Old Stone Fort State Archaeological Park and Coffee County



Photo © Richard Connors

Welcome to the wonderful world of dragonflies at beautiful Old Stone Fort State Archaeological Park! Of the approximate 155 species of odonates (dragonflies and damselflies) in Tennessee, 51 have been documented in this park and Coffee County.

Pictured above is a male American Rubyspot (*Hetaerina americana*). This fairly common damselfly is found at swiftly moving sections of small rivers and streams, including the Duck River. Males are dark with the distinctive red spots in the wings. Females and immature males come in shades of bronze, green, gold and red.

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Dragonfly and Damselfly Checklist of Old Stone Fort State Archaeological Park and Coffee County

Damselflies (Zygoptera)

Broad-winged Damselflies (Calopterygidae)

- Ebony Jewelwing
- * American Rubyspot
- Smoky Rubyspot

Spreadwings (Lestidae)

- Slender Spreadwing
- * Swamp Spreadwing

Pond Damselflies (Coenagrionidae)

- * Blue-fronted Dancer
- * Variable Dancer
- * Powdered Dancer
- * Blue-ringed Dancer
- Blue-tipped Dancer
- Dusky Dancer
- * Double-striped Bluet
- Turquoise Bluet
- Stream Bluet
- * Skimming Bluet
- * Orange Bluet
- Slender Bluet
- Citrine Forktail
- * Fragile Forktail
- Eastern Forktail

Dragonflies (Anisoptera)

Dragonflies Darners (Aeshnidae)

- * Common Green Darner
- * Springtime Darner
- * Ocellated Darner
- Swamp Darner
- * Cyrano Darner

Clubtails (Gomphidae)

- Unicorn Clubtail
- Black-shouldered Spinyleg
- * Dragonhunter

Cruisers (Macromiidae)

- Royal River Cruiser

Emeralds (Corduliidae)

- Slender Baskettail
- * Common Baskettail
- * Prince Baskettail
- Mocha Emerald
- Clamp-tipped Emerald

Skimmers (Libellulidae)

- Calico Pennant
- * Halloween Pennant
- Banded Pennant
- * Common (Eastern) Pondhawk
- Golden-winged Skimmer
- Spangled Skimmer
- Yellow-sided Skimmer
- * Slaty Skimmer
- * Widow Skimmer
- Twelve-spotted Skimmer
- Great-blue Skimmer
- * Blue Dasher
- Wandering Glider
- * Eastern Amberwing
- * Common Whitetail
- Blue-faced Meadowhawk
- Black Saddlebags

* **Documented in the Park**

Historical Significance

The Old Stone Fort is a 2000 year-old American ceremonial site. It consists of mounds and walls that combine with cliffs and rivers to form an enclosure measuring 1 1/4 miles around. The 50-acre hilltop enclosure mound site is believed to have served as a central ceremonial gathering place for some 500 years. It has been identified as perhaps the most spectacularly sited sacred area of its period in the U.S. and the largest and most complex hilltop enclosure in the south. Settlers tended to name such enclosures "forts."

The spectacular setting occurs where two rivers drop off the plateau of the Highland Rim in Middle Tennessee and plunge to the level of the Central Basin of Tennessee. As the forks of the Duck River cut down from the plateau level they isolate a promontory between them before they join.

At the narrow neck of land between the two rivers there is a set of parallel mound walls oriented to within one degree of the summer solstice sunrise. Mound sites such as the 50-acre Old Stone Fort provided modified landscapes for ceremonies that may have represented in some way the culture's concept of their place in the cosmos and a separation of the sacred and mundane or pure and impure.

Good spots

- *In and along streams, stream-side trails.
- *Open areas/fields and along the edges of these open areas/fields.
- *Around ponds and water features on the golf course.