

NATURE *news* FOR kids

There are lots of aquatic (water) insects in Wisconsin that are important food sources for fish. Some of the species (kinds) that you could find in area waters include:

Mayfly

Stonefly

Caddisfly

Alderfly

Giant **water bug**

Water **boatman**

Water **strider**

Backswimmers

Water **scorpion**

Riffle beetles

Look for words in **bold** in the word find puzzle.

Common Name: Dragonflies (Order Odonata)



Dragonflies and damselflies are insects that belong to the scientific order Odonata. The word "odonata" came from the Greek word for tooth, referring to the tooth-like objects found in these insects' jaws. Dragonflies have long, skinny bodies, four transparent (see-through) wings and large eyes that are actually 30,000 little eyes or lenses working together to allow the dragonfly to see almost all the way around their heads. Like all insects they have six legs, but dragonflies cannot walk. Adult dragonflies are excellent fliers, and some can fly up to 35 miles per hour! They can fly forward, backward and even change direction while they are flying.

You can usually tell the difference between dragonflies and damselflies if you watch them land. When dragonflies land to rest, they hold their wings out to the side like the wings of an airplane while damselflies hold their wings up over their backs.

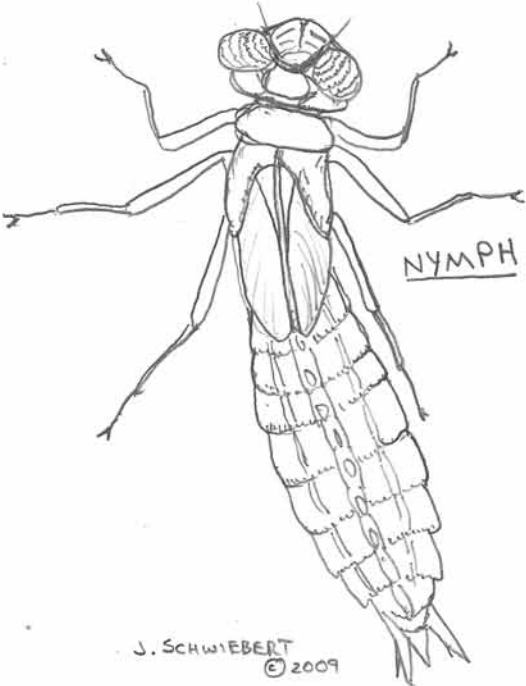
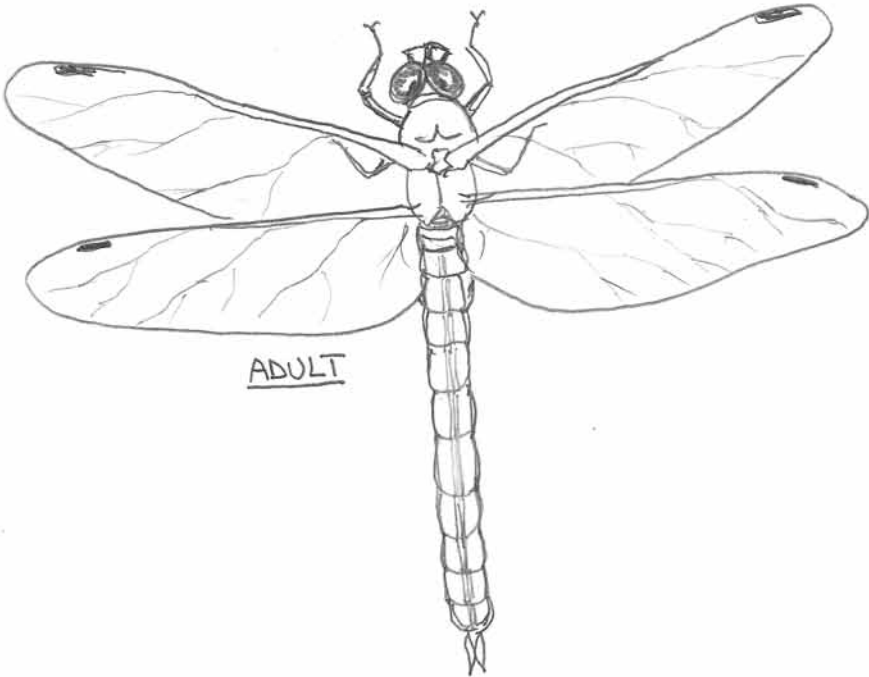
There are about 5,500 species (kinds) of Odonata in the world, and about 110 of these can be found in Wisconsin. Dragonflies are some of the oldest insects; scientists think they were around when the dinosaurs were here. Fossils of giant dragonflies have been found with wingspans reaching almost three feet across, making them the largest flying insect that ever lived.

R	S	Y	L	F	R	E	D	L	A
N	T	N	H	M	A	Y	F	L	Y
A	R	X	O	F	F	V	B	W	L
M	I	C	O	I	A	T	S	A	F
T	D	F	G	P	P	P	R	T	E
A	E	L	F	F	I	R	A	E	N
O	R	Y	L	V	E	S	O	R	O
B	S	P	K	C	N	L	E	C	T
C	A	D	D	I	S	F	L	Y	S

Dragonflies are predators (hunters). They catch their prey while flying by forming a basket with their legs to catch other insects like mosquitoes and flies. Most of their life is spent underwater as a nymph (young stage of their life). Even as youngsters they are good hunters. The nymphs have a long lower lip that can quickly flip out and catch other aquatic insects.

So when you are outside near water this summer, keep your eyes open for the dragons.

Color the Dragonflies



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