

8. COMMON HOOKTAIL (*PARAGOMPHUS LINEATUS*)

Size: Male: Abdomen: 32-37mm, **Hind wing:** 24-27mm. **Female:**

Abdomen: 31-36mm, **Hind wing:** 24-27mm.

Description: A yellow dragonfly with black and brown markings, and bluish grey eyes.

Male: Face: Pale yellow.

Eyes: Bluish grey.

Thorax: Yellow with a brown "X" shaped and

an oblique mark on the back of the thorax. Sides of the thorax have three parallel brown stripes. **Legs:** Yellow with black markings. **Wings:**

Transparent with yellowish white costa, which extends up to the wing spot.

Wing spot: Pale reddish brown. **Abdomen:** Segments 1-7 have yellow with black apical rings and remaining segments are sandy brown. Eighth and ninth segments have lateral oar like expansions. There is considerable individual variation in the colouration of terminal abdominal segments.

Female: Is similar to the male and less brightly coloured and without the

lateral expansions of 8th

and 9th abdominal

segments. **Habits and**

Habitat: Commonly found near streams, rivers, ponds and lakes.

Breeding: Breeds in streams, rivers, ponds and lakes. **Flight season:**

Found throughout the year. **Distribution:** The

species is found throughout India.



Photo: Shyam Prasad



Photo: David Raju

Common Oartail

DARNERS

(*FAMILY: AESHNIDAE*)

Darners are large or medium sized, non-iridescent coloured dragonflies. Eyes meet broadly overhead. The wings are transparent and species like the Blue-tailed Green Darner (*Anax guttatus*) have amber coloured hindwing patches. The abdomen is longer than the wings and often tumid at the base. Most of the darners inhabit



Photo: K. A. Subramanian

Rusty Darner



Photo: K. A. Subramanian

Blue-tailed Green Darner

marshes, ponds and lakes. Most of the species are diurnal. However a few species like the Parakeet Darner (*Gynacantha bayadera*) are crepuscular. Darners have cosmopolitan distribution and 412 species are known world wide. Within Indian region 42 species are known, of which 8 species are found in peninsular India.

9. RUSTY DARNER (*ANACIAESCHNA JASPIDEA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 43-48mm, Hind wing: 41-46mm.

Female: Abdomen: 43-46mm, Hind wing: 41-43mm

Description: *Male:* **Eyes:** Bluish grey above, pale yellow below.

Thorax: Reddish brown with two broad greenish yellow stripes on each side. **Legs:** Black, femora dark reddish brown. **Wings:** Transparent, suffused with pale amber-yellow.

Wing spot: Bright ochreous. **Abdomen:** Reddish brown. A large squarish pale yellow spot is present on each side of first segment and second segment glistening pearly white. Second segment is azure blue dorsally and laterally. The blue and white from the second segment continues to the third segment, which has a pair of dorsal apical yellow spots. Segments 4-7 are rusty with yellow lateral bands and segment 8 is with a pale spot on lateral and dorsal sides. The 9th and 10th segments are darker with dorsal pale apical spots. **Female:** Very similar to male. **Habits and habitat:** A crepuscular



Photo: K.A. Subramanian

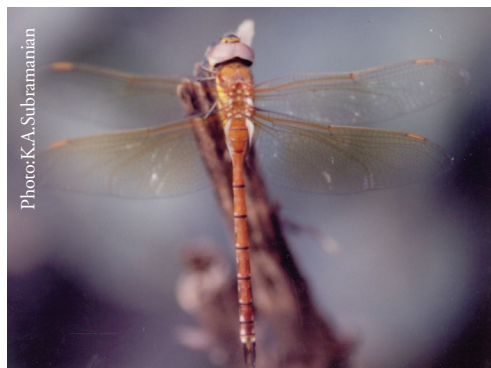


Photo: K.A. Subramanian

Rusty Darner

species. Flies during dawn and dusk and frequently comes to light at night. This species is common in marshes surrounded by woodland. It is seen up to an altitude of 2200m ASL in the Western Ghats. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes. **Flight season:** Common during August-November. **Distribution:** Throughout the Oriental region.

10. BLUE-TAILED GREEN DARNER (*ANAX GUTTATUS*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 56-62mm, Hind wing: 50-54mm.

Female: Abdomen: 56-58mm, Hind wing: 52-54mm.

Description: *Male:* Face golden yellow to bright greenish yellow.

Eyes: Blue with yellow and black behind. *Thorax:* Pale green. *Legs:* Black. Outer and inner surfaces of anterior femora is yellow.

Wings: Transparent. Hindwing with large amber yellow patch. *Wing spot:* Long narrow and reddish.

Abdomen: The first and second segment is pale green; however the second segment is turquoise blue dorsally. The third segment green with a pair of dorsal triangular turquoise blue spots. This is flanked by a pair of anterior and posterior bright orange spots. The segments 4-7 has 3 pairs of bright orange spots. In segments 8 and 9 two pairs of orange spots are confluent and segment 10 is entirely yellow. *Female:* The female is similar to the male in most respects. However, the hindwing often lack the amber patch. The turquoise blue of second segment is broken into four square patches. The orange spots of the abdomen are more confluent. **Habits and habitat:** A

diurnal species, which occasionally, comes to light at night. Usually seen perched on bare twigs and makes frequent sallies to catch insects such as small butterflies and dragonflies. This dragonfly is very common near marshes, ponds and big wells.

Breeding: Breeds in marshes. **Flight season:** May-November.

Distribution: Throughout the Oriental region and occurs up to an altitude of 1800m (ASL) in the Western Ghats.



Photo:Krushnamegh Kunte



Photo:K.A.Subramanian

Blue-tailed Green Darner

11. BLUE DARNER (*ANAX IMMACULIFRONS*)

Size: Male: Abdomen: 52-55mm, *Hind wing:*

55mm. **Female:**

Abdomen: 56mm, *Hind wing:* 58-60mm.

Description: Male: Face is uniform pale green.

Eyes: Sapphire blue.

Thorax: Thorax is pale bluish green dorsally and turquoise blue laterally with two black stripes. **Legs:** Black.

Wings: Transparent and tinted with amber yellow from base to tip. **Wing**

spot: Reddish brown. **Abdomen:** The first segment is black and the 2nd segment is turquoise blue with a black “bird in flight” dorsal mark. The segments 3-8 is broadly turquoise blue at its base and have black apical half. The segment 9 is black and 10th segment is black or brown on dorsum.

Female: Is very similar to male but the turquoise blue is replaced

by greenish yellow and black by dark reddish brown.

Habits and habitat:

Frequents slow flowing streams.

Breeding: Breeds in hill streams. Female inserts eggs into a submerged water plant. **Flight season:** Not known.

Distribution:

Oriental region.



Photo: Sahil Lathief



Photo: Giby.K

Blue Darner: Male above and female below

12. PARAKEET DARNER (*GYNACANTHA BAYADERA*)

Size: Male: Abdomen: 46mm, *Hind wing:* 44mm.

Female: Abdomen: 45mm, *Hind wing:* 43-45mm.

Description: A large green dragonfly. **Male:** Face is pale olive green. **Eyes:** Eyes are deep blue to blue grey above which fade to yellowish green below.

Thorax: Bright grass green.

Legs: Yellowish brown.

Wings: Transparent. **Wing spot:** Bright olive.

Abdomen: Pale brown to reddish brown above.

Segments 1-3 are grass green on the sides.

Female: Very similar to the male, however, the segments 8-10 are reddish brown. **Habits and habitat:** Frequents reed covered ponds and



Photo:K.A.Subramanian



Scan:K.A.Subramanian

tanks. A crepuscular insect, often visiting light immediately after the rains.

Breeding: Breeds in reed covered ponds and tanks. **Flight season:** Throughout the year.

Distribution: Oriental region.

Parakeet Darner

13. BROWN DARNER (*GYNACANTHA DRAVIDA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 50-58mm, *Hind wing:* 43-50. *Female:*

Abdomen: 48-55mm, *Hind wing:* 44-50mm

Description: *Male:* Face

is olivaceous brown with a broad black T-shaped mark on the upper surface. *Eyes:* Olivaceous. *Thorax:*

Brown. *Legs:* Reddish brown. *Wings:*

Transparent and lightly tinted with

reddish brown throughout. *Wing spot:* Reddish brown. *Abdomen:* Pale reddish brown. The third segment is constricted. Apical half of the first segment is black above. Segments 3-8 have dark brown triangular

markings above and remaining segments are pale brown. *Female:* Is similar to the male but markings are duller. **Habits and habitat:** A crepuscular dragonfly. Common around weed covered ponds and tanks. Occasionally this dragonfly comes to light at night. **Breeding:** Breeds in weed covered ponds and tanks. **Flight season:** June-November. **Distribution:** Oriental region.



Photo: Kishen Das



Scan: K.A. Subramanian

Brown Darner

MOUNTAIN HAWKS

(*FAMILY: CORDULEGASTERIDAE*)

Mountain Hawks are large black or dark brown dragonflies with bright yellow markings. The eyes are large and they are moderately separated or meet at a point. The wings are transparent or tinted with golden yellow. The abdomen is cylindrical in both sexes or compressed in females. Mountain Hawks are forest species and they fly high above the tree canopy. Species of



Photo: K.A. Subramanian

Nilgiri Mountain Hawk

this family have cosmopolitan distribution and they breed in torrential streams. World over 82 species are known, of which 22 species are recorded from the Indian region. In the Western Ghats, only two species are found and they are restricted to the higher altitudes (>1800m) of Nilgiris and Anaimalais.

14. NILGIRI MOUNTAIN HAWK (*CHLOROGOMPHUS CAMPIONI*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 53mm, Hind wing: 45mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 52-55mm, Hind wing: 50mm

Description: A large black and yellow dragonfly with amber coloured wings. *Male:* **Eyes:** Eyes are moderately separated and emerald green in colour. **Thorax:** Black with three oblique bright yellow stripes. Underside is black. **Legs:** Black with basal segments and outer side of anterior femora yellow. **Wings:** Transparent with tips dark brown. **Wing spot:** Black and narrow. **Abdomen:** Black with yellow markings. The first segment has a



Photo: K.A. Subramanian

Nilgiri Mountain Hawk

small dorsal spot. Second segment has a complete yellow apical ring and a pair of dorsal crescent marks. Segments 4-7 with narrow paired dorsal yellow crescent marks and the remaining segments are black. *Female:* The colour

and markings of body very similar to male. **Wings:** Transparent and tinted with rich golden yellow. The wing tips are diffusely tipped with blackish-brown. **Habits and habitat:** Confined to high altitude forests. Usually soars above forest canopies descending occasionally to forest clearings. **Breeding:** Breeds in torrential streams. **Flight season:** April-September. **Distribution:** Restricted to the Western Ghats above 1200m in the region between Nilgiris and Coorg.

TORRENT HAWKS (*FAMILY: CORDULIIDAE*)

Torrent hawks are large or medium sized metallic green or blue dragonflies marked with bright yellow. Eyes are broadly contiguous. Male and female are similar in appearance. The females of genera such as *Idionyx* (dagger heads) have prominent structure in between the eyes. The legs are long and spidery. The family has world wide distribution with 468 recorded species of which 35 species are known within Indian limits. Most of the species are restricted to montane regions and breed in torrential streams. One or two species are found in plains and they breed in marshes and lakes. Recent studies have shown that genera such as *Macromia*, *Epophthalmia* etc. are phylogenetically distinct to assign a separate family-*Macromiidae*.



Photos:Giby,K

Coorg Torrent Hawk. Inset:Face of Coorg Torrent Hawk

15. TULU DAGGERHEAD (*IDIONYX GALEATA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 35mm, Hind wing: 35mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 37mm, Hind wing: 37mm.

Description: A medium sized black and metallic green dragonfly.

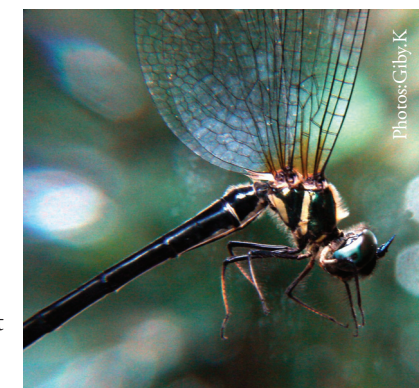
Females with a dagger like projection in between of the eyes.

Male: Face: Metallic green. **Eyes:** Bottle green.

Thorax: Glossy metallic black green with two bright yellow stripes at the lower end. Thorax is covered with fine golden hairs dorsally. **Legs:** Black and yellow.

Wings: Transparent and uniformly enfumed. **Wing spot:** Black.

Abdomen: Black with borders of second segment yellow ventrally. Anal appendages black. **Female:** General markings and colouration similar to male. However, it has characteristic dagger shaped structure in between of the eyes.



Photos: Gibby, K



Photo: K.A. Subramanian

Female Tulu Daggerhead

Wings are transparent and uniformly enfumed with amber coloured base.

Habits and Habitat: Usually found flying over torrent streams and open forest patches on mountain tops. They fly in short circles close to ground during early mornings and late evenings.

Breeding: Breeds in streams. Female lays egg between cobbles without an accompanying male. Four to five females lay egg together on the same spot.

Flight season: April-May. **Distribution:** Endemic to the Western Ghats in Dakshinakanda, Coorg, Wayanad and Nilgiris.

16. COORG TORRENT HAWK (*MACROMIA ELLISONI*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 49-52mm, *Hind wing:* 47-48mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 54-56mm, *Hind wing:* 53-59mm.

Description: A large black dragonfly with bottle green eyes and yellow markings. *Male: Face:* Reddish brown. *Eyes:* Bottle green. *Thorax:* Glossy metallic black green

with bright yellow backwardly pointed dorsal stripe. The broad lateral yellow stripe above hind legs meets the stripe on the other side between roots of the wings. *Legs:* Black.

Wings: Transparent or sometimes lightly brownish. *Wing spot:* Blackish brown.

Abdomen: Black with yellow paired mid dorsal spots. Basal half of the seventh segment is yellow. Segment 8th & 9th are with paired ventral spots and 10th segment is unmarked. *Female:* Is similar to male. **Habits and Habitat:** Usually found flying over torrent streams and waterfalls flowing through evergreen forests.

Extremely fast dragonfly and difficult to photograph or catch. **Breeding:** Breeds in streams. Female lays egg between cobbles without an accompanying male. **Flight season:** April-May. **Distribution:** Endemic to the Western Ghats in Coorg, Wayanad and Nilgiris.

Note: Recent studies consider *Macromia*, *Epophthalmia* and other related genera as a separate family-Macromiidae. However, this field guide follows the classification scheme of Davis and Tobin (1984, 1985) and, Prasad and Varshney (1995) and treats these genera as part of Corduliidae.



Female Coorg Torrent Hawk

SKIMMERS

(*FAMILY: LIBELLULIDAE*)

Skimmers are the most diverse group of odonates. They are large, medium or small dragonflies and non-iridescently coloured. Eyes are always broadly confluent. The wings vary in size, shape, width and colouration. This family has

worldwide distribution and is represented by 1139 species. They breed in wide variety of aquatic habitats like puddles, ponds, marshes, rivers, domestic storage tanks and aquaria. Within Indian limits, 95 species are known, of which 50 species are found in the peninsular India.



Photo: K.A. Subramanian

Fulvous Forest Skimmer - male



Photo: Gibby K

17. TRUMPET TAIL (*ACISOMA PANORPOIDES*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 15-18mm, Hind wing: 16-21mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 15-18mm, Hind wing: 17-22mm

Description: A small blue dragonfly with bluged abdomen. *Male:* Face is pale blue. *Eyes:* Blue, glossy brown spotted with black behind. *Thorax:* Azure

blue, marbled with black. *Legs:* Black, femora striped with yellow. *Wings:* Transparent. *Wing spot:* Pale yellow. *Abdomen:* Azure blue in colour. Abdomen from segments 1-5 widely dilated and abruptly slim and cylindrical from segments 6-10. The underside of segments 1-5 have broad black border. Dorsal black stripe broadens at apical borders of segments. The segment 3-5 are with large lateral spots. The segments 6-10 are black, however 6th and 7th segments have a large spot of azure blue. *Female:* Very similar to the male. **Habits and habitat:** A species closely



Photo: Praveen.J



Photo: Praveen.J

Trumpet Tail

associated with water. Commonly found among reeds in ponds and tanks. The species has a very weak and short flight. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes associated with tanks and ponds. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Widely distributed throughout the Oriental region.

18. SCARLET MARSH HAWK (*AETHRIAMANTA BREVIPENNIS*)

Size: Male: Abdomen: 17-20mm. **Hind wing:** 23-26mm.

Female: Abdomen: 16mm, **Hind wing:** 23mm.

Description: A small dragonfly with black thorax and scarlet or yellow abdomen. **Male:** The face is covered with short and stiff black hairs. **Eyes:** Dark

reddish brown paler towards lateral and undersides. **Thorax:** Dark chocolate brown above, which pales to golden olivaceous-brown on sides. **Legs:** Black. Hind femora marked with bright blood-red spot. **Wings:** Transparent and tinted with deep golden amber at base. In the hind wings the amber tint encircles a black opaque area. The venation within this region are bright golden yellow. **Wing spot:** Blackish brown. **Abdomen:** Bright red contrasting with blackish thorax. **Female: Eyes:** Dark reddish brown. **Thorax:** Golden-olivaceous above and paler sides. **Legs:** Black. The red spot on hind femora of male is replaced by bright yellow. **Wings:** Very similar to the male, but opaque black basal spot usually small. **Wing spot:** Greyish white. **Abdomen:** Golden olivaceous with dorsal black triangular or rhomboidal markings.



Photo: Shibu Bhaskar



Photo: Manoj P

Scarlet Marsh Hawk - male above and female below

Habits and habitat: Found in weed covered ponds, tanks and ditches. They have adapted to urban environment and could be seen in garden ponds in cities. **Breeding:** Breeds in weed covered ponds and tanks. **Flight season:** May-October. **Distribution:** Widely distributed in the Western Ghats, North eastern India and Sri Lanka.

19. RUFOUS-BACKED MARSH HAWK (*BRACHYDIPLAX CHALYBEA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 21-25mm, Hind wing: 26-30mm. *Female:*

Abdomen: 21-23mm, Hind wing: 27-29mm.

Description: A small black and ochre coloured dragonfly with dense bluish white pruinescence on thorax and abdomen. *Male:*

Face: Ochre and metallic

blue-green. Forehead is iridescent metallic blue. **Eyes:** Coffee brown above and pale yellow below. **Thorax:** Rusty brown laterally with dorsal bluish white pruinescence. **Legs:** Black. **Wings:** Transparent with brown base. **Wing spot:** Yellow with black border. **Abdomen:** Black with sides of segments 1-3 are ferruginous. Segments 1-7 have bluish white dorsal pruinescence and remaining segments are entirely black.

Female: The thorax is ochreous and wing base is palely tinted with

yellow. Abdomen is ochreous instead of bluish white pruinescence.

Habits and Habitat:

Commonly found in marshes, ponds and rivers.

Breeding: Breeds in marshes and other similar habitats. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:**

Found in Western Ghats, Eastern India, extending to Malaysia, Borneo, Celebes and Sumatra.



Photos: Praveen.J



Photos: Praveen.J

Rufous-backed Marsh Hawk

20. LITTLE BLUE MARSH HAWK (*BRACHYDIPLAX SOBRINA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 20-24mm, Hind wing: 25-28mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 16-22mm, Hind wing: 22-26mm.

Description: A small black dragonfly with dense bluish white pruinescence on thorax and abdomen.

Male: Face: Yellowish white and black with metallic blue-green forehead. **Eyes:** Coffee brown above and pale yellow below. **Thorax:** Dark brown with dorsal bluish white pruinescence.

Legs: Black. **Wings:**

Transparent with brown base. **Wing spot:** Yellow with black border.

Abdomen: Black with bluish white dorsal pruinescence on segments 1-7

and remaining segments are fully black. **Female:** The thorax is bright

yellow with glossy black markings. **Habits and Habitat:** Commonly found

in marshes, ponds and rivers. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes and other similar habitats. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Found in Peninsular India, Eastern India and extend to Myanmar in east and Sri Lanka in south.



Photo: David Rajju



Photo: Raghu Anand

Little Blue Marsh Hawk

21. DITCH JEWEL (*BRACHYTHEMIS CONTAMINATA*)

Size: *Male:* *Abdomen:* 18-21mm, *Hind wing:* 20-23mm. *Female:* *Abdomen:* 18-20mm, *Hind wing:* 22-25mm.

Description: *Male:* Face is olivaceous.

Eyes: Olivaceous brown above bluish grey below. *Thorax:* Olivaceous brown to reddish brown above with two reddish brown lateral stripes. *Legs:*

Dark brown in colour. *Wings:*

Transparent with reddish venation. A broad bright orange patch extending from wing base to wing spot is present in fore and hind wings. *Wing spot:*

Rusty. *Abdomen:* Bright red. *Female:*

Face is yellowish white. *Eyes:* Pale brown above and bluish grey below.

Thorax: Pale greenish-yellow, with a narrow brown middorsal stripe. A dark brown lateral stripe is also present. *Legs:* Similar to that of the males.

Wings: Transparent. The bright orange wing patches of males absent. The hindwing tinted with yellow at the base. *Wing spot:* Rusty. *Abdomen:* Pale olivaceous-brown with a black middorsal stripe. In segments 2-6 a

subdorsal brown stripe borders the middorsal stripe, enclosing a yellow area.

Habits and Habitat: A dragonfly of polluted waters. This species is very common along sewage canals, tanks, ponds and ditches. Flies very close to the ground and perches on aquatic weeds. **Breeding:** Breeds in ponds, marshes and tanks. **Flight season:** Throughout the year.

Distribution: Widely distributed in the plains of Oriental region.



Photo:K.A.Subramanian



Photo:K.A.Subramanian

Ditch Jewel -
Male above and female below

22. GRANITE GHOST (*BRADINOPYGA GEMINATA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 26-29mm, Hind wing: 33-36mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 26-29mm, Hind wing: 32-36mm

Description: A medium sized grey dragonfly with black and white markings. *Male:* **Eyes:** Brown above, pale greyish beneath.

Thorax: Grey thorax is marbled and peppered with black and light grey. **Legs:** Grey. **Wings:**

Transparent. **Wing spot:** Black in the center and white at both the ends.

Abdomen: Is coloured very similar to the thorax. **Female:** Is very similar to the male. **Habits and Habitat:** This species is usually seen perched on compound stone walls, boulders etc. It easily merges with such perching sites because of its colouration, extremely alert species, quite impossible to catch with bare hands. The species is commonly found near rock pools and other similar small water collections. It is common in the urban landscapes and breeds in overhead tanks and garden ponds. In aquaria larvae tend to destroy fish



Photo: Natasha Mahatre

Granite Ghost

hatchlings. After sunset it comes for roosting to the same locality day after day.

Breeding: Breeds in small water collections such as rock pools, overhead tanks etc.

Flight season: Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Oriental region.

23. EMERALD-BANDED SKIMMER (*CRATILLA LINEATA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 30-32mm, *Hind wing:* 35-38mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 31-32mm, *Hind wing:* 37-41mm

Description: A medium sized cream yellow dragonfly with iridescent green thoracic stripes. *Male:* Frons creamy white in front, iridescent blue or green

above. *Eyes:* Dark reddish brown above, which fades to pale blue below.

Thorax: Cream yellow with lateral iridescent stripes. *Legs:* Black on outer surface and yellow on inner surface. *Wings:* Transparent and tips occasionally brown. In adults wings are smoky brown. *Wing spot:*

Yellowish white and long. *Abdomen:* Black with broad middorsal and subdorsal yellow stripe. *Female:* Very similar to the male. **Habits and habitat:** Large number of these dragonflies can be seen perched on forest understory, often in association with Fulvous Forest Skimmer. Sunlit forest paths and canopy gaps are preferred locations for this species. **Breeding:**

Breeds in marshes associated with hill streams. **Flight season:** May-November. **Distribution:** Forested areas of Oriental region.



Photo:K.A.Subramanian



Photo:K.A.Subramanian

Emerald-banded Skimmer

24. RUDDY MARSH SKIMMER (*CROCOTHEMIS SERVILIA*)

Size: *Male:* *Abdomen:* 24-25mm, *Hind wing:* 27-38mm. *Female:* *Abdomen* 25-32mm; *Hind wing:* 31-37mm.

Description: A medium sized blood red or reddish yellow dragonfly with amber coloured patch at wing base. *Male:* Face is blood red. *Eyes:* Blood red above, purple on the sides.

Thorax: Blood red to bright orange. *Legs:* Reddish. *Wings:* Transparent base marked with rich amber. *Wing spot:* Dark brown. *Abdomen:* Blood red. *Female:* Face is pale yellow. *Eyes:* Eyes are brown above and olivaceous below. *Thorax:* Dark brown. *Legs:* Dark brown. *Wings:* Transparent and basal amber marking paler than in the males. *Wing spot:* Pale yellow. *Abdomen:* Yellowish brown with a mid dorsal black stripe. **Habits and habitat:** One of the commonest red dragonflies. Frequently found in ponds, puddles, rivers, big wells, tanks, ditches



Photo: Kishan Das



Photo: E. Kumbhikrishnan

Ruddy Marsh Skimmer - Male above and female below

and paddy fields. This dragonfly perches on aquatic weeds and chases any passing by dragonflies. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes associated with ponds, rivers and tanks. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Widely distributed in Oriental and Australian region.

25. BLACK GROUND SKIMMER (*DIPLACODES LEFEBVREI*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 17-25mm, *Hind wing:* 21-29mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 14-18mm, *Hind wing:* 18-23mm.

Description: A small black dragonfly with smoky brown wing tips. *Male: Face:* Black, forehead is dark iridescent violet. *Eyes:* Coffee brown above and violaceous below. *Thorax:* Black. *Legs:* Black. *Wings:* Transparent and clouded with black brown towards the tip. Base of hind wings have blackish brown markings. *Wing spot:* Brown above, white beneath. *Abdomen:* Black. *Female:* Adult females are similar to males, but with



Photo: Mallikarjuna.D.G

Black Ground Skimmer

some pale markings on the face. Sub adults are coloured with yellow and black markings on thorax and abdomen. The wings of females are more palely coloured and the black area of hind wings in males is replaced by rich amber yellow. **Habits and Habitat:** Found in marshes, and weedy ponds. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes and other similar habitats. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Distributed in Western and southern India, and Eastern Africa.

26. BLACKTIPPED GROUND SKIMMER (*DIPLACODES NEBULOSA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 15-17mm, *Hind wing:* 17-19mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 14-15mm, *Hind wing:* 18mm.

Description: A small greenish yellow and black dragonfly with black tipped transparent wings. *Male: Face:* Brown marked with yellow. Forehead is metallic violet. *Eyes:* Coffee brown above and grayish yellow below.



Photo: Praveen.]

Blacktipped Ground Skimmer

Thorax: In adults, thorax is black. In sub adults it is black with yellow stripes. **Legs:** Black. **Wings:** Transparent with black tips on all the four wings. **Wing spot:** Black. **Abdomen:** Black in adults and black with yellow stripes in subadults. **Female:** Similar to sub adult males in markings and colouration. **Habits and Habitat:** Found in marshes and weedy ponds.

Breeding: Breeds in marshes and other similar habitats. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Distributed in Western Ghats, Eastern India and Sri Lanka and extend to Java and Australia in south. Though widespread, the species is not found every where, it is locally common in some localities.

27. GROUND SKIMMER (*DIPLACODES TRIVIALIS*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 19-22mm, Hind wing: 22-23mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 18-20mm, Hind wing: 22-24mm

Description: A small greenish yellow or blue dragonfly with black markings. *Male:* Face is pale azure blue. *Eyes:* Reddish brown above and pale bluish or yellowish below.

Thorax: Greenish yellow or olivaceous. The dorso-lateral area is violet brown and is speckled with minute dots. In old adults the thorax is covered with fine blue pruinescence. *Legs:* Greenish yellow

marked with black. *Wings:* Transparent. *Wing spot:* Dark grey to black.

Abdomen: The segments 1-7 greenish yellow with middorsal and subdorsal black stripes. Remaining segments black. In old individuals all markings are obscured by fine blue pruinescence. *Female:* Resemble young or sub adult male. Abdominal markings are broader and continued on to segments 8-10. The 10th segment and anal appendages are completely yellow.

Habits and habitat: One of the commonest dragonflies in gardens, fields, playgrounds, etc.



Photo: K.A. Subramanian



Photo: Naraasha Mahatre

Ground Skimmer

This dragonfly usually perches on the ground and rarely flies above 1m.

Breeding: Breeds in muddy puddles, tanks and pond edges. **Flight season:** Throughout the year.

Distribution: Throughout Oriental region and Pacific islands.

28. RUBYTAILED HAWKLET (*EPITHEMIS MARIAE*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 19-22mm, *Hind wing:* 20-21mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 37mm, *Hind wing:* 37mm.

Description: A small dragonfly with ruby coloured segments at the base of the abdomen in males. **Male: Face:** Chalky white and metallic blue green. **Eyes:** Coffee brown above, bluish grey below. **Thorax:** Coffee brown above and on sides, which gradually fades to yellowish. Faint yellow stripes on sides may be visible in some specimens. **Legs:** Black. Inner side of anterior



Photo: Manoj P

Rubytailed Hawklet mating

femora is yellow. **Wings:** Transparent, wing base tinted with amber-yellow.

Wing spot: Dark reddish brown. **Abdomen:** Black with basal 1-3 segments ruby red. Anal appendages black. **Female:** Marked with golden yellow and black. Basal abdominal segments are bright yellow instead of ruby. **Habits and Habitat:** Found closely associated with forested marshes, especially in Myristica swamps. They occur in small colonies. **Breeding:** Breeds in forested marsh lands. **Flight season:** June-October. **Distribution:** Endemic to the Western Ghats south of Dakshinakannada.

29. AMBERWINGED MARSH GLIDER (*HYDROBASILEUS CROCEUS*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 29-33mm, Hind wing: 40-42mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 28-34mm, Hind wing: 42-48mm.

Description: A Large rusty dragonfly with transparent rusty wings. *Male:* **Face:** Bright golden ochreous. **Eyes:** Reddish brown above and yellowish laterally and below. **Thorax:** Rich olivaceous with golden reddish brown. **Legs:** Ochreous. **Wings:** Transparent and tinted with uniform burned



Amberwinged Marsh Glider

brown. Hind wing along the posterior border has a broad dark reddish brown wavy mark. **Wing spot:** Rusty brown above, bright ochreous beneath. **Abdomen:** Olivaceous changing to reddish or ochreous towards the end. Abdominal segments are finely bordered with black. Segments 4-9 have dorsal black wedge shaped spots and the 10th segment is black. **Female:** Is similar to male but the abdomen is stouter. **Habits and Habitat:** Found in marshes, and weedy ponds. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes and other similar habitats. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Found in Western Ghats, Eastern India, Sri Lanka, South East Asia, extending up to Philippines in the east. The species is very local but common where ever it occurs.

30. BLUE HAWKLET (*HYLAEOTHEMIS FRUHSTORFERI*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 23-32mm, *Hind wing:* 28-32mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 24-26mm, *Hind wing:* 29-33mm

Description: A small turquoise blue and black dragonfly associated with forested marsh lands. *Male: Face:* Pale greenish yellow with iridescent metallic blue

forehead. *Eyes:* Sapphire blue above, yellowish green beneath. *Thorax:* Black with turquoise blue dorsal and lateral stripes. *Legs:* Black. *Wings:* Transparent. *Wing spot:* Dark reddish brown. *Abdomen:* Black with lateral turquoise blue spots. The 7th segment has paired broad turquoise blue

dorsal spots and segments 8-10 are black. *Female:* Similar to male, but more robust and turquoise blue markings are replaced by greenish yellow colour. **Habits and Habitat:** Usually found perched in sunlit patches of marshes associated with hill streams. They occur in small colonies.

Breeding: Breeds in marshes associated with hill streams.

Flight season: May-November. **Distribution:** Restricted to south of Uttarakannada in the Western Ghats, Orissa and Sri Lanka .



Photo: David Raju



Photo: Krushnamegh Kunte

Blue Hawklet-Male above and female below

31. ASIATIC BLOOD TAIL (*LATHRECISTA ASIATICA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:*
27-32mm, *Hind wing:*
33-37mm. *Female:*

Abdomen: 27-32mm,
Hind wing: 34-36mm .

Description: A
medium sized dark
brown dragonfly with
blood red tail. *Male:*

Face is yellow below and upper surface of frons is steel black or iridescent blue black. *Eyes:* Eyes are broadly confluent. The upper surface is brown and lower surface is bluish grey. *Thorax:* Dark coppery- brown above and bright yellow on sides. In subadults, the upper surface is coppery brown with two parallel yellow stripes. A narrow lateral yellow stripe extends to mid leg. In addition to this, two black lateral “Y” shaped markings are present. *Legs:* Dark reddish brown to black. The anterior femora is yellow on inner side. *Wings:* Transparent with smoky brown tips. *Wing spot:* Reddish brown. *Abdomen:* The segments 1-2 with a broad lateral and fine mid dorsal yellow stripe. In older individuals these markings covered by fine bluish white pruinescence. The segments 3-8 are bright crimson red and segments at the tip are black. *Female:* Resemble males, however the abdomen



Photo: Natasha Mahare



Scan:K.A.Subramanian

Asiatic Blood Tail - Male above and female below

is rich olivaceous brown. A middorsal greenish yellow stripe is present, which is bordered with black lateral stripes. **Habits and habitat:** This shy dragonfly is found in ponds, tanks and marshes. When disturbed, it flies very rapidly. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes associated with ponds and tanks. **Flight season:** Not known.

Distribution: Oriental region.

32. FULVOUS FOREST SKIMMER (*NEUROTHEMIS FULVIA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 21-26mm, Hind wing: 27-32mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 20-24mm, Hind wing: 26-32mm

Description: A medium sized rusty coloured dragonfly with transparent wing tips. *Male:* Face is reddish brown. *Eyes:* Dark reddish brown above, golden brown below. *Thorax:* Reddish brown. *Legs:* Dark reddish brown. *Wings:* Opaque dark reddish brown with an irregular triangular transparent area at the tip of the wing. *Wing spot:* Dark reddish brown. *Abdomen:* Reddish brown.



Photo: Srinidhi

Female: Many forms of females are found. Colour of head, thorax and abdomen paler than males or rusty brown. Wings are clear amber yellow with a dark ray extending to the tip in fore wing. **Habits and habitat:** A dragonfly of wet forests. Usually perches on fallen logs and shrubs. A large number of

them can be found together in canopy gaps and forest edges. During wet season they move to non forested areas.

Breeding: Breeds in marshes associated with forest streams and rivers.

Flight season: Found throughout the year. However, large number can be seen between May-September. **Distribution:** Forested areas of Oriental region.



Photo: Kishan Das

Fulvous Forest Skimmer -
Male above and female below

33. RUDDY MEADOW SKIMMER (*NEUROTHEMIS INTERMEDIA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 22-24mm, *Hind wing:* 24-27mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 21-24mm, *Hind wing:* 25-28mm

Description: A medium sized red dragonfly with a broad amber patch at the base of wings. *Male: Face:* Bright scarlet. *Eyes:* Reddish brown above and yellowish brown below. *Thorax:* Rusty brown. *Legs:* Reddish brown. *Wings:* Transparent with amber yellow patch in all the four wings. This patch extends to almost one third of the wings.



Photo: David Raju

Male Ruddy Meadow Skimmer

Wing spot: Bright reddish brown. **Abdomen:** Bright red with ventro-lateral brownish stripe, which is interrupted at the apical end of segments.

Female: Is similar to male but the ventro-lateral abdominal band is more sharply defined. **Habits and Habitat:** This dragonfly is usually found in grasslands and other similar open habitats. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes, ponds and lakes. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Peninsular India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Malacca and Indochina.

34. PIED PADDY SKIMMER (*NEUROTHEMIS TULLIA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 16-20mm, Hind wing: 19-23mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 16-19mm, Hind wing: 20-23mm.

Description: *Male:* Face is black. *Eyes:* Blackish brown above, violaceous below. *Thorax:* Black with middorsal cream stripe. *Legs:* Black. *Wings:* Basal half is opaque blue black which is bordered by a milky white patch towards the tip. The wing tips are transparent. *Wing spot:* Dull brown.

Abdomen: Black with a broad middorsal creamy white stripe on the upperside. *Female:* Differs significantly from the male in body markings and colouration. The face is olivaceous yellow. *Eyes:* Pale brown above, which fade to pale olivaceous towards the sides and below. *Thorax:* Greenish yellow with a bright yellow mid dorsal stripe. This stripe is broadly bordered with blackish brown throughout. *Legs:* The outer surface of legs is yellow and the inner surface is black. *Wings:* Base of the wings bright amber yellow. Front edge of the wing is blackish brown, broadening into a very large blackish brown spot. This spot extend to the rear edge of the wing. In hindwings this spot is irregular or sickle shaped. Tips of all wings are broadly blackish brown. *Wing spot:* Dull brown. *Abdomen:* Bright yellow with a broad black band above. Underside is black. **Habits and habitat:** A

conspicuous species of ponds, marshes and paddy fields. Flight is slow and weak. Usually perches on twigs, aquatic weeds and other plants. This species is very common along irrigation canals in paddy fields. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes and ponds. **Flight season:** Found throughout the year. However, peak abundance is during July-September months. **Distribution:** Throughout the Oriental region.



Pied Paddy Skimmer -
male above and female below

35. STELLATE RIVER HAWK (*ONYCHOTHEMIS TESTACEA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 34-36mm, *Hind wing:* 40-42mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 36mm, *Hind wing:* 42-44mm.

Description: A large black and yellow dragonfly with emerald green eyes.

Male: Face: Black and yellow with metallic blue green markings. **Eyes:**

Emerald green. **Thorax:** Dark metallic blue with yellow mid dorsal stripe.

First lateral stripe on the thorax is incomplete. However, the posterior one is complete and reaches the base of wings. **Legs:** Black. **Wings:** Transparent.

Wing spot: Black and long. **Abdomen:** Black with dorsal and lateral yellow

spots. Third and fourth segment has yellow characteristic stellate spots on the

dorsal side. The segments 7-10 do not have the lateral yellow spots. **Female:**

Similar to male in colouration and markings. **Habits and Habitat:** Very fast flying dragonfly of forested streams. It usually perches on dry twigs and other similar vantage points over streams and aggressively chases other odonates.

Breeding: In streams. **Flight season:** April-June. **Distribution:** Western Ghats, Sri Lanka and eastern India.



Photo: K. V. Gaururaj

Stellate River Hawk

36. BROWN-BACKED RED MARSH HAWK (*ORTHETRUM CHRYSIS*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 28-33mm, *Hind wing:* 31-38mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 25-30mm, *Hind wing:* 31-36mm.

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with blood red tail and brown thorax. *Male: Face:* Scarlet. *Eyes:* Coffee brown above, bluish grey below. *Thorax:* Rusty



Photo: Giby.K

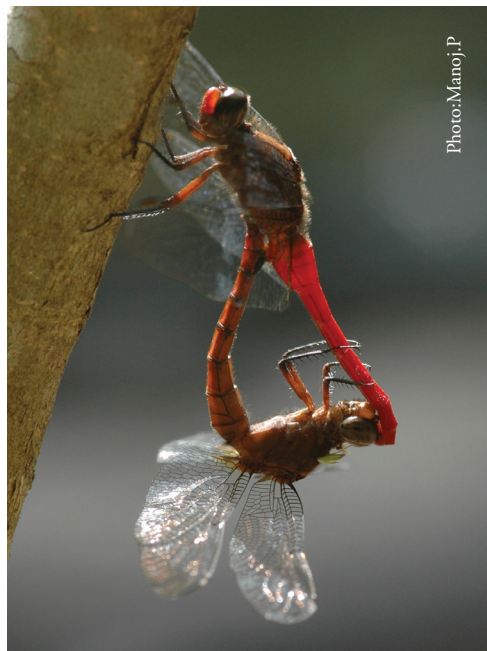


Photo: Manoj.P

Brown-backed Red Marsh Hawks- male above and a mating pair below

brown. **Legs:** Black. **Wings:** Transparent, wing base tinted with amber. **Wing spot:** Dark reddish brown. **Abdomen:** Bright red. **Female:** Bright ochreous with black markings. **Habits and Habitat:** Commonly found perched around marshes, ponds, paddy fields and stagnant parts of rivers and streams. **Breeding:** Mated pairs are frequently found around wetlands throughout the year. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Widely distributed from India, Sri Lanka to Celebes and Borneo in the east.

37. BLUE MARSH HAWK (*ORTHETRUM GLAUCUM*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 29-35mm, *Hind wing:* 33-40mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 28-32mm, *Hind wing:* 32-37mm

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with bluish black thorax and blue tail. *Male:* Face is pale olivaceous brown in young adults changing to glossy black in old individuals. *Eyes:* Dark green and is capped with reddish brown. *Thorax:* In



Photo: K.A. Subramanian

Male Blue Marsh Hawk

old individuals it is dark dull blue or black with fine black blue or black hairs. *Legs:* Black. *Wings:* Transparent, with extreme base tinted with dark amber yellow. In old adults, wings are smoky brown.

Wing spot: Dark reddish brown. *Abdomen:* Bulged at segments 1-3.

Segments 1-8 are pruinose pale blue and the remaining segments black.

Female: Thorax: Olivaceous above bordered by a broad reddish brown lateral stripe. Lateral side is reddish brown with two yellowish-white narrow stripes. *Legs:* Black externally and yellow internally. *Wings:*

Similar to that of males. *Abdomen:* Reddish brown with a broad greenish

yellow middorsal stripe. Segments 8-10 are black middorsally. **Habits and**

habitat: Commonly found in marshes associated with forest streams,

plantations and canals. **Breeding:** Breeds in Marshes. **Flight season:** May-

October. **Distribution:** Widely distributed in the Oriental region.

38. TRICOLOURED MARSH HAWK (*ORTHETRUM LUZONICUM*)

Size: *Male:* *Abdomen:* 28-30mm, *Hind wing:* 30-32mm. *Female:* *Abdomen:* 28-32mm, *Hind wing:* 30-32mm.

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with blue, yellow and brown markings. *Male:* *Face:* Pale bluish or greenish yellow. *Eyes:* Bluish green with violet

or brownish spots. *Thorax:* Pale olivaceous green with brown lateral stripes. Dorsal side has a distinct yellow "Y" shaped mark. In older individuals, brown and yellow markings may be totally replaced by pale blue pruinescence. *Legs:* Bluish black. *Wings:* Transparent. *Wing spot:* Yellowish. *Abdomen:* Is pruinosed pale azure blue in colour and dorso-ventrally dilated at base. *Female:* Markings similar to sub adult males but less brightly coloured. **Habits and Habitat:** Commonly found perched around marshes, ponds, paddy fields, and stagnant part of rivers and



Photo: Praveen, J



Photo: K. A. Subramanian

Tricoloured Marsh Hawk: Sub adult above and adult male below

streams. Like green marsh hawk (*O. sabina*) this species also frequently perches on ground.

Breeding: Mated pairs are frequently found around wetlands throughout the year. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Widely distributed from India, Sri Lanka to Java and Sumatra in the east.

39. CRIMSON-TAILED MARSH HAWK (*ORTHETRUM PRUINOSUM*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 28-31mm, Hind wing: 32-36mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 30mm, Hind wing: 37mm.

Description: *Male:* Face is ochreous to pale reddish brown. *Eyes:* Blue black above and bluish grey below. *Thorax:* Is covered with fine hairs and reddish brown to dull purple. *Legs:* Black and reddish brown at the base. *Wings:* Transparent. In old adults, it is pale brown towards the tip. On the fore and hindwings, the basal area is marked with reddish brown. *Wing spot:* Reddish



Photo: K.A. Subramanian

Crimson-tailed Marsh Hawk

Abdomen: Bright red. In old adults it is purplish due to pruinescence. *Female:* Face is pale olivaceous. *Eyes:* Yellowish, capped with brown. *Thorax:* Reddish brown or dull ochreous with indistinct lateral brown stripe. *Wings:* Similar to male but the basal markings are indistinct. *Abdomen:* Is dull ochreous with each segment thinly bordered with black. **Habits and habitat:** A very common dragonfly of wells, ponds, ditches, tanks and rivers. Males are very conspicuous and can be seen perched on shrubs, stones etc. **Breeding:** Breeds in puddles, ponds and tanks. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Oriental region.

40. GREEN MARSH HAWK (*ORTHETRUM SABINA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 30-36mm, *Hind wing:* 30-36mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 32-35mm, *Hind wing:* 31-35mm
Description: *Male:* Face is yellowish green. *Eyes:* Green mottled with black. *Thorax:* Greenish yellow with black tiger like stripes. *Legs:* Black; inner side of anterior femora is yellow. *Wings:* Transparent; inner edge of hindwing tinted with yellow. *Wing spot:* Black with reddish brown spot. *Abdomen:* The segments 1-3 are green with broad black rings and distinctly swollen at the base. *Female:* Is very similar to the male. **Habits and habitat:** A common dragonfly of gardens and fields. This dragonfly perches motionless on shrubs and dry twigs for a long time. Hawks flying insects such as flies, small butterflies and dragonflies. This species can be seen far away from water and occasionally enters houses at night attracted by the light. **Breeding:** Breeds in ponds and tanks. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Widely distributed in Ethiopian, Oriental and Australian region. It is found throughout Indian subcontinent upto an altitude of 2000m ASL.



Photo: K. A. Subramanian

Green Marsh Hawk



Photo: E. Kumbhikrishnan

Green Marsh Hawks mating

41. BLUE-TAILED FOREST HAWK (*ORTHETRUM TRIANGULARE*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 29-33mm, Hind wing: 37-41mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 29-32mm, Hind wing: 37mm.

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with black thorax, black brown patch at wing base and blue tail. *Male:* Face is glossy black. *Eyes:* Dark blue. *Thorax:* Velvety black. *Legs:* Black. *Wings:*

Transparent. The hindwing has a broad triangular blackish brown spot at the base. *Wing spot:* Black. *Abdomen:* Broad at the base and gradually tapering towards the tip. The segments 1-2 and 8-10 black. The segments 3-7 azure blue and covered with fine hairs. *Female:* *Thorax:* Olivaceous green above, often suffused with reddish brown. The sides are dark reddish brown with two bright yellow stripes. *Wings:* The transparent wing is suffused with brown. The hindwing does not have basal black area instead it is tinted with yellow. *Abdomen:* The abdomen is black and without fine hairs. A middorsal yellow or olivaceous green stripe runs from segments 1-7. The segments 2-7 have two yellow spot underneath. **Habits and habitat:** A

species of the hills. Usually found in marshes associated with hill streams. **Breeding:** Breeds in brooks flowing through marshes in foothills. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** It is distributed in the hill ranges of Oriental region.



Photo: K.A. Subramanian



Photo: K. V. Gururaj

Blue-tailed Forest Hawk

42. BLUE-TAILED YELLOW SKIMMER (*PALPOPLEURA SEXMACULATA*)

Size: *Male:* *Abdomen:* 14-16mm, *Hind wing:* 15-21mm. *Female:* *Abdomen:* 13-14mm, *Hind wing:* 18-21mm

Description: A small dragonfly with greenish yellow thorax and blue abdomen. *Male:* Face is creamy yellow with brilliant iridescent blue frons. *Eyes:* Bluish grey, capped with brown above.

Thorax: Pale greenish yellow.

Dorsal side is warm reddish

brown. *Legs:* Bright yellow with black terminal segments. *Wings:* Forewings are transparent with three black streaks extending from the wing base to the tip. A prominent black spot is also present in the wing node. The hind wings are tinted with yellow and have two short black streaks extending from the wing base to the tip. *Wing spot:* Black with central white streak. *Abdomen:* Light blue and covered with pruinescence. The sides of 1&2 and base of 3rd segments yellow. Underside is yellow with a median black stripe. *Female:* Face is yellow without iridescent markings. *Thorax:* Rich orange brown with lateral brown stripe. *Wings:* Transparent and more broadly marked with blackish-brown and black. The amber yellow tint in the hind wing is deeper. *Wing spot:* Black and creamy white.

Abdomen: Bright reddish brown with a median black stripe. A broad lateral black stripe is also present. **Habits and habitat:**

This dragonfly is usually found in marshes associated with bamboo brakes. It resembles wasps in appearance and with slow, circling flight. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:**

Throughout the Oriental region.



Blue-tailed Yellow Skimmer:
Male above and female below

43. WANDERING GLIDER (*PANTALA FLAVESCENS*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 29-35mm, Hind wing: 38-40mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 30-33mm, Hind wing: 39-41mm.

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with rusty thorax and yellow abdomen. *Male:* Face is bright golden yellow or orange. *Eyes:* Reddish brown above, bluish grey on sides and below. *Thorax:* Olivaceous or rusty and is coated thickly with fine yellowish hair. On

sides, it is pale green or bluish green. *Legs:* Black. *Wings:* Transparent and base of hind wing amber yellow. *Wing spot:* Bright redish brown. *Abdomen:* Bright redish brown and is tinted with brick red dorsally. The segments 8-10 have black spots above. *Female:* Is very similar to the male. Eyes are olivaceous brown above and wings are evenly smoky. The abdomen lacks the dorsal red colouring found in the males. **Habits and habitat:** Most common dragonfly. Huge swarms can be seen just before and after monsoon. Thousands of them swarm over harvesting fields and playground during early morning and evening. They are ubiquitous and migrate in large numbers with the monsoon winds. The swarms usually use clearings such as railway tracks, highways and



Photo: Natasha Mahatre



Photo: Kishan Das

Wandering Glider

rivers to migrate. These swarms frequently bump into passing vehicles and die on road. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes and small puddles. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. However large numbers can be seen between September-December. **Distribution:** Throughout the tropics.

44. YELLOW-TAILED ASHY SKIMMER (*POTAMARCHA CONGENER*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 29-32mm, Hind wing: 33-35mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 29-31mm, Hind wing: 33-37mm

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with bluish black thorax and yellow tail with black markings. *Male:* Face is olivaceous yellow to steel black or brown. *Eyes:* Reddish brown above and bluish grey below. *Thorax:* Black in adults and covered with bluish pruinescence. In young adults, yellow markings are visible through the pruinescence. *Legs:* Black or reddish brown.



Photo: Shibu Bhaskar

Yellow-tailed Ashy Skimmer - Male

Wings: Transparent and tipped with brown. *Wing spot:* Dark reddish brown. *Abdomen:* Basal segments covered with bluish pruinescence. The segments 1-8 with medial and lateral yellow stripe bordered with black. *Female:* *Thorax:* Is reddish-brown above, fading to dull

brown on sides. A medial yellow and brown lateral markings present. *Legs:* Black and femora obscurely striped with yellow. *Wings:* Transparent and brown coloured area in the wing tip much more defined. The yellow tinting of the wings is deeper. *Abdomen:* Similar to male, however the yellow stripe beneath is broad leaving a black narrow stripe. **Habits and habitat:** Found in weedy ponds and marshes. Large colonies are often found in woods associated with ponds and marshes. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Oriental region.

45. RUFIOUS MARSH GLIDER (*RHODOTHEMIS RUFA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 25-29mm, *Hind wing:* 32-37mm. *Female:*

Abdomen: 25-29mm, *Hind wing:* 32-37mm.

Description: A Large rusty dragonfly with transparent wings.

Male: Face: Bright ochreous and blood red. **Eyes:** Reddish

brown above and scarlet red below. **Thorax:** Reddish brown with dorsal yellow stripe or without any markings. **Legs:** Dark reddish brown. **Wings:** Transparent amber yellow spot at the base of fore and hind wing. **Wing spot:** Light ochreous. **Abdomen:** Brilliant scarlet red. **Female:** Rusty brown with a mid dorsal yellow stripe extending from base of the head to 4th segment of the abdomen. Wings are similar to male but the basal markings are less extensive. **Habits and Habitat:** Found in marshes, and weedy ponds. Females are usually found perched on riparian vegetation. Males are difficult to identify in flight with other similar red



Photo: David Raju



Photo: David Raju

Rufous Marsh Glider:
Male above and Female below

coloured dragonflies,

with which it shares

the habitat. **Breeding:**

Breeds in marshes and

other similar habitats.

Flight season: Not

known. **Distribution:**

Found in West and

east coast, Eastern

India, Sri Lanka, South

East Asia, extending

up to Celebes, Borneo,

Java and Australia.

46. GREATER BLUE WING (*RHYOTHEMIS PLUTONIA*)

Size: *Male: Abdomen:* 20-22mm, *Hind wing:* 31-36mm. *Female: Abdomen:* 19-21mm, *Hind wing:* 29-32mm.

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with metallic blue wings and body.

Male: Face: Pale bluish with metallic blue-green frons. **Eyes:** Dark reddish brown above, violaceous below. **Thorax:** Metallic blue green. **Legs:** Black.



Photo: Arif Siddiqui

Great Blue Wing

Wings: Opaque metallic blue with transparent forewing tips. **Wing spot:** Blackish brown. **Abdomen:** Black. **Female:** Similar to males but the transparent area of fore and hind wing extending to inner end of wing spot or sometime even further below. Females have shorter and broader wings than that of males. **Habits and Habitat:** Commonly found perched around marshes, ponds, paddy fields, and stagnant part of rivers and streams. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes and other similar habitats. **Flight season:** Not known. **Distribution:** Found in Eastern India and extends to Myanmar.

47. LESSER BLUE WING (*RHYOTHEMIS TRIANGULARIS*)

Size: Male: Abdomen: 16-20mm, *Hind wing:* 24-29mm.

Female: Abdomen: 16-17mm, *Hind wing:* 24-28mm.

Description: A medium sized metallic blue-green dragonfly with metallic blue markings on the base of the wings. **Male:**

Face: Black and dark metallic blue-green.

Eyes: Blackish-brown above, paler brown below. **Thorax:** Metallic blue green. **Legs:** Black. **Wings:** Base of the wings opaque metallic blue remaining area transparent. **Wing spot:** Dark reddish brown. **Abdomen:**

Black. **Female:** Similar to males but females have shorter and broader wings than that of males. **Habits and Habitat:** Commonly found perched

around marshes and

ponds. **Breeding:**

Breeds in marshes and other similar

habitats. **Flight**

season: Not known.

Distribution:

Found in Western Ghats, Sri Lanka, Eastern India and extend to Malaysia, Sumatra, Java and Borneo towards

east.



Photo: Shyam Prasad



Photo: Shyam Prasad

Lesser Blue Wing

48. COMMON PICTURE WING (*RHYOTHEMIS VARIEGATA*)

Size: *Male:* Abdomen: 23-25mm, Hind wing: 33-36mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 20-22mm, Hind wing: 28-37mm.

Description: A medium sized dragonfly with butterfly like yellow and brown wings.

Male: Frons iridescent green.

Eyes: Dark reddish brown above. **Thorax:** Iridescent green. **Legs:** Black.

Wings: The forewing is transparent and golden yellow. The wing tip, leading edge and centre of the wing are marked with deep coffee brown spots. The hindwing also has similar spots; however the central spot is absent. Moreover, the wing base is marked with an irregular brown patch. The trailing edge of the hindwing has a characteristic 'W' shaped coffee brown mark. **Wing spot:** Black.

Abdomen: Black. **Female:** **Wings:** Tips of the forewings transparent. A dark brown opaque area extends to the centre of fore wing. This area borders a bright yellow hockey stick shaped patch. In hindwings the brown opaque area is more extensive and reaches upto the wing tip, which encloses a long yellow central patch and a small yellow spot towards the wing tip. This patch also borders yellow spots of wing margins. **Wing spot:** Black. **Abdomen:** Bluish black. **Habits and habitat:** A prominent dragonfly of marshes, paddy fields and ponds. This species is easily mistaken for a butterfly. A weak flier and frequently perches on



Common Picture Wing: Male above and Female below

aquatic weeds. This dragonfly is rarely seen away from water. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshes, ponds and paddy fields. **Flight season:** Throughout the year, especially near perennial marshes. **Distribution:** Throughout the Oriental region.