

Damselfly and Dragonfly Identification Course

The first session of the Stepping Stones funded training was held on 14th June and focused on identification of damselflies. Led by Sue Rees-Evans, the Shropshire Odonata recorder, eight CWG members attended. After an introductory session at Natural England's Pennerley offices, the group moved to the grounds of Linley Hall. After a rather cool and cloudy spring we were fortunate to have bright sun and warm temperatures that brought out the damselflies in numbers.

Beautiful Demoiselles fluttered along the River West Onny, and Azure, Common Blue, Large Red and Blue-tailed damselflies were found along the leat feeding the lake or around the lake itself. For many of us this was the first time we had looked closely at these species with a hand lens or close-focus binoculars, and what stunning insects they proved to be. As an introduction to the next session, which will be on dragonflies, the final species spotted was a Black-tailed Skimmer.

The combination of an indoor session emphasising the features to look for and introducing the 12 species of damselfly occurring in Shropshire, with the outdoor session that enabled us to see the described features on the living insects, was most informative and raised participants' confidence.

The second session of this three part course will be on 10th August, again with a morning's introduction to the dragonflies that may be encountered in Shropshire and then a field visit to the various pools at The Bog. The final session on 4th October will explore ideas of how members of the CWGs can take the recording of damsel- and dragon-flies forward. To book your place use the links below.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/upper-onny-community-wildlife-group-identification-of-dragonflies-registration-302837774937>

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/upper-onny-community-wildlife-group-dragon-damselflies-what-next-registration-302848787877>

Our thanks to Stepping Stones for funding this course and to James and Diana Moores for allowing us to use the grounds of Linley Hall.