

## Long Meadow Dragonfly and Damselfly Report



Large red damselfly



Common darter

Twelve species of dragonflies and damselflies have been seen using the meadow. These are banded demoiselle, common blue damsel, azure damsel, large red damsel, migrant hawker, brown hawker, southern hawker, emperor, black-tailed skimmer, four-spotted chaser, broad-bodied chaser, common darter.

During the last five years the most common damselfly was the azure damselfly seen from May to August and the most common dragonfly was the common darter seen from July to September.

Dragonflies and damselflies need relatively still water for breeding. The absence of ponds or sheltered still water within the meadow will have limited their presence.

In 2014 two backwaters fed by the river Pinn were created to provide suitable breeding habitat. In particular the larger more sunny open one has attracted common blue, azure, large red damselflies and common darters many of which were paired up laying eggs during the last three years. Broad-bodied chasers have been seen more frequently during the last two years and an ovipositing pair was seen in 2018.

Dragonflies and damselflies are carnivores and eat other invertebrates, mainly flying insects, which they catch on the wing, so a healthy environment full of insect food is what these predators need. Most of them, such as migrant, brown, southern hawkers and emperor were seen on the sunnier warmer side of the meadow where their insect prey was feeding on the abundant flowers.

Long meadow is managed to host as many types of insects as practicable and the larger backwater is managed to maintain a balance between aquatic vegetation and open water. The link to the river is cleared to allow a regular inflow of water.



Southern hawker



Migrant hawker



Emperor