MARSH DARTS  
(FAMILY: COENAGRIONIDAE)  

Marsh darts are slender and small damselflies with varied colouration. These non-iridescent damselflies rest with wings closed over their body. The wings are transparent and rounded at the tip. The long and slender abdomen is slightly longer than the hind wing. Some of the smallest damselflies like the Golden Dartlet (*Ischnura aurora*) is from this family. Marsh Darts are found throughout the world. World over, this family is represented by about 1147 species. Within Indian limits, 65 species are known and in peninsular India 25 species are recorded. The marsh darts breed in a variety of aquatic habitats like ponds, marshes, streams and rivers. Though most of the species are closely associated with aquatic habitats, some species like the Common Marsh Dart (*Ceriagrion coromandelianum*) can be found far away from any aquatic habitat.
35. Pigmy Dartlet (*Agriocnemis pygmaea*)

**Size:**  
**Male:** Abdomen: 16-17mm, Hindwing: 9.5-10mm. **Female:** Abdomen: 18 mm, Hindwing: 11-12 mm.

**Description:** A small apple green damselfly with black thoracic stripes orange coloured terminal abdominal segments. **Male:**  
**Eyes:** Black above, pale apple green below. **Thorax:** Black above with pale apple green stripes on sides. The pale green colour along the sides fades to yellow below. Upper side of posterior lateral side has small black spot.  
**Legs:** Yellow, outer surface of femora black. **Wings:** Transparent. **Wing spot:** Pale yellow in forewings and black in hind wings. **Abdomen:** Broadly black above. Segment 1-6 with ground colour pale apple green. Terminal segments brick red.  
**Female:** Shows range of colour variations, some even resemble the males. In red form (Photo) the head, thorax and abdomen are dark brick red in colour. Thorax has a broad, dorsal black band. **Habits and Habitat:** Common in marshes, ponds, and sea shore. Darts among vegetation and flies very close to the ground. **Breeding:** In marshes and ponds. **Flight Season:** Very common during October-January.  
**Distribution:** Throughout the Oriental, Australian regions and Pacific islands.
36. Orange-tailed Marsh Dart (*Ceriagrion cerinorubellum*)

**Size:** *Male:* Abdomen: 31-33mm, Hindwing: 20-21mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 31-35mm, Hindwing: 20-21mm.

**Description:** A medium sized pale green damselfly with orange coloured segments at the base and end of the abdomen. *Male:*

**Eyes:** Dark olivaceous above, pale green below.

**Thorax:** Green above fading to blue on the sides and yellow below. **Legs:** Yellow, with short black spines. **Wings:** Transparent. **Wing spot:** Amber coloured.

**Abdomen:** Multicoloured. Segments 1-2 and 7-10 brick red. Central segments (3-7) blue grey with dorsal black band. *Female:* Very similar to the male, however, the red abdominal segments 7-10 are much duller. **Habits and Habitat:** Common on the banks of ponds, rivers and canals. Sits on dry twigs and vegetation over water. **Breeding:** Breeds in marshy banks of rivers, canals and ponds. **Flight season:** October-January. **Distribution:** Throughout the Oriental region.
37. Coromandel Marsh Dart (*Ceriagrion coromandelianum*)

**Size:**
- **Male:** Abdomen: 28-30 mm, Hindwing: 18-20 mm.
- **Female:** Abdomen: 29-32 mm, Hindwing: 20 mm.

**Description:** A medium-sized pale green damselfly with bright yellow (male) or pale green tail (female).
- **Male:**
  - **Eyes:** Olivaceous above, pale greenish yellow below.
  - **Thorax:** Olive green above merging to yellow on sides.
  - **Abdomen:** Uniform yellow.
- **Female:**
  - **Thorax:** Golden brown.
  - **Abdomen:** Uniformly olivaceous with an ochrous or golden brown tint on the dorsal side.

**Habits and Habitat:**
- Common along the banks of ponds, rivers, and canals. Also found frequently far away from water bodies.
- **Breeding:** Shallow water bodies with profuse growth of grass and other aquatic plants.
- **Flight season:** Throughout the year.
- **Distribution:** Throughout the Oriental region.

*Photo: K.A. Subramanian*
38. Rusty Marsh Dart (Ceriagrion olivaceum)

Size: **Male**: Abdomen: 34-38mm, Hindwing: 22-23mm. **Female**: Abdomen: 33-35mm, Hindwing: 22mm.

**Description**: A medium sized pale green or brown damselfly with rusty tail. **Male**: **Eyes**: Olivaceous brown. **Thorax**: Upper side pale olivaceous, paler on the sides and beneath. **Legs**: Yellow with black spines. **Wings**: Transparent. **Wing spot**: Pale brown. **Abdomen**: Uniform olivaceous brown, fading to yellowish beneath. **Female**: Very similar to the male. The race found in the Western Ghats (C.o.aurantiacum) has a reddish brown abdomen. **Habits and Habitat**: Very common among vegetation along the banks of streams. **Breeding**: Shaded streams. **Flight season**: September-December. **Distribution**: Western Ghats, North-east India and West Bengal.
**39. Golden Dartlet (Ischnura aurora)**

**Size:** Male: Abdomen: 16-20mm, Hindwing: 10-20mm. Female: Abdomen: 18-20mm, Hindwing: 14-15mm

**Description:** A small apple green damselfly with black thoracic stripes and blue tipped yellow tail.

**Male: Eyes:** Black half moon like cap above, olive green to dark olive below, which fade to pale olive beneath. Two azure blue spots are present behind the eyes.

**Thorax:** Shining black with two pale grass green stripes. Sides are light green and white below.

**Legs:** Pale greenish white.

**Wings:** Transparent. **Wing spot:** The wing spots are different in fore and hindwings. It is rose-red in forewings and uniform pale grey in hindwings.

**Abdomen:** Bright yellow. The second and seventh segments has upper narrow and broad black marks respectively. Segments 8-10 are entirely azure blue. The 10th segment has a upper black spot.

**Female:** The female is less brightly coloured than the male. A broad black stripe runs along the upper side of abdomen. Segments 8-10 do not have azure blue markings.

**Habits and Habitat:** Found among vegetation along the banks of ponds, rivers, canals and estuaries.

**Breeding:** Among marshes on the banks of ponds, canals and rivers.

**Flight season:** Throughout the year.

**Distribution:** Oriental and Australian regions. Also found in remote oceanic islands probably carried by air currents.
40. Senegal Golden Dartlet (*Ischnura senegalensis*)

**Size:**  
- **Male:** Abdomen: 21-23mm, Hindwing: 13-15mm.  
- **Female:** Abdomen: 20-24mm, Hindwing: 14-16mm

**Description:** A small pale green damselfly with black and yellow thoracic stripes. Abdomen is yellow and has basal and terminal blue spots.  
- **Male:** Eyes: Upper side black; underside pale green to yellow. Two bright blue spot present behind the eyes.  
- **Thorax:** Bronze backed with pale green sides and yellow underside. Narrow stripe on sides is pale green to bright yellow bordered by a broad black band.  
- **Legs:** Black, with yellow or pale green outer surface. The legs are covered short black spines.  
- **Wings:** Transparent.  
- **Wing spot:** Diamond shaped and black in forewing and dull white in the hindwing.  
- **Abdomen:** The first segment is pale green and the second is azure blue with steel blue black on upper side. The segments 3-7 are bright yellow with black upper side. The eighth and ninth segments are azure blue with black upper side. The last segment has black upper side and yellow on sides.  
- **Female:** Less brightly coloured than the male. The eyes and spots behind the head are paler. The thorax has pale green stripe and brown band instead of yellow stripe and black band of male. The legs and abdomen are pale brown with black stripes. The abdomen lacks blue markings found in males.  

**Habits and Habitat:** Very common in marshes, ponds and wet grasslands.  

**Breeding:** Breeds in marshes and ponds.  

**Flight season:** Not known.  

**Distribution:** Ethiopian and Oriental region. In the Western Ghats it is reported up to an altitude of 2300m ASL.
41. Blue Grass Dartlet (*Pseudagrion microcephalum*)

**Size:** Male: Abdomen: 27mm, Hindwing: 17mm. Female: Abdomen: 29mm, Hindwing: 20mm.

42. Yellow-striped Blue Dart (*Pseudagrion indicum*)

**Size:**
- **Male:** Abdomen: 34mm, Hind wing: 22mm.
- **Female:** Abdomen: 32mm, Hind wing: 22mm.

**Description:**
A medium sized blue damselfly with black and yellow thoracic stripes. **Male:** Eyes: Black above, greenish on sides and beneath. **Thorax:** Azure blue with broad black medial. On the sides, it is azure blue with greenish yellow stripe and a narrow black stripe. Rest of the thorax is azure blue with two black spots towards poster end. **Wings:** Transparent. **Legs:** Pale azure blue and the outer surface of femora have a black band. **Wing spot:** Pale yellow. **Abdomen:** Azure blue. Second segment has a broad ‘V’ shaped mark. The segment 3-7 has a broad black stripe above. The segment 8 and 9 are azure blue, with broad apical black rings. The 10th segment is black above. **Female:** Eyes: Emerald green above with or without a small black cap. **Thorax:** Grass green above and pale yellowish green on sides. This is marked with three fine black parallel lines above and a fine black line on sides. **Wings:** Transparent. **Wing spot:** Pale brown. **Abdomen:** The segments 1-7 are similar to males. However, the 8 and 9th segments are black with a fine blue ring towards the end, and the 10th segment is black. **Habits and Habitat:** Found in pools associated with hill streams. Usually perches on dry twigs near streams. **Breeding:** Marshes associated with hill streams. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Endemic to the Western Ghats. This species is known from Chikmagalur, Kodagu (Karnataka) and Nilgiri (Tamil Nadu) districts.
43. Saffron-faced Blue Dart (*Pseudagrion rubriceps*)

**Size:** Male: Abdomen: 29mm, Hind wing: 18-20mm. Female: Abdomen: 29mm, Hind wing: 21mm.

**Description:** A medium sized blue damselfly with characteristic bright orange face. **Male:** Eyes: Olivaceous green above, bright orange below and bluish beneath. **Thorax:** Olivaceous green with azure blue sides. Median fine black line with broad black parallel line present on each side. On sides, a fine black line is present and the under side is white. **Wings:** Transparent. **Legs:** Yellow. Femora black on outer and rear surfaces. **Wing spot:** Reddish brown. **Abdomen:** The segment 1-2 is olivaceous green above and azure blue on sides. The segment 3-7 is black, bronzed green above. The 8th segment has a broad black cone above and the 9th and 10th segments are azure blue. **Female:** The face is rusty brown. **Eyes:** Dark blue above, azure blue below. **Thorax:** Markings similar to male but the colour is dull bluish green. **Abdomen:** The markings above the segments broader than in males. The mark on 8th segment extends the whole length of the segment and 9th segment has basal forked markings above. **Habits and Habitat:** Frequents banks of large rivers. Usually perches on aquatic plants on the bank and is seen in small groups of 3-4 individuals. **Breeding:** Breed in marshes along the river bank. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Oriental region.
Bush Darts are small, slender damselflies. They are predominantly black damselflies with blue, red or yellow markings. The narrow, transparent wings are rounded at the tip. Abdomen is longer than the hindwing. Bush Darts are found only in Old World and 197 species are known from this region. Within Indian limits 30 species are known. Only two species are known from peninsular India and the rest of the species are found in the eastern Himalayas. Bush darts breed in small mountain streams and adults usually dart among riparian vegetation. Newly emerged Bush Darts are conspicuously white and without any marking.
44. Blue Bush Dart (*Copera vittata*)

**Size:** *Male*: Abdomen: 28-34mm, Hindwing: 16-18mm. *Female*: Abdomen: 28-30mm, Hindwing: 18mm

**Description:** A black band extend from eye to eye. *Male*: **Eyes**: Black cap above, olivaceous green below with a black equatorial belt. **Thorax**: Black above, chocolate brown on sides with a few coarse yellow spots. A narrow yellow stripe beneath continuous as bluish or yellowish in front. Underside of the thorax is yellow. **Legs**: Reddish yellow. **Wings**: Transparent. **Wing spot**: Reddish brown. **Abdomen**: Black above. The segments one and two reddish yellow. Pale blue rings at the front end of segments 3-7. The segment 9 has a blue spot and segment 10 is entirely blue. *Female*: **Eyes**: Dark brown cap above with pale apple green below. The black equatorial belt present as in males. **Thorax**: Pale brown and marked similar to males. **Wings**: Transparent. **Wing spot**: Blackish brown. **Legs**: Yellow. **Abdomen**: Pale brown with dark purplish black. Segments 1-2 pale yellowish brown. Segment 3-7 with pale brown anterior rings. The 9th segment has a broad pale brown T-shaped mark. Segment 10 is pale brown.

**Habits and Habitat:** Found along ponds, puddles, canals and streams. Flies very close to the ground (<1m). **Breeding:** Breeds in shallow water collections, such as rainwater puddles and backwaters of streams. **Flight season:** August-November. **Distribution:** Throughout the Oriental region.
45. Yellow Bush Dart (*Copera marginipes*)

**Size:** Male: Abdomen: 28-31mm, Hindwing: 16-18mm. Female: Abdomen: 29-30mm, Hindwing: 20mm.

**Description:** A black band extend from eye to eye. Male: Eyes: Black above, greenish on sides and beneath with black equatorial band. Thorax: Bronze black with fine yellow lines on sides. The stripe on sides is narrow and pale greenish yellow. Legs: Bright yellowish orange. Wings: Transparent. Wing spot: Brown. Abdomen: Bronzed black above. Segment 3-6 with a pale stripe along the side and a narrow pale greenish white ring at the end of each segment. Female: Ground colour is dark and of varying shades of brown. Eyes: Similar to the male but has a brown cap. Thorax: Ground colour is brown. The black stripe above is similar to that of males and black stripe on sides is irregular. Legs: Brownish. Wings: Transparent. Wing spot: Pale brown. Abdomen: Brown above with broad rings towards the end. Half of 8th segment and the whole of 9-10th segments pale brownish white. Habitat: Found along ponds, puddles, canals and streams. Flies very close to the ground (<1m). Breeding: Breeds in shallow water collections, such as rainwater puddles and backwaters of streams. Flight season: August-November. Distribution: Oriental region.
Reedtails are small black or brown damselflies marked with white, blue or, rarely, iridescent markings. Transparent wings are slightly pointed at the tip. Abdomen is very long and twice or more than twice the length of the hindwing. Reed Tails are found in tropical Old and New World. 142 species are known world wide. Within Indian region 13 species are known, of which 8 are found in the Western Ghats. Reed Tails are exclusively found in forested streams and they breed in them.
46. Pied Reedtail (*Protosticta gravelyi*)

**Size:** 
*Male:* Abdomen: 46-49mm, Hindwing: 20-22mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 33-35mm, Hindwing: 19-23mm

**Description:**

*Male:* 
**Eyes:** Dark bottle green, fading to pale greenish beneath. 
**Thorax:** Glossy black, marked with broad diagonal creamy white stripe, extending from middle and hind pair of legs. 
**Legs:** Creamy white. 
**Wings:** Transparent. 
**Wing spot:** Black. 
**Abdomen:** Black, marked with creamy white rings at the end of segments 3-7. The sides of first and second segment and basal half of 8th segments are turquoise blue. The 9th and 10th segments are unmarked. 

*Female:* Very similar to male, but abdomen is short. 
**Eyes:** With an ill defined white spot on the outer side. 
**Abdomen:** Turquoise blue marking on segment 8 of male is replaced by white spot. 

**Habits and Habitat:** 
Occurs in heavily shaded hill streams. Found among rocks and ferns in streams. It flies in short jerks holding the abdomen rigid and horizontal. In dark forest understorey, the species appears like a chain of darting white dots. 

**Breeding:** 
Heavily shaded hill streams. 
**Flight season:** May-June and again in September-October. 
**Distribution:** Endemic to the Western Ghats. Does not occur north of Sharavathi Valley.
BAMBOOTAILS
(FAMILY: PROTONEURIDAE)

Bambootails are small to medium sized slender damselflies. They are usually black coloured and marked with blue, red, yellow or rarely iridescent. Wings are transparent and rounded or pointed at the tip. Abdomen is long and never twice the length of the hindwing. Bamboo Tails are highly diverse family with 244 known species. Within Indian limits 24 species are known of which 15 are found in peninsular India. All the species breed in running waters and they are restricted to forested landscapes.

Nilgiri Bambootail

Head and thorax of Nilgiri Bambootail
47. Black Bambootail (*Prodasineura verticalis*)

**Size:** Male: Abdomen: 29mm, Hindwing: 19mm. Female: Abdomen: 30mm, Hindwing: 20mm.

**Description:** A medium sized black damselfly with blood red thoracic stripes. 

**Male:**  
**Eyes:** Velvety black on upper side coral red below. **Thorax:** Velvety black with two diagonal brick red stripes on sides. Under side yellowish. **Legs:** Black. **Wings:** Transparent. **Wing spot:** Dark reddish brown. **Abdomen:** Black with yellow basal spots from segments 3-7. The first segment has a small spot on each side and the second segment has a narrow yellow border below.

**Female:** Similar to the male and the bright red markings of male are largely replaced by pale yellowish white. **Habits and Habitat:** Found along the banks of large ponds and rivers, usually sitting among emergent water plants. **Breeding:** Not known. **Flight season:** August-December. **Distribution:** Western Ghats, Northeast India extending to Southeast Asia.
48. Black-winged Bambootail (Disparoneura quadrimaculata)


Description: A medium sized brick red damselfly with black banded wing. Male: Eyes: Brick red with two equatorial black stripes. Thorax: Bright brick red above, paler on sides. A black narrow stripe above and incomplete or broken stripes are present on sides. Legs: Pale brown, Femora, Speckled with black. Wings: Transparent with broad blackish brown bands in the centre. Wing spot: Rusty brown. Abdomen: Brick red. The first segment is black above and the second segment has a large black ring above. The base of segments 3-6 has a pair of small whitish spots above. A narrow pale stripe on each side and a broad black ring towards the end is present. The segments 7-9 is black and the 10th segment is reddish. Female: Differ drastically from male. Thorax: The thorax is black above. The side is olivaceous green shaded with ochrous and black as in the male. Legs: Pale reddish brown. Wings: Transparent and without broad brownish black bands. Occasionally edges of the wings are smoky brown. Abdomen: Pale olivaceous with rusty brown above, which is marked and shaded with black and brown. Habits and Habitat: Streams and rivers. Perches on emergent boulders and aquatic plants. Breeding: Not known. Flight season: August-December. Distribution: Western Ghats, Bihar, West Bengal, Delhi and Rajasthan.
49. Nilgiri Bambootail *(Esme longistyla)*

**Size:** *Male:* Abdomen: 44mm, Hindwing: 28-29mm. **Female:** Abdomen: 42-43mm, Hindwing: 28mm.

**Description:** A large blue damselfly with black thoracic stripes. **Male:** Eyes: Sky blue, capped with black. **Thorax:** Black above with narrow blue stripes. Azure blue on sides with a diagonal black stripe. Under side is greenish yellow or blue. **Legs:** Black. **Wings:** Transparent. **Wing spot:** Black and rhomboidal in shape. **Abdomen:** Long and slender. The first and segments 8-10 azure blue. The second segment is black with broad irregular azure blue stripe on sides. The segments 3-7 is black with azure blue rings at the end of each segment. **Female:** Very similar to male.

**Habits and Habitat:** Shaded forest streams. Perches on overhanging vegetation. **Breeding:** Breeds in forest streams. **Flight season:** May-November. **Distribution:** Endemic to Western Ghats from north of the Palghat gap to South Kannada.
50. Myristica Bambootail (Phylloneura westermanni)

Size: Male: Abdomen: 41-51mm, Hindwing: 28-37mm. Female: Abdomen: 45-46mm, Hindwing: 33-35mm


Abdomen: Black with blue markings. The first segment is broadly blue on sides and second segment has blue broader on underside. The segments 3-5 has narrow blue basal rings. The apical half of 7th segment is azure blue. The 8th and 9th segments are entirely azure blue.

Female: Very similar to the male, however, the 8th and 9th abdominal segments have large triangular blue spots above.


Distribution: This rare damselfly is endemic to the Western Ghats between the Nilgiris and Sharavathi Valley.
SPREADWINGS (FAMILY: LESTIDAE)

Spreadwings are small to medium sized damselflies with iridescent or non-iridescent markings on head, thorax and abdomen. Spreadwings rest with their wings wide open. The abdomen is long and slender. Spreadwings are found throughout the world and 159 species are known. Indian fauna is represented by 25 species of which 8 are recorded from peninsular India. Spreadwings breed in a variety of aquatic habitats like marshes, ponds and rarely in running waters.
51. Emerald Spreadwing (*Lestes elatus*)

**Size:**  
*Male:* Abdomen: 34-36mm, Hindwing: 23-24mm.  
*Female:* Abdomen: 34mm, Hindwing: 24mm.

**Description:** A medium sized brown damselfly with narrow iridescent green thoracic stripes.  
*Male:*  
Eyes: Brown above, turquoise blue below.  
Thorax: Dark brown above, fading to white below. Upper side marked with a pair of narrow iridescent green stripes.  
Legs: Pale greenish brown.  
Wings: Transparent.  
Wing spot: Black.  
Abdomen: Pale bluish green on sides. Upper side is iridescent green or bronze, changing to dull black on terminal segments.  
*Female:* Similar to male, but the ground colour is pale brown and markings are less iridescent.  

**Habits and Habitat:** Common around tanks, ponds and streams. Usually sits with open wings among plants. Though a weak flier, it is very alert and difficult to approach.  
**Breeding:** Breed in ponds, canals and tanks.  
**Flight season:** Throughout the year, however very abundant during September-December months in grasslands.  
**Distribution:** Peninsular India and Sri Lanka.
52. Malabar Spreadwing (*Lestes malabarica*)

**Size:** Male: Abdomen: 24-25mm, Hindwing: 21mm. Female: Abdomen: 32-33mm, Hindwing: 22-23mm.

**Description:** A small brown damselfly with broad iridescent green thoracic stripes. Male: Eyes: Torquoise blue, paler beneath. Thorax: Bright iridescent green above. Sides of the thorax black. A dark brown stripe is present medially and on sides. Underside is black covered by pruinescence. Legs: Yellowish with a parallel pair of black stripes on outer sides of femora. Wings: Transparent and smoky. Wing spot: Black. Abdomen: Sides azure blue, dull iridescent green above. The segments 3-6 have a narrow basal ring of blue and pale yellow ring. Remaining terminal segments are black. Female: Very similar to male, however the ground colour more greenish. The sides of the thorax brown with five black spots. The abdomen is dull coppery above upto segment 6, then dull black. The 6th segment partially, the sides of 9th and entire 10th segment is yellow. Habits and Habitat: Makes short flight among bushes. Rarely flies above 1m. Perches on dry twigs with open wings, and slowly waging its tail. Breeding: Tanks and ponds. Flight season: May-June. Distribution: Western Ghats, Andaman Islands and Chandigarh. Coinciding with south west monsoon there appears to be local migration which is not clearly known.
GLORIES
(FAMILY: CALOPTERYGIDAE)

Glories are large damselflies with broad head and conspicuous round eyes. These iridescent coloured damselflies have broad rounded hindwing. Wings are transparent, amber or iridescent coloured. Abdomen is longer than the hindwing. Glories are found in temperate and tropical regions. Worldwide 169 species are known. Within Indian limits 10 species are known of which 3 species are found in peninsular India. Glories are associated with forested streams and they breed in them.

Male Stream Glory flashing its wings

Head and thorax of Forest Glory
53. Stream Glory (*Neurobasis chinensis*)

**Size:** *Male*: Abdomen: 45-50mm, Hind wing: 32-38mm. *Female*: Abdomen: 44-50mm, Hind wing: 36-40mm.

**Description:** *Male*: **Eyes**: Blackish brown above, bluish white below. **Thorax**: Iridescent green with a coppery wash. **Legs**: Long and lanky legs are dark bronze with white outer stripe. **Wings**: Rounded at tips. Forewings transparent, tinted with pale yellowish green with emerald green venation. Hindwings opaque, basal two thirds iridescent green or peacock blue. Apical half is blackish brown with violet reflections and green iridescent veins. Underside of hindwing uniformly blackish brown with dull golden reflections. **Wing spot**: Absent in all wings. **Abdomen**: Iridescent green above and on sides, Underside black. The 9th and 10th segments are whitish. *Female*: **Eyes**: Brownish above, yellowish white below. **Thorax**: Similar to males. **Legs**: Similar to males. **Wings**: Transparent and amber coloured. All wings have a round creamy white central opaque spot on the edge of the wing. **Wing spot**: Absent in forewings and creamy white in hindwings. **Abdomen**: Dull iridescent green above and black below. Green metallic stripe on sides in all segments bordered with black. **Habits and Habitat**: Common in hill streams upto an altitude of 2250m. Commonly found between 500-1200m. Perches on emergent boulders and fallen logs in streams. Males flash its iridescent green marking of hind wing immediately after alighting. **Breeding**: Female lays eggs on submerged decaying logs in streams during southwest monsoon. **Flight season**: May to November. **Distribution**: Throughout forested landscapes of Oriental region.
54. Clear-winged Forest Glory (*Vestalis gracilis*)

**Size:**  
*Male*: Abdomen: 45-46mm, Hindwing: 34-38mm. *Female*: Abdomen: 43-50mm, Hindwing: 36-39mm

**Description:** A large iridescent green damselfly with transparent wings.  
*Male*:  
**Eyes:** Dark brown above, greenish yellow below.  
**Thorax:** Iridescent emerald green above, yellowish beneath.  
**Legs:** Pale to dark brown.  
**Wings:** Transparent with a blue sheen.  
**Wingspot:** Absent.  
**Abdomen:** Iridescent green or blue above and black beneath.  

*Female:*  
Resembles males in colour and markings. However, the abdomen is dull iridescent green.  
**Habits and Habitat:** Commonly found along hill streams. Large numbers usually rest among bushes in forest paths in association with Black-tipped Forest Glory.  
**Breeding:** In forest streams.  
**Flight season:** May to November.  
**Distribution:** Throughout Oriental region.
55. Black-tipped Forest Glory (*Vestalis apicalis*)

**Size:** *Male:* Abdomen: 49-55mm, Hindwing: 36-39mm. *Female:* Abdomen: 46-50mm, Hindwing: 38-40mm.

**Description:** *Male:*
- **Eyes:** Blackish brown above, yellowish white below. **Thorax:** Metallic green above and on sides. The underside is yellowish white.
- **Legs:** Blackish brown. **Wings:** transparent with amber tint and blue sheen. Wing tips blackish brown. **Wingspot:** Absent
- **Abdomen:** Iridescent green or blue, black underneath. **Female:** Resembles the male. The black markings on wing tips are paler and less sharply defined. Abdomen is less iridescent green and more coppery.

**Habits and Habitat:** Commonly found along hill streams. Large numbers usually rest among bushes in forest paths in association with Clear-winged Forest Glory. **Breeding:** Breeds in forest streams. **Flight season:** May to November. **Distribution:** Forested areas of Oriental region.

![Black-tipped Forest Glory](Photo:E.Kunhikrishnan)
STREAM JEWELS
(FAMILY: CHLOROCYPHIDAE)

Stream Jewels are small damselflies with large bulb-like eyes and a protruding face. Thorax is short and stout. The wings are transparent, iridescent in males and transparent in females. Abdomen is cylindrical and shorter than the hindwing. Stream Jewels are restricted to the Old World with 158 known species. Indian fauna is represented by 20 species, of which 3 are found in peninsular India. Stream Jewels are associated with forested streams and they breed in them.
56. Stream Ruby (*Rhinocypha bisignata*)

**Size:** Male: Abdomen: 20mm, Hindwing: 24-26mm. Female: Abdomen: 16mm, Hindwing: 22mm

**Description:** A small black and red damselfly with red iridescent streaks on wings. **Male:** Eyes: Blackish brown. Thorax: Black thorax with two triangular orange-red spots. On sides, it has a narrow rusty stripe and below that another broken rusty stripe is also present. Legs: Black with white outer surface. **Wings:** Transparent and amber tinted. Forewings are tipped black with brilliant coppery sheen. Hindwings black tipped with two series of elongated brilliant iridescence. **Wing spot:** Black. **Abdomen:** Black, marked with yellow from segments 1-5. **Female:** Eyes: Brownish black above, bluish grey below. Thorax: Similar to male but orange red and rusty stripes more yellowish. Legs: Black with creamy white centres. **Wings:** Transparent, tinted with yellow. **Wing spot:** Black. **Abdomen:** Similar to male but dull coloured. **Habitat:** Very common in hill streams. Males are very conspicuous and hover over streams. Frequently sit on boulders and twigs. Females are more elusive. **Breeding:** Breeds in hill streams. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Hills of peninsular India.
57. River Heliodor (*Libellago lineata*)

**Size:** **Male:** *Abdomen:* 14-16mm, *Hindwing:* 15-18mm. **Female:** *Abdomen:* 13-17mm, *Hindwing:* 17-20mm

**Description:** A small black and yellow damselfly with black tipped transparent wing. **Male:**

**Eyes:** Dark brown above and grey below. **Thorax:** Black with yellow stripes above and on sides. **Legs:** Black with white outer surface. **Wings:** Transparent and amber tinted at the base. The tips of the forewings black. Hindwings shorter than fore wing. **Wingspot:** Absent in forewings, black in hind wings. **Abdomen:** Golden yellow with black dumb bell shaped markings above. The segments 8-10 are black. **Female:** **Eyes:** Brown above grey below. **Thorax:** Similar to male and markings more extensive and dull. **Legs:** Yellow, femora lined extensively with brown. **Wings:** Transparent with amber tint. **Wing spot:** Creamy white. Present in all wings. **Abdomen:** Yellow, with black markings. The first segment has a large square spot above. The segments 2-8 has a broad black patch above. This is bisected by a narrow yellow line, which extend to the 9th segment and the last segment is black. **Habitat:** Confined to hill streams and rivers of forested landscapes. Frequently sits in emergent water plants and overhanging bushes. **Breeding:** Breed in hill streams. **Flight season:** Throughout the year. **Distribution:** Oriental region.
TORRENT DARTS
(FAMILY: EUPHAEIDAE)

Torrent Darts are large damselflies with large round eyes. The wings are transparent, tinted or with iridescent markings. Forewings are long and narrow and hindwings broad and rounded. The hindwings are shorter than the forewings and abdomen. The abdomen is longer than the hindwings in males and shorter or of the same length in the females. Species of this family are found predominantly in the Oriental region. Worldwide 65 species are known. Within Indian limits, 19 species are recorded, of which 4 are found in peninsular India.
58. Nilgiri Torrent Dart (*Euphaea dispar*)

**Size:**
- **Male:** Abdomen: 39-47mm, Hind wing: 32-40mm, Fore wing: 35-42mm.
- **Female:** Abdomen: 35-38mm, Hind wing: 34-39mm

**Description:**
- **Male:**
  - **Eyes:** Black above, bluish grey below.
  - **Thorax:** Black, marked with bright orange red. Orange stripes on sides fused in front and behind to enclose a long oval black spot.
  - **Legs:** Bright yellow, outer surface of tibia and femora are reddish.
  - **Wings:** Transparent, smoky light brown tips of forewings tipped with blackish brown. Tips of hindwing broadly black.

  Though the tip appears black it is iridescent red on upper side and blue on lower side.
- **Wing spot:** Black.
- **Abdomen:** Bright orange red. Segment joints and apical end of segment 6 to the end black.
- **Female:**
  - **Thorax:** Markings similar to males. However the bright orange red of male is replaced by dull yellow.
  - **Legs:** Similar to male, but more blackish.
- **Wings:** Transparent and uniformly covered with brown. In old individuals the hindwing tip is brownish black.
- **Wing spot:** Black.
- **Abdomen:** Black, marked with bright yellow. The first segment is yellow, and segments 2-7 have longitudinal yellow stripes on either sides. The 8th and 9th segment is marked with black square spots on sides. The last segment is unmarked.

**Habits and Habitat:**
Found in streams flowing through evergreen forests. Males perch on boulders and dry twigs near streams. They fly up to riparian trees when disturbed. Males prominently display their copper red markings of forewings immediately after alighting.

**Breeding:**
Streams flowing through evergreen forest. **Flight season:** May-November.

**Distribution:**
Endemic to Western Ghats between Nilgiris and Udupi districts.
59. Malabar Torrent Dart (*Euphaea fraseri*)

**Size:**
- **Male:** Abdomen: 36-41mm, Hind wing: 29-35mm, Fore wing: 34-38mm.
- **Female:** Abdomen: 33-34mm, Hind wing: 31-33mm.

**Description:**
- **Male:**
  - **Eyes:** Dark brown above, pale brown below.
  - **Thorax:** Black with azure blue stripe above. The two stripes on sides are rusty and encloses an oval black spot. Underside is rusty.
  - **Legs:** Coral red. **Wings:** Transparent. Hindwings are markedly shorter than the forewings. Forewings are tipped with brown. Hindwings are broadly tipped with iridescent coppery above and blue below. **Wing spot:** Black. **Abdomen:** Upto segment 6 coral red. The 7th segment has black tip and remaining terminal segments are black.
- **Female:**
  - Similar to male, however the azure blue and red area of thorax and abdomen are replaced by dull yellow. **Eyes:** Dark brown above and bluish grey below. **Legs:** Greyish yellow. **Wings:** Transparent and covered with blackish brown. Hindwing without iridescent apices of males. **Wing spot:** Black. **Abdomen:** The segments 1-7 is black above and it is yellow on sides and below, with a black longitudinal stripe. The terminal segments are black with a yellow spot on segment 10.

**Habits and Habitat:**
Common in hill streams from about 90m-1000m. Males are very common and can be seen using same perch for days together. Females are rarer. Males open wings and prominently display the iridescent copper markings of the upperhind wing. **Breeding:** Breeds in hill streams and larvae can be collected throughout the year. **Flight season:** May to December. **Distribution:** Earlier thought to be endemic to the Western Ghats from Agastyamalai to Dakshin Kannada. But the author has recorded this species from the Eastern Ghats (Thalakonan falls of Thirupathi Hills and Nagarjunasagar Wildlife Sanctuary) also.
60. Black Torrent Dart *(Dysphaea ethela)*

**Size:** Male: *Abdomen:* 38mm, *Hindwing:* 33mm; Female: *Abdomen:* 32mm, *Hindwing:* 33mm.

**Description:** A large black damselfly with amber coloured wings.


**Habits and Habitat:** Torrential hill streams from 300-1000m ASL. This damselfly is rare and usually sits in the middle of streams on boulders or emergent twigs. If disturbed flies high up to riparian trees. **Breeding:** Not known. **Flight season:** June to December. **Distribution:** Western Ghats from Agastyamalai to Aghanashini river in Uttara Kannara district. This species is also known from the Eastern Ghats.
REFERENCES

For identification of odonates of the Indian subcontinent:

For updated Indian checklist and nomenclature:

For detailed odonate biology:

Websites
http://asia-dragonfly.net/
http://www.thaibugs.com
http://www.geocities.cpm/indianodonata/index.html
http://www.odonata.jp/index.html
http://www.bechly.de/index.html
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http://powell.colgate.edu/wda/dragonfly.html
Biotope: Refers to habitat in broad sense. See habitat.

Clutch: Complement of oocytes that mature together to produce a batch of eggs, which are usually laid together.

Conspecific: Belonging to the same species.

Courtship: A set of behavioural interactions between male and female that facilitates copulations; usually refers to displays by males.

Crepuscular: Active during twilight hours.

Dimorphism: Occurrence of two forms of individuals of a species.

Dispersal: Spatial displacement of individuals, that causes them to become further apart.

Diurnal: Active during day.

Ecosystem: Natural unit consisting of interacting living and non living parts.

Eclosion: See emergence.

Ectoparasite: Parasite living on the host. Also parasite and parasitoid.

Emergence: Events associated with emergence of adult from larva.

Endemic: Restricted to a particular geographic area.

Feeding: Behaviour that follows prey capture.

Flight season: Period of the year during which reproductively mature adults are active.

Foliate: Leaf like.

Foraging: Behaviour that increases the likelihood of prey capture.

Guarding: Behaviour of male when escorting a female and usually while she is ovipositing.

Habitat: Place where a given species or community lives.

Hyaline: Transparent, colourless.

Instar: Stage of larva between two successive moult. 
**Larva:** Development stage between egg and adult.

**Microhabitat:** Specific part of a habitat in which an individual is normally found during a specific stage of its life cycle or when performing a particular activity.

**Migration:** Spatial displacement of population from emergence site to a different habitat where reproduction ensues. Migration may be facultative or obligate and migrating individuals may or may not travel in aggregations.

**Monotypic:** Genus with only one species.

**Myristica swamps:** Patches of evergreen swamp forests dominated by species of nutmeg family (Myristicaceae).

**Nocturnal:** During night.

**Obelisk posture:** Position adopted by perching dragonflies with abdomen pointing vertically upward, usually when the sun is overhead.

**Ovipositor:** Extension of female genitalia involved in oviposition.

**Oviposition:** Act of laying eggs.

**Parasitism:** Interaction between species in which one species—the parasite—lives in or on the other species—the host—from which it is benefited; the host is not necessarily killed by the interaction.

**Parasitoid:** Larvae of insects which parasite other insects and kill host.

**Pruinescence:** Bloom on body surface, more often in males, caused by supracuticular pigment that reflects ultraviolet light.

**Riparian:** Along the bank of a river or lake.

**Site fidelity:** Duration of site residentiality.

**Tandem linkage:** Physical connection between male and female before copulation formed by male holding female by prothorax or head with his anal appendages.

**Wetland:** Ecosystems of fresh or brackish water with distinct set of plant and animal community. Ecosystems such as puddles, pools, ponds, tanks, lakes, reservoirs, canals, streams, rivers, marshes, paddy fields and estuaries are wetlands.

**Wheel position:** Copulation.
## CHECKLIST OF PENINSULAR INDIAN DRAGONFLIES AND DAMSELFIES

### Damselflies (Zygoptera)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI NO</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Name as in Fraser, 1933-36</th>
<th>Name as in Prasad &amp; Varshney, 1996</th>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Peters, 1981</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Selys, 1877</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Agriocnemis pieris</td>
<td>Agriocnemis pieris Laidlaw, 1919</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Archibasis mimetes</td>
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<td>Coenagrim dyeri</td>
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<td>Ceriagrion rubiae Laidlaw, 1916</td>
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<td>Enallagma parvum</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Ischnura delicata</td>
<td>Ischnura aurora (Brauer, 1865)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Chloroneura quadrimaculata</td>
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<td>Lestes patricia</td>
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<td>Neurobasis chinensis</td>
<td>Linnaeus, 1758</td>
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<td>VII Chlorocyphidae</td>
<td>Calocypha laidlawi</td>
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<td>Indophaea fraseri</td>
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<td>Dysphynea ethela</td>
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<td>Ictinus rapax</td>
<td>Rambur, 1842</td>
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<td>Macrogonphus annulatus</td>
<td>Selys, 1854</td>
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<td>Fraser, 1924</td>
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<td>Megalogomphus hannyngtoni</td>
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Megalogomphus superbus  
Merogomphus longistigma  
Microgomphus souteri  
Microgomphus torquatus  
Lamelligomphus acinaces  
Lamelligomphus malabarensis  
Lamelligomphus nilgiriensis  
Onychogomphus striatus  
Mesogomphus lineatus  

Aeshnidae  
Anaciaeschna jaspidea  
Anaciaeschna martini  
Anax guttatus  
Anax immaculifrons  
Anax parthenope  
Gynacantha hyalina  
Gynacantha millardi  

Cordulegasteridae  
Chlorogomphus campioni  
Chlorogomphus xanthoptera  

Cordulidae  
Epophthalmia frontalis  
Epophthalmia vittata  
Hemicordulia asiatica  
Idionyx burlyarenis  
Idionyx galeata  
Idionyx minima  
Idionyx nadganiensis  
Idiophya nilgiriensis  
Idionyx rhinoceroides  
Idionyx saffronata  
Idionyx travancorenensis  
Macromia annamallaiensis  
Macromia bellica  
Macromia cingulata  
Macromia ellisoni  
Macromia flavicincta  
Macromia flavoclorata  
Macromia ida  
Macromia indica  
Macromia irata  
Macromidia donaldi  

Libellulidae  
Acisoma panorpoides  
Aethriamanta brevipennis  
Barchydiplax sobrina  
Brachythemis contaminata  
Bradinopyga geminata  
Cratilla lineata  
Crocothemis servilia  

Check List

Macromia annamallaiensis  
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Macromia ellisoni  
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Barchydiplax sobrina  
Brachythemis contaminata  
Bradinopyga geminata  
Cratilla lineata  
Crocothemis servilia
Diplacodes lefebvrei Diplacodes lefebvrei (Rambur,1842)
Diplacodes nebulosa Diplacodes nebulosa (Fabricius,1793)
Diplacodes trivialis Diplacodes trivialis (Rambur,1842)
Amphithemis mariae Amphithemis mariae Laidlaw,1915
Hydrobasileus croceus Hydrobasileus croceus Brauer,1867
Hylaeothemis frushtorferi Hylaeothemis frushtorferi Fraser,1924
Indothemis caesia Indothemis carnatica (Fabr.,1798)
Indothemis limbata Indothemis limbata Campion,1923
Lathrecista asiatica Lathrecista asiatica (Fabr.,1798)
Macrodiplax cora Macrodiplax cora (Brauer,1867)
Neurothemis fulvia Neurothemis fulvia (Drury,1773)
Neurothemis intermedia Neurothemis intermedia (Ris,1919)
Neurothemis tullia Neurothemis tullia (Drury,1773)
Onychothemis testacea Onychothemis testacea Ris,1912
Orthetrum chrysis Orthetrum chrysis (Selys,1892)
Orthetrum chrysostigma Orthetrum luzonicum (Brauer,1868)
Orthetrum pruinosum Orthetrum pruinosum (Rambur,1842)
Orthetrum sabina Orthetrum sabina (Drury,1770)
Orthetrum triangulare Orthetrum triangulare (Selys,1878)
Palpopleura sexmaculata Palpopleura sexmaculata (Fabr.,1787)
Pantala flavescens Pantala flavescens (Fabr.,1798)
Potamarcha obscura Potamarcha congener (Rambur,1842)
Rhodothemis rufa Rhodothemis rufa (Rambur,1842)
Rhyothemis triangularis Rhyothemis triangularis Kirby,1889
Rhyothemis variegata Rhyothemis variegata (Linn.,1763)
Sympectrum fonscolombi Sympectrum fonscolombi (Selys,1840)
Sympectrum hypomelas (Selys,1844)
Tetraphemis platyptera Tetraphemis platyptera Selys,1878
Tholymis tillarga Tholymis tillarga (Fabr.,1798)
Tramea basilaris Tramea basilaris Kirby,1889
Tramea eurybia Selys,1878
Tramea limbata Tramea limbata (Rambur,1842)
Tramea virginia (Rambur,1842)
Trithemis aurora Trithemis aurora (Burmeister,1839)
Trithemis festiva Trithemis festiva (Rambur,1842)
Trithemis kirbyi Trithemis kirbyi Selys,1891
Trithemis pallidinervis Trithemis pallidinervis Selys,1889
Urothemis signata Urothemis signata (Rambur,1842)
Zygonyx iris Zygonyx malabaricus Fraser,1926
Zygonyx metallicus Fraser,1931
Zygonyx torrida Zygonyx torridus Fraser,1924
Zyxomma petiolatum Zyxomma petiolatum Rambur,1842

Note: 1.Species in bold are endemic to peninsular India.
2.Family and species level classification follows:


INDEX

Index to Common Names

Bambootail, Black 92
Bambootail, Black-winged 93
Bambootail, Myristica 95
Bambootail, Nilgiri 94
Bambootails 91
Blood Tail, Asiatic 56
Bush Dart, Blue 87
Bush Dart, Yellow 88
Bush Darts, 86
Clubtail, Syrandiri 38
Clubtails 37
Clubtails, Marsh 39
Could Wing, Coral-tailed 68
Darnar, Blue 43
Darnar, Blue-tailed Green 42
Darnar, Brown 44
Darnar, Parakeet 45
Darnar, Rusty 41
Darners, 40
Dart, Saffron-faced Blue 85
Dart, Yellow-striped Blue 84
Dartlet, Blue Grass 83
Dartlet, Golden 81
Dartlet, Pigmy 77
Dartlet, Senegal Golden 82
Ditch Jewel, 51
Forest Glory, Black-tipped 102
Forest Glory, Clear-winged 101
Forest Hawk, Blue-tailed 60
Forest Skimmer, Fulvous 57
Glider, Wandering 64
Glories, 99
Granite Ghost, 52
Hawk, Brown Dusk 74
Heliodor, River 105
Marsh Dart, Coromandel 79
Marsh Dart, Orange-tailed 78
Marsh Dart, Rusty 80
Marsh Darts, 76
Marsh Glider, Crimson 71
Marsh Glider, Long-legged 73
Marsh Hawk, Blue 61
Marsh Hawk, Crimson-tailed 62
Marsh Hawk, Green 59
Marsh Hawk, Scarlet 50
Marsh Skimmer, Ruddy 54
Marsh Trotter, Black 70
Marsh Trotter, Red 69
Mountain Hawk, Nilgiri 47
Mountain Hawks 46
Picture Hawk, Black-tipped 102
Picture Hawk, Clear-winged 101
Picture Hawk, Blue-tailed 63
Picture Hawk, Ground 55
Picture Hawk, Pied Paddy 58
Picture Hawk, Pigmy 67
Picture Hawk, Yellow-tailed Ashy 65
Picture Hawks 48
Spreadwing, Emerald 97
Spreadwing, Malabarian 98
Spreadwings 96
Stream Glider, Black 72
Stream Glory, 100
Stream Jewels, 103
Torrent Dart, Black 109
Torrent Dart, Malabarian 108
Torrent Dart, Nilgiri 107
Torrent Darts, 106
Trumpet Tail, 49

Index to Scientific Names

Acisoma panorpoides, 49
Aeshnidae, 40
Aethriamanta brevipennis, 50
Agriocnemis pygmea, 77
Anaciaeschna jaspidea, 41
Anax guttatus, 42
Anax immaculifrons, 43
Brachythemis contaminata, 51
Bradinopyga geminate, 52
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calopterygidae</td>
<td>Ceriagrion cerinorubellum</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ceriagrion coromandelianum</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ceriagrion olivaceum</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorocyphidae</td>
<td></td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlorogomphus campioni</td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coenagrionidae</td>
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<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copera marginipes</td>
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<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copera vittata</td>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordulegasteridae</td>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cratilla lineata</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crocothemis servilia</td>
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<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davidioides martini</td>
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<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplacodes trivialis</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disparoneura quadrimaculata</td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysphaea ethela</td>
<td></td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esme longistyla</td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphæa dispar</td>
<td></td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphæa fraseri</td>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphæidae</td>
<td></td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gomphidae</td>
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<td>Gynacantha bayadera</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Gynacantha dravida</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ictinogomphus rapax</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ischnura aurora</td>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ischnura senegalensis</td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lathrecista asiatica</td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lestes elatus</td>
<td></td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lestes malabarica</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Libellago lineata</td>
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<td>Libellulidae</td>
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<td>Neurobasis chinensis</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Neurothemis fulvia</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
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<td>Neurothemis tullia</td>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthetrum glaucum</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthetrum pruinosum</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthetrum sabina</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthetrum triangulare</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palpopleura sexmaculata</td>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pantala flavescens</td>
<td></td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phylloneura westermannii</td>
<td></td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platycenemididae</td>
<td></td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platystictidae</td>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potamarcha congener</td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prodasineura verticalis</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protoneuridae</td>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protosticta gravelyi</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudagrion indicum</td>
<td></td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudagrion microcephalum</td>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudagrion rubriceps</td>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhinocypha bisignata</td>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhyothemis variegate</td>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetrathemis platyptera</td>
<td></td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tholymis tillarga</td>
<td></td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramea basilaris</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramea limbata</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trithemis aurora</td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trithemis festiva</td>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trithemis pallidinervis</td>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vestalis apicalis</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vestalis gracilis</td>
<td></td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zyxomma petiolatum</td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first photographic field guide to 60 peninsular Indian dragonflies and damselflies.

- English common names introduced to Indian dragonflies and damselflies for the first time.
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