Newsletter of the Ohio Odonata Society

Ohio Dragon Flyer



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Ohio Odonata Society Board

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Cover Photo

American Rubyspot *Hetaerina americana*Sony RX10IV (bridge camera). 1/250, f/5.6, ISO 1250
Olentangy River, Whetstone Park, Columbus, Ohio, Sept 10, 2021
Jay Heiser

Photographers reserve all rights to their images published within Ohio Dragon Flyer.

Species Spotlight - American Rubyspot Jim Lemon (article and photos)

Hetaerina americana (Fabricius, 1798) Scientific name: Companion or courtesan, carrying out the tradition of giving female names to odonates; also, perhaps, referring to red arm bands of Greek courtesans (A Checklist of North American Odonata, Paulson and Dunkle)

H americana is a large, broad-winged damselfly (Calopterygidae family), the same family as Smoky Rubyspots and jewelwings. Individuals are common at gravel bars with Water Willow *Justicia americana* on rivers and streams across Ohio and throughout eastern North America (hence the name). Surprisingly, while survey numbers are good for *H americana*, it is not yet documented in Lawrence, Jackson, or Meigs Counties. *H americana* shows up in Ohio in June and flies into the Fall. Good larval habitat is critical for finding adults. Degraded streams have greatly reduced numbers of adults.



Female (left), male (right) Big Darby, Franklin Co. Note the light colors and coppery thorax on immature female.

Males and females are common at the water, often in big numbers sometimes hundreds. They frequently share the habitat with Ebony Jewelwings. Both sexes tend to be territorial and challenge one or more individuals in a delightful bouncing circle that can last for several minutes. With the female tendency to be at the water, it's common to see tandem pairs where the female is obviously not yet mature. The tandems are sizable enough in flight to confuse observers (me) into thinking they are seeing a larger dragonfly.

American Rubyspot, female (left), male (right), Mad River, Clark Co, Aug 30, 2020.

Dark colors. Darker eyes on female signal maturity. As with most Odonata, Rubyspots are sexually dimorphic. Further, both sexes display some variability in color. Dull and pale when teneral, the males mature to a bright red on the thorax and at the base of all four wings. Both sexes have tan-colored sutures on thorax and abdomen that tend to darken



with age. Some males have darkening wingtips, others are clear. Females are less bright, and have a range of color forms - from dark to coppery to metallic green. Females also tend to display pale stigmas and can have wings that are relatively clear or tinged with amber.

Fairly fresh female, Tawawa Park, Shelby Co, Aug 8, 2017. Note pale sutures and stigma.





Mature female, Farrington Reserve, Miami Co, Aug 25, 2020. Note shining green color and dark eyes

Immature male, Taylorsville, Montgomery Co, Aug 15, 2017. Note the tan sutures and pale eyes.





Mature male, Old Reid Park, Clark Co, Aug 14, 2017. Dark eyes and red sutures. Note also the spines on the legs.

Common Green Darner Radio Tracking Ray Novotny

I attended Ami Thompson's dragonfly session at a 2013 conference in Reno. She began her career as a park ranger at Mississippi National River and Recreation Area in St. Paul, Minnesota, so it shouldn't have surprised me that on a cool November day she dipped for nymphs in the not-exactly-gently-flowing Truckee River near our hotel. Ami updated me at a subsequent conference: she was working on a doctorate at the University of Minnesota. Her research included cutting through ice to study nymphs during winter, and during summer, using helicopters for transportation to remote bogs!

Ami is now a professor at North Carolina Wesleyan University. She also works with Wings Across the Americas, a U.S. Forest Service International Program "Partnering to Preserve and Protect Migratory Species and their Habitat."



On the final Saturday of August, Ami and her colleagues Melissa Sanchez Herrera, a native of Columbia, now a post-doc at University of Alabama and freelance biologist Sandra Hunt von Arb of California, traveled to Cleveland (well, Parma) to present a workshop about the migration mysteries of the Common Green Darner *Anax junius*. U.S. Forest Service administrators Karin Theophile and Mike Rizo also accompanied them.

During the workshop, we captured nine darners, attached Motus tags (a delicate process!) and then released them. A network of Motus stations will

record location data as they

fly past. The data, mined by future international dragonfly conservation researchers (and Ami), will reveal clues about the mystery of migration. How fortunate for me that the workshop's site, West Creek Reservation in Cleveland Metroparks, is only ~70 miles from home. I estimate about 25 others attended, many being local teachers.

Metroparks staff member, Jennifer Brumfield, whose illustrations grace Dragonflies & Damselflies of Northeast Ohio, Second Edition, shared her expertise. Sandra made my day by choosing me to release one of the darners! I hope to find out about its journey south.



Photos: Ami addressing participants. Ami and Melissa attaching tags. Sandra records data. Both by Ray.

For more information:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SL-8LayWFGY&t=9s

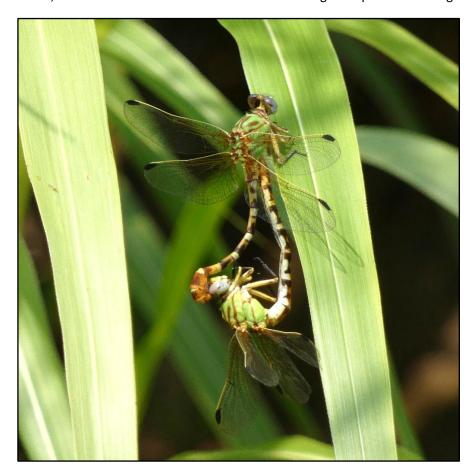
https://www.amidragonfly.com/

https://motus.org/

Ray Novotny, Youngstown, Ohio, raynovotny@yahoo.com

Eastern Ringtail Wheel Lisa Claire Miller

What I love about going to a new place to search for a dragonfly species you have never seen before is the excitement and anticipation! Transforming your research of past INaturalist sightings of your target species into reality may be more of an adventure than you expected; you may find yourself in vegetation taller than you, laced with poison ivy leaves the size of your foot, get lost, discover that your best effort to navigate ends at an impasse, or simply not be able to find the place. At times like these, one wonders how you should have made better use of your time. On this particular adventure we drove two hours to look for the Eastern Ringtail dragonfly. As we came to the end of the main trail and tried to find a way to the river, the quest seemed perplexing. My husband, Lee, was on Google Maps and I was using my intuition. Over the 40 years we've been together our capacity to respect our differences has grown considerably. After finding ourselves in thick vegetation over our head and no apparent way to get to the river, we decided we had to backtrack. While in the brush, we had a chance encounter with a man holding an impressive looking camera. He asked if we had seen anything



interesting and we responded that we had seen several colorful spreadwings. He immediately said, "Oh, you are not birders!" We explained that we were trying to get to the river, and he said, "Follow me." After introduction, we realized that we had met our impromptu local guide, Jim Lundberg, previously on an outing led by Jim Lemon. Nearing the end of the walk along the river we had not seen much. It was a little on the early side of the season for Eastern Ringtails. We were running out of land to explore when I noticed a flutter, and we located Eastern Ringtails in wheel. Elation and many photographs ensued! Lisa Claire Miller

Photo credit: Eastern Ringtail
Erpetogomphus designates. Lee Miller.

Editor's notes: Our shared interest brings us together at obscure intersections in a big, wide world. For hiking directions to Armleder Park's north beach, reference the August 2022 Ohio Dragon-Flyer Issue 31-8 edition article: *Little Miami River – August and September Clubtails*. First-time navigation to the north beach at Armleder Park can be tricky but rewarding for Eastern Ringtails and Russet-tipped Clubtails. Armleder Park's south beach, also known as the "Canoe Launch" or "Dog Beach" is better for Elusive Clubtails.

200,000 Observations

Our iNaturalist Dragonfly Project went over 200,000 submissions on 9/4/2023. 200,000 observations is amazing; I don't think any of us would have predicted those numbers when we started this project for the 2017 season.



Emerging American Rubyspot Video Christine Szymanski



Links below to view the video of an American Rubyspot *Hetaerina americana*, emerging. https://youtu.be/4Weazjl8pro?list=PL8 HI KPBTkzHXidfGSansv5ENNh-Sseb
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=798533381769713&ref=sharing

Christine.Szymanski@dnr.ohio.gov

World's Largest Dragonfly?

What might be, for all that I know, the world's largest dragonfly. It's in the children's museum in Columbia, SC, where my daughter lives. For scale, that's my grandson standing by the sneaker. (I just read, in looking on-line for the name of the museum (EdVenture Children's Museum), that they've just "rebranded" the museum and, in the process, have replaced the dragonfly with a firefly. *David Goldstein*





Dragonhunter Exuviae Jim Lundberg

The Dragonhunter nymph is one of the most recognizable of all dragonflies. The abdomen is large, circular, brown and flattened, resembling a dead leaf.

"Hagenius nymphs sprawl among dead leaves and flat pieces of wood just downstream of riffles and runs, although they also occupy edges of riffles, sometimes among the roots of aquatic plants such as Water Willow weed." (Dragonfly Nymphs of North America – Tennessen).

Exuviae, Dragonhunter *Hagenius brevistylus*, dorsal and ventral views. June 2023, Harrison County, Kentucky. *Jim Lundberg*

2023 Survey Numbers (March 1 – Sept 27) Jim Lemon

Survey data continues to arrive. We are approaching 35,000 research grade observations for 2023 and are on track for a new yearly high - somewhere around 36,000. Apr-Sep months have all been above the 5-year average, with April (364) and July (10,660) establishing new record highs for those months.

County numbers are fairly consistent with previous years - doing well where we have plenty of data, and could be better where we are historically low. Franklin and Ashtabula lead in observations, Montgomery leads in number of species. Wood, Paulding, Highland, Huron, and Allen are the low counties. We have many counties above their 5-year average and a number that have new annual highs (see the County table).

Eastern Forktail is the most reported species, followed by Eastern Pondhawk, and Fragile Forktail. We are at 135 species for the year, this is below the 5-year average (138). As groups, Clubtails had a good year, River Cruisers under the normal levels. Many species have new high numbers (see the Species table).

County Table

2023 iNat data - Mar1 to Sep27 as of Sep 28, 10AM						
88 Counties	# Observations	# Sp	# Days	# Users	# Co Records	
Adams	143	38	25	18		
Allen	87	32#	22#	8#	2	
Ashland	135 #	25	25	17		
Ashtabula	2827 #+	66	103 #	36 #+	2	
Athens	210 #+	34	24	24	3	
Auglaize	144#	26	6	1	2	
Belmont	145 #	28 #+	8 #+	4		
Brown	348 #+	28 #	13 #	9 #+	2	
Butler	470	43 #	86	39	1	
Carroll	571 #+	27 #	70 #+	10 #+	1	
Champaign	1281#	62	75	40#	1	
Clark	689 #	52	57	27#	1	
Clermont	467 #+	57 #+	109 #	44#	4	
Clinton	98	27	19	15 #+	2	
Columbiana	122 #	31#	12	9	3	
Coshocton	1021#	52#	78	9	1	
Crawford	288 #+	38#	17	20 #+	2	
Cuyahoga	720 #	55 #+	118#	106 #+	1	
Darke	133	43	17	4	1	
Defiance	91#	31#	7	5	1	

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Delaware	202	39	60	31	
Erie	180	30	43	24#	
Fairfield	244 #	36	28	23	1
Fayette	394 #+	25	5	5	
Franklin	[3122] #+	65 #+	131	[111]	1
Fulton	206#	28	16#	7 #+	2
Gallia	218#	31#	7	3	4
Geauga	595	63	84	43 #	
Greene	1001#	66#	117 #+	63 #	2
Guernsey	118#	26	15 #	8 #+	2
Hamilton	1030 #+	58#	132 #	75 #	
Hancock	253	52	52	11	1
Hardin	148#	29 #	20 #+	5	2
Harrison	161#	29	20#	10 #+	1
Henry	173 #	39 #+	10#	5	5
Highland	84	25	12	8	
Hocking	144#	38	38	35 #+	
Holmes	177 #	23	23	9	1
Huron	85	21	11	6	3
Jackson	136	30	20#	11#	1
Jefferson	157 #	34#	31 #+	4	2
Knox	349 #+	31#	13	14#	1
Lake	831#	68 #	80	53 #	
Lawrence	267 #+	30#	12 #	7#	
Licking	490 #	38#	50	23	1
Logan	336 #	39	36#	9	1
Lorain	838 #	56#	107	43 #	1
Lucas	1770#	70	[141] #	73 #	
Madison	264	32	28	7	1
Mahoning	144#	36#	48 #	20#	1
Marion	219#	26#	5	6	2
Medina	415 #	45	73	39#	2
Meigs	113	26#	11 #+	6#	2
Mercer	156#	26#	8	3	3
Miami	180	39	21	15	2
Monroe	100 #	25	5	2	
Montgomery	940	[76] #	125 #	49	2
Morgan	120#	30	14	7	2
Morrow	457 #	37 #+	36 #+	17 #+	3
Muskingum	244 #	43 #	29 #+	17 #+	2
Noble					

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Ottawa	124	22	55#	28	2
Paulding	75	24	3	1	1
Perry	291 #+	49 #+	23	9 #+	5
Pickaway	481#	34#	22	12	2
Pike	110	36#	11	12 #+	1
Portage	369	55	78#	43	1
Preble	191#	33 #	17	14#	
Putnam	355 #+	28 #	4	4#	
Richland	173 #+	27	25	20 #	2
Ross	109	31	22#	22 #+	1
Sandusky	179 #	27	19	10	1
Scioto	223 #	28#	11	12	1
Seneca	174#	27 #	12	8	1
Shelby	167	40 #	14	4	3
Stark	913	69 #	94	37	
Summit	1235#	70 #	131	111#	1
Trumbull	195	45 #	38#	15 #+	3
Tuscarawas	155 #	27 #	16#	8	1
Union	415 #	41 #+	31 #+	11	4
Van Wert	171 #	36 #+	15#	3	[6]
Vinton	429 #+	33 #	11	9#	
Warren	271#	46 #	59#	42 #	3
Washington	154	35 #	16	6#	1
Wayne	232 #+	44 #+	60#	30 #	3
Williams	166#	45 #	8	6	
Wood	75	25	30	16	
Wyandot	236#	25	8	8	1

[#] where 2023 is above 5 year average

[top value]

Species Table

2023 iNat data - Mar1 to Sep27 as of Sep 28, 10AM							
	#				# Co		
Species	Observations	# Counties	# Days	# Users	Records		
Gray Petaltail	37	16#	27 #	24	1		
Common Sanddragon	0	0	0	0			
Dragonhunter	57 #	15	26	27 #	1		
Rusty Snaketail	122 #+	4 #	19 #+	12#			

⁺ where 2023 is new high value

Riffle Snaketail	0	0	0	0	
Eastern Ringtail	47 #+	6 #+	19#	12 #+	2
Spine-crowned Clubtail	0	0	0	0	
Green-faced Clubtail	4	1	3 #	3 #	
Midland Clubtail	123 #+	20#	23	31#	2
Plains Clubtail	9	3 #+	6	6	1#
Handsome Clubtail	61 #+	3	17 #+	10 #+	
Riverine Clubtail	0	0	0	0	
Cobra Clubtail	32	6	14	14	1
Skillet Clubtail	0	0	0	0	
Splendid Clubtail	13 #	1	4#	4 #	
Elusive Clubtail	28 #+	1	14 #+	10 #+	
Russet-tipped Clubtail	66 #+	4 #+	29 #+	16 #+	
Arrow Clubtail	13	5	9	8#	1
Ashy Clubtail	198 #+	35 #+	35 #+	41 #+	
Pronghorn Clubtail	79 #+	10 #+	19#	16 #+	2
Lancet Clubtail	342 #+	44 #+	52 #+	36	2
Dusky Clubtail	29 #+	4 #	8#	5	
Rapids Clubtail	109 #+	11 #+	24 #+	17 #+	
Jade Clubtail	20 #	5 #+	4	3	1
Lilypad Clubtail	27 #+	5 #+	6#	7#	
Unicorn Clubtail	357 #+	53 #	50 #+	74 #+	2
Laura's Clubtail	1	1	1	1	
Flag-tailed Spinyleg	143 #+	22	50#	33 #	
Black-shouldered Spinyleg	54 #	20	28	23	1
Eastern Least Clubtail	50 #+	7 #	18#	12 #	1
Northern Pygmy Clubtail	0	0	0	0	
Southern Pygmy Clubtail	41 #+	2 #	8 #+	9 #	
Taper-tailed Darner	0	0	0	0	
Harlequin Darner	13 #	3 #	9 #+	7#	
Springtime Darner	62 #+	22 #+	27 #+	28 #+	1
Fawn Darner	40 #	17 #	26	27 #+	
Ocellated Darner	2	2 #	2	1	
Comet Darner	69	25	34	35 #	
Common Green Darner	820 #+	75 #	150#	152 #+	
Cyrano Darner	52 #+	25 #+	30 #+	26 #+	5
Swamp Darner	45	17	28	35	3
Spatterdock Darner	57 #+	13#	24 #+	23 #	1
Shadow Darner	68	24	36	46	1
Lance-tipped Darner	0	0	0	0	
Variable Darner	0	0	0	0	
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Mottled Darner	0	0	0	0	
Black-tipped Darner	20	5 #+	11 #+	8#	
Canada Darner	0	0	0	0	
Green-striped Darner	16	7#	9	11#	
Delta-spotted Spiketail	44 #+	1	6#	6#	
Brown Spiketail	18 #	4 #	9#	8	
Tiger Spiketail	13 #	4#	4#	6#	
Arrowhead Spiketail	16	6	10	12	
Twin-spotted Spiketail	10 #	6 #+	7 #+	8 #+	1
Swift River Cruiser	62 #	18	36#	25 #	
Allegheny River Cruiser	0	0	0	0	
Royal River Cruiser	50 #	15	22	18	1
Wabash River Cruiser	0	0	0	0	
Macromia Hybrid	18 #+	4	11#	7 #+	1
Gilded River Cruiser	3	1	1	1	
Georgia River Cruiser	0	0	0	0	
Stream Cruiser	22 #+	8	11 #+	10 #+	1
Umber Shadowdragon	0	0	0	0	
Stygian Shadowdragon	1	1	1	1	
Smoky Shadowdragon	0	0	0	0	
Prince Baskettail	492 #+	81 #+	96#	81 #+	
Common Baskettail	82 #+	29#	29#	36 #+	3
Slender Baskettail	1	1	1	1	
Beaverpond Baskettail	1	1	1	1	
Uhler's Sundragon	3	1	1	1	
Mocha Emerald	8	6	5	6	
Plains Emerald	0	0	0	0	
Clamp-tipped Emerald	11	5	7	7	1
Hine's Emerald	0	0	0	0	
Incurvate Emerald	0	0	0	0	
Brush-tipped Emerald	0	0	0	0	
Kennedy's Emerald	0	0	0	0	
American Emerald	0	0	0	0	
Racket-tailed Emerald	2	1	1	1	
Elfin Skimmer	48	1	17	17	
Eastern Amberwing	1517#	[88] #	113	188 #+	
Halloween Pennant	524 #	61	86	107	
Calico Pennant	388 #	46	82	70	
Banded Pennant	123 #	15	38	25	
Double-ringed Pennant	5	1	2	2	
Scarlet Skimmer	0	0	0	0	

Band-winged Dragonlet	0	0	0	0	
Little Blue Dragonlet	0	0	0	0	
Blue Corporal	102 #+	12	23 #	19#	
Yellow-sided Skimmer	3	1	1	1	
Chalk-fronted Corporal	1	1	1	1	
Widow Skimmer	1634#	[88] #	118	250 #	
Golden-winged Skimmer	0	0	0	0	
Spangled Skimmer	196 #+	33 #	47 #	43 #	
Painted Skimmer	107	24	46 #	39	
Twelve-spotted Skimmer	362	61	88	97	
Four-spotted Skimmer	248 #+	31 #+	16 #+	58 #+	[23]
Slaty Skimmer	745 #	61	104#	116#	
Great Blue Skimmer	13	7	8	9	
Common Whitetail	1798 #+	[88] #	141#	[318] #	
Variegated Meadowhawk	30 #	7#	17#	11#	2
Blue-faced Meadowhawk	86	14	39	27	2
White-faced Meadowhawk	7	3	5	6	
Cherry-faced Meadowhawk	0	0	0	0	
Ruby Meadowhawk	16	9	11	9 #	
Band-winged Meadowhawk	66	16	32	22	1
Autumn Meadowhawk	563	51	82	85	
Saffron-winged Meadowhawk	0	0	0	0	
Dot-tailed Whiteface	235 #+	30#	44 #	43 #	1
Frosted Whiteface	0	0	0	0	
Belted Whiteface	0	0	0	0	
Blue Dasher	1835	[88] #	124	223	
Eastern Pondhawk	2043 #	[88] #	134	220	
Swift Setwing	64 #+	7#	17	10	1
Spot-winged Glider	121 #+	25 #+	51#	45 #+	3
Wandering Glider	151	33	63	54	
Striped Saddlebags	0	0	0	0	
Black Saddlebags	361	72 #	106	85	
Red Saddlebags	34 #+	12 #+	20 #+	16 #+	2
Carolina Saddlebags	70	23	44	31	1
Appalachian Jewelwing	0	0	0	0	
River Jewelwing	10 #	1	6#	6	
Ebony Jewelwing	1270 #+	70	113 #+	293 #	
American Rubyspot	639 #+	50#	101	82 #+	
Smoky Rubyspot	27	3	9	4	
Great Spreadwing	90	23 #	40	48 #	4
Elegant Spreadwing	78 #+	23 #+	30 #	27 #+	4

Amber-winged Spreadwing	71	17	29#	23	2
Spotted Spreadwing	61	13	24	20	2
Lyre-tipped Spreadwing	6	4#	5	5 #	2
Sweetflag Spreadwing	68 #+	15	32#	21#	3
Northern Spreadwing	1#	1	1	1	1
Southern Spreadwing	14	6	7	11#	1
Slender Spreadwing	377	59#	104	71	
Emerald Spreadwing	67 #	15	22	20	2
Swamp Spreadwing	72 #+	20 #	36#	22#	2
Blue-fronted Dancer	850#	81#	103	130 #+	
Seepage Dancer	187 #	5#	33	30#	
Violet Dancer	1187 #+	82 #	115 #	133 #+	
Paiute Dancer	42	4#	17	13	
Powdered Dancer	781 #+	60#	90	95 #	1
Blue-ringed Dancer	403 #	43	70	45	
Blue-tipped Dancer	678#	65 #	83 #	119 #+	
Dusky Dancer	230 #	47 #	62	42 #	
Eastern Red Damsel	208 #+	24 #+	50#	57 #+	2
Duckweed Firetail	0	0	0	0	
Sphagnum Sprite	46	9#	20#	16	1
Sedge Sprite	43 #	11#	21#	18#	1
Aurora Damsel	95 #+	18#	27 #+	27 #+	2
Taiga Bluet	0	0	0	0	
Turquoise Bluet	204 #+	27 #+	41 #+	32 #+	6
Hagen's Bluet	0	0	0	0	
Boreal Bluet	3 #	1	3 #+	3 #+	1
Northern Bluet	8#	2#	4#	3 #	
Skimming Bluet	671 #+	73 #	106#	87 #+	
Orange Bluet	624 #+	82 #+	117 #	81 #+	
Vesper Bluet	244 #+	33 #+	51 #+	35 #+	7
Marsh Bluet	0	0	0	0	
Stream Bluet	846 #+	76#	93 #	93 #+	
Rainbow Bluet	62 #+	15 #	17 #	23 #+	1
Tule Bluet	54	9#	25	19 #+	1
River Bluet	8#	2 #+	3 #	2 #	1
Atlantic Bluet	0	0	0	0	
Familiar Bluet	724 #	73 #	131	113 #+	
Double-striped Bluet	698#	77 #	124	89 #	
Azure Bluet	324#	51#	89 #	82 #	
Westfall's Slender Bluet	506 #+	61 #+	67 #+	64#	
Furtive Forktail	0	0	0	0	

Fragile Forktail	2006 #+	[88] #	154	184 #+	
Lilypad Forktail	187 #+	10#	48 #+	23 #+	3
Rambur's Forktail	1	1	1	1	1
Eastern Forktail	[2309] #	[88] #	[155]	186 #+	
Citrine Forktail	75	13	29	18	1

where 2023 is above 5 year average + where 2023 is new high value [top value]

Parting Shot

Ray Novotny releases a Common Green Darner after a MOTUS radio tracker is attached. Happy Trails!

Photo courtesy of Sandra Hunt-von Arb

