

Have you seen our **green-eyed dragons** fight?



The Golden-ringed Dragonfly is the longest in the UK with the females reaching 8.4cm long. You can approach quite closely before this brave predator is disturbed.

If you see the Golden-ringed Dragonfly it may startle you as, with its black and golden-ringed body, it could be mistaken for a giant wasp! Not surprisingly this magnificent flying beast has the old folk name 'Horse-stinger', but rest assured it has no sting. It is actually a highly beneficial insect as it likes to feed on midges and mosquitoes.

It flies between June and August, slowly patrolling watercourses at knee height whilst hunting for prey with its big green eyes. It often stops to hover or perch on vegetation. You may even be lucky enough to witness a spectacular aerial dog-fight between males competing for territory and hear them repeatedly collide.

It is scarce in Sussex but breeds on this site thanks to the fast-flowing silty watercourses where it lays its eggs, and the heathy glades where it hunts for bees amongst the gorse and heather.



Dragonflies are fearsome predators and belong to the order of insects known as Odonata meaning 'the toothed ones'.

How do you tell the difference between a dragonfly and a damselfly?

Dragonflies are normally the larger of the two, with strong persistent flight and they hold their wings outspread when perched. The smaller damselflies' flight is usually weak and brief and they hold their wings together behind their bodies when at rest.



With thanks to the British Dragonfly Society - Sussex Group. Photography by Dave Mitchell and Emma Newman.
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