

The Dragonhunter

Winter 2009

Newsletter of the New Hampshire Dragonfly Survey

(The NHDS is a partnership of N.H. Audubon, N.H. Fish and Game, and UNH Cooperative Extension)

Coordinator: Pam Hunt (603) 224-9909 ext 328 or
phunt@nhaudubon.org



www.wildlife.state.us/Wildlife/Nongame/dragonflies.html

Coordinator's Greeting,

You may have noticed that we missed a "fall" issue of *The Dragonhunter*. It was a busy fall at Audubon, both with dragonflies and other tasks, and while I started this newsletter in November, it's taken until February to wrap it up.

Many thanks to everyone who sent in their data from 2008. I think I have most of it, but if you still have a few sightings it's never too late to send them in! I've done a summary of the 2008 season in this issue. Part of this summary is reflected in the survey logo above, with pink towns indicating new sites for the Dragonhunter in 2008. Since the survey began, the number of towns with this species has gone from 58 to 81— an increase of 40% in just two years. Keep up the good work and maybe we can surpass 100 towns by the time we're done!

As I did last year, I am including a donation coupon with this fall newsletter. Your donations go toward creating "The Dragonhunter," and can also help defray costs associated with ongoing development of the database I mention below.

And although we're clearly in the winter now, the days *are* getting longer. It'll be spring before we know it! See you then!

Pam

Special Thanks to:

Two volunteers have been helping the NHDS in the computer realm. Christina Emery created a database for the long-term management of all the data the Survey is collecting. This will be far better than the Excel spreadsheet that currently holds all of the 2007 data (plus decades worth of records older than 2007!). If anyone is interested in helping with data entry (you'll need to be familiar with Microsoft Access or willing to learn), by all means let Pam know. This is a great opportunity to help the survey in the off-season! Secondly, Scott Young created a "Flickr" web page for the NHDS where members can share their photos. Watch for more details in your email or visit:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/358961@N25/>

Many thanks to both Christina and Scott for their efforts!!

2008 Highlights

A broad overview of the 2008 season is on the next page, so here I'll focus on some more specific findings. In the last *Dragonhunter* I spotlighted two species of potential conservation interest, and for one of these we ended up collecting a fair bit of data. The number of towns with Mottled Darner went up 50%: from 25 to 37. There were only two records or the other species—American Rubyspot—so I'll have to spotlight it *again* in 2009. You have been warned.

Two coastal plain species were documented much farther north in the state than previously known. One of these was our old friend the Scarlet Bluet, which was found at an additional 18 sites, bringing the state total to 30. This is quite remarkable considering that there were only five known sites at the end of 2006. For Martha's Pennant, the number of towns went from eight to 13, an equally impressive increase. Both species were found far to the north at Iona Pond in Albany—right at the edge of the White Mountains.

There were also five new records for one of our smallest and least known damselflies: the Citrine Forktail. Two of these were even new county records from Enfield (Grafton County) and Middleton (Strafford County), with the latter a photograph submitted by an unsuspecting observer who didn't even know there was a statewide survey going on! With luck she'll collect a bit more data in 2009.



Citrine Forktail in New Ipswich on Sept 3 (photo by T. Saenger)

2008 Season Summary

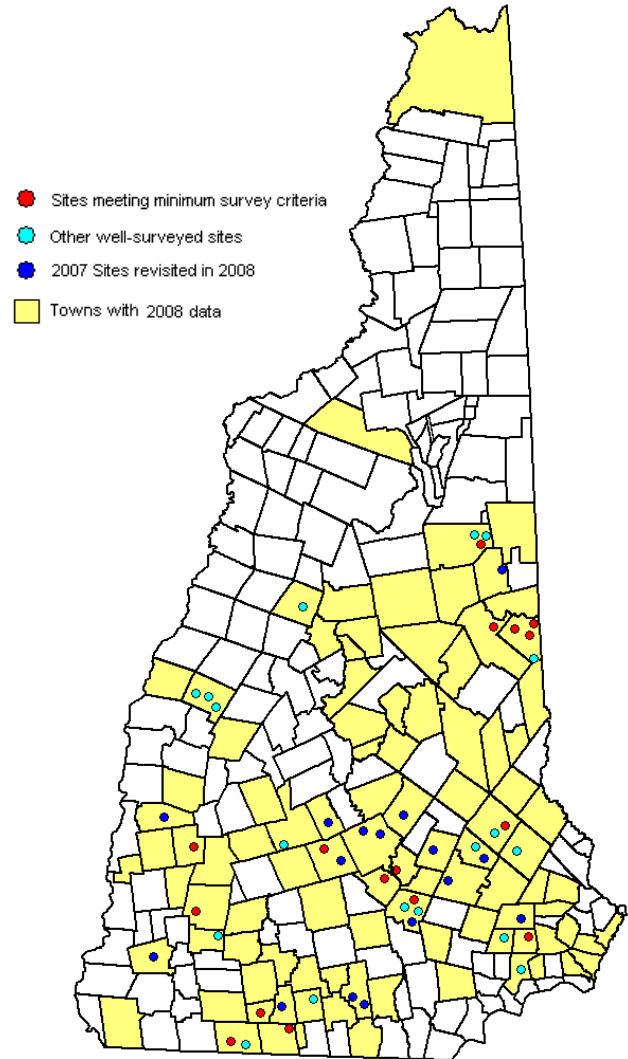
The table below compares the first two years of the NHDS. It is interesting to note that despite a drop in the number of volunteers, we actually collected data from more towns and for more species in 2008. I won't know how many total records were collected until we finalize the database (see page 1) but a quick scan suggests it is close to 2000 again.

	2008	2007
Number of volunteers	23	35
Number of volunteer hours	500+	~350
Number of towns with data	97	74
Towns with regularly surveyed sites	27	28
Sites with regular data	49	90
Total records (not final for 2008)	1200+	1800
Number of species detected (of 162)	135	127
Number of priority species (of 56)	33	31
Records of priority species	170	224
New town records	650+	500+
New county records	31	13

The map to the right shows the distribution of effort across the state. If you still have the similar map for 2007, you'll see a definite increase in three areas: 1) the southwest, 2) the Ossipee area, and 3) the area between the Merrimack Valley and the Seacoast. It's also worth noting that several of the 2007 sites were revisited in 2008 (dark blue dots on map). In many cases, these visits turned up new species or occurred at times during the season when the site hadn't been surveyed in 2007.

Where to in 2009? In southern NH, there are still significant "holes" in the southwest and Nashua area, so existing volunteers will be strongly encouraged to shift locations to new sites in that part of the state. And the Survey will continue to expand northward, with trainings planned in the Lakes Region and in the White Mountains.

Thanks to all our efforts, all ten of New Hampshire's counties now have at least 100 species reported from them. Belknap and Sullivan both ended up with 102 species at the close of the season's. Hillsborough and Merrimack counties still lead with 130 and 132 species, respectively. As a point of comparison, the last time I checked, the species list for the *entire state of California* stood at 108. Something for NH to be proud of besides primaries and lack of taxes!



Eat and be Eaten: A couple more photos from 2008

Left: Even the mighty Dragonhunter gets eaten by something. Scott Young photographed this Great Crested Flycatcher at its next box on June 24. Small consolation, but apparently the dragon was too big for the chicks inside!

Right: A female Eastern Pondhawk snacks on a meadowhawk on July 22. Photo taken by Dennis Skillman at the Brentwood Mitigation Area.

