

# The Ohio Dragon-Flyer

## Newsletter of the Ohio Odonata Society

January 2021, Volume 30: Number 1

Greetings Ohio Odonata Society (OOS)!

This afternoon I am able to look out and see sunshine on the trees, birds on the feeders, and routine squirrel shenanigans. I am writing a newsletter on my tablet, having a bit of tea. All of this feels remarkable at the moment. No dragons today, but with the trees, and birds, and squirrels it almost seems like things are normal for January.

OK, OK, things are not normal... too many C's: the relentless Cloud Cover of the past couple weeks; the grim numbers on CoVid-19 today; all the Climate data for 2020; the Chaos in our Capital. My head and heart both need a little *Dragonfly Distraction*.

The 2020 iNaturalist data is now in the OOS database, so I'm going to share a first round of results in case you also need a little *Dragonfly Distraction*.

There's a lot that we don't know – yet – no updates on a 2021 Dragonfly Conference, or details on the 2022 Dragonfly Society of the Americas meeting in Marietta, or the new field guide. As information is available, we will let you know. It doesn't hurt anything to have high hopes – maybe a way can be found to get the vaccines distributed and we can try to move forward together. First some business – Small Grants, then some numbers.



### Current OOS Board -

*President* - MaLisa Spring, [spring.99@osu.edu](mailto:spring.99@osu.edu)

*Vice-President* - Kyle Bailey,  
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*Past-President* - Shane Myers,  
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*Member-at-Large* – Dave McShaffrey,  
[mcscaffd@marietta.edu](mailto:mcscaffd@marietta.edu)

*Treasurer* - Bob Restifo, [rarestifo@yahoo.com](mailto:rarestifo@yahoo.com)

## Small Grants

OOS has had a Small Grants program for a number of years. Funds have been available (up to \$500) but have *never* been used. In an effort to expand the awareness of the OOS Small Grants, we are teaming up with Ohio Biological Survey. If you are interested in applying for a Small Grant, please see the information on the Ohio Biological Survey web site.

Application deadline is February 15.

<http://www.ohiobiologicalsurvey.org/projects/>

## Dragonfly Survey

The Ohio Dragonfly Survey had an official three-year period of 2017-2019. We had a good 2020 season on iNaturalist with the submission of 19,668 observations vetted to species as Research Grade. Not wanting to ignore these records and looking to round out the data given submission of historical records, I have expanded the Survey data set to the 5-year span 2016-2020.

Notes: 1) Over a thousand records were vetted to Research Grade, but not identified to species, this was mostly Meadowhawks, but also some Bastkettails and Pond Spreadwings. 2) While the vast majority of iNaturalist records were of adults, there are some nymph records in the totals. 3) The data also includes the voucher specimen records. 4) Some individual Odonates are accounted with multiple records where an unusual dragon was reported by multiple people.

## Overview by Year

Year	# Observations	# Species	# Contributors
2016	2852	110	207
2017	7902	127	294
2018	19523	135	593
2019	32513	139	912
2020	19668	139	1128

These are some impressive numbers for citizen-science. Having hundreds of people contributing is good, having over 1100 in a year is super. While our overall observations declined in 2020, we still matched our 2019 peak of 139 species.

139 species in a year is good. The total for the Survey is 152, which is over 88% of the total species (172) in the OOS data. A number of the historical Species have scant records (5 or less), so 152 may be close to representative.

## Species Detail

Sp	# Observations	# Counties
Eastern Pondhawk	6313	88
Blue Dasher	5725	88
Eastern Forktail	5419	88
Widow Skimmer	4405	88
Fragile Forktail	4306	88
Common Whitetail	3738	88
Eastern Amberwing	3696	88
Ebony Jewelwing	2791	83
Blue-fronted Dancer	2401	86
Autumn Meadowhawk	2003	84

No surprises here. Five years of data gives good separation. These species are common and ubiquitous, particularly at ponds. This list has all the Species observed in all 88 counties. Three species not on the list were observed in 87 counties: Common Green Darner, Orange Bluet, and Prince Baskettail.

Eastern Pondhawk has good size, is showy, and can be found at nearly any pond in the state through a long flight season. Eastern Forktail, while small, appears in sufficient numbers to be seen by nearly everyone. In a quantitative survey, our two common Forktails would probably be the most numerous.

On the low end, we had five Species with single observations: Belted Whiteface (Rick Nirschl, Lucas Co), Furtive Forktail (Jay Heiser, Coshocton Co), Northern Spreadwing (Rick Asamoto, Highland Co), Riverine Clubtail (Sarah White, Greene Co), and Skillet Clubtail (Rick Nirschl, Wood Co).

Species most prominently missing from the Survey are Canada Darner and Boreal Bluet. Both of these Northern species have 41 historical records, but neither have been seen since the 1990's.

## County Detail

County	# Observations	# Contributors	# Species
Franklin	5931	287	78
Champaign	4708	81	80
Ashtabula	4420	68	88
Summit	4134	281	89
Montgomery	3904	104	86
Lucas	3076	133	94
Greene	2783	99	79
Lorain	2296	86	63
Lake	2122	127	91
...			
Huron	199	15	34
Noble	194	9	34
Belmont	193	13	35

Top and bottom on the observation query for count by county. Pretty easy to see more people makes for more observations, more observations lead to more Species. Habitat plays into this a bit as well, but we just need to get more people to check out under-represented areas.

Mercer Co had the fewest number of Species with 30, Morrow Co and Holmes Co were also on the low end of the Species count with 35.

Paulding Co had the fewest number of Contributors with 6. Putnam Co had 7, Perry Co had 8.



## County Records

Each of the OOS records is located to at least County-level resolution. We track the first observation of a species in a County and call this a County Record. Given the volume of observations during the Survey, we expected new County Records.

A County Record is only something that happens once – so as time goes on, County Records are harder to get. As it happens, a new observation or data point sometime arrives that establishes a new first observation – we saw a fair amount of this in 2019 and 2020.

In the last 5 years, we have recorded 960 new County Records – a substantial increase, over 17%.

### Top County Record count by Species – 5Yr

Species	# County Recs
Slaty Skimmer	36
Westfalls Slender Bluethroat	36
Carolina Saddlebags	34
Dusky Dancer	32
Wandering Glider	30
Comet Darner	29

### Top County Record count by County – 5Yr

County	# County Recs
Wood	26
Coshocton	25
Sandusky	25
Hancock	24
Wyandot	24

### County Record count by Year

Year	# County Recs
2016	83
2017	160
2018	305
2019	307
2020	105

### County Record count by Sp/Year

Sp	Year	#
Great Blue Skimmer	2019	21
Carolina Saddlebags	2018	15
Carolina Saddlebags	2019	15
Westfalls Slender Bluet	2018	14
Dusky Dancer	2018	13
Slaty Skimmer	2017	13
Wandering Glider	2018	13
Golden-winged Skimmer	2017	12
Comet Darner	2019	11
Painted Skimmer	2019	11
Slaty Skimmer	2018	11
Unicorn Clubtail	2019	10
...		
Royal River Cruiser	2020	9
...		
Turquoise Bluet	2016	5

The last table tells a story of breakout species by year, especially Slaty Skimmer in 2017, Carolina Saddlebags in 2018 and 2019, and Great Blue Skimmer in 2019.

While these species had historical records, none had the numbers or range that we're seeing now. As I understand it, these are Southern species – we may be seeing a range expansion. Slaty Skimmer number for 2020 remained high. Carolina Saddlebags numbers were not as high for 2020 as previous years. Great Blue dropped off quite a bit.

I kinda get that the Skimmers and Saddlebags are new records – not so much on the Wandering Glider and Comet Darner – it maybe that we can finally take enough pictures to get something to ID.

A bit of a question exists here with Westfall's Slender Bluet (*Enallagma traviatum westfalli*). Are

we seeing a range expansion? Or just looking closer?

Notes: 1) The 12 Golden-winged Skimmer observations were a single Dragonfly. 2) The high species for 2020 and 2016 didn't fall in the top results, they are included here for comparison.

## New Species

Several new Species were recorded for Ohio during the Survey: River Bluet (*Enallagma anna*), Shane Myers, Hancock Co, 2016; Belted Whiteface (*Leucorrhinia proxima*), Rick Nirschl, Lucas Co, 2017; Scarlet Skimmer (*Crocothemis servilia*), MaLisa Spring, Summit Co, 2018; Jade Clubtail (*Arigomphus submedianus*), Jim Lemon, Shelby and Auglaize Co's, 2018; Double-ringed Pennant (*Celithemis verna*), MaLisa Spring, Jackson Co, 2019.

## Individual Details

Many people have contributed to the Dragonfly Survey – involving time, travel, meetings, conferences, bug bites, poison ivy, sunburn. All the interest, trouble, and attention to detail is noted and appreciated.

Listing all the contributors and efforts would be a book, not a newsletter - but here are some names and numbers.

People that submitted the most observations for the Survey: Jim Lemon with 10,723 Research Grade observations; Dave McShaffrey with 4,904; Alisa DeMatteo with 4,022; Carol Blake with 3,546; and Sheree Cyra-Moorman with 3,389.

Rick Nirschl recorded the most Species with 126. Other over 100 were: Jim Lemon, 124; Jim Heflich, 112; Deb Marsh, 106; Kim Smith, 103.

Dave McShaffrey made observations in 84 Counties. After that, it was: Jim Lemon, 67 Co's; MaLisa Spring, 59 Co's; Jim McCormac, 45 Co's; Deb Marsh, 41 Co's; and Victor Fazio, 40 Co's.

Carol Blake recorded observations for 519 separate days, followed by: Jim Lemon, 503; Deb Marsh 313; Rick Nirschl, 305; Sarah White, 300.

#### County Records Top Observers by Year

Observer	Year	# Co Rec
Jim Lemon	2019	52
Jim Lemon	2018	38
Jim Lemon	2020	31
Dave McShaffrey	2018	31
Rick Asamoto	2017	27
MaLisa Spring	2018	26
Ryan Jacob	2018	25
Nina Harfmann	2019	24
Rick Asamoto	2018	24
Jim Lemon	2017	23
...		
Shane Myers	2016	14

Three people had 6 County Records on a single day: Dave McShaffrey on Jun 15, 2018 in Harrison, Guernsey and Carroll Co's; MaLisa Spring on Jul 7, 2018 in Gallia and Lawrence Co's; and Tom Arbour on Jun 3, 2016 in Logan Co.

The most County Records for a species by an observer in 2020 was 5 for Royal River Cruiser. Several of the same combination of Species, Year, and Observer had 4 – Carolina Saddlebags in 2018 and 2019, Citrine Forktail in 2019, Comet Darner in 2019, Great Blue Skimmer in 2019, and Slaty Skimmer in 2020.

## Coming Soon

Updated Species Maps and Flight Charts will be coming soon.

Last year's Maps and Charts can be found at:

<https://u.osu.edu/ohiodonatasurvey/species-distributions-across-ohio/>

<https://u.osu.edu/ohiodonatasurvey/species-distributions-across-ohio/species-flight-dates/>

## Take it easy – Stay Safe!

Suggestions for the Dragon-Flyer are welcome – please send ideas, questions, comments, or submissions to [jlem@woh.rr.com](mailto:jlem@woh.rr.com)

So, if you've read enough to get this far - to quote *Car Talk* - you've once again wasted a perfectly good hour, but hopefully it's been an OK *Distraction*.

