



Downy Emerald

Local Biodiversity Action Plan

DOWNY EMERALD (CORDULIA AENEA)



Ecology

Appearance

Measuring about 5cm in length, the downy emerald dragonfly is a medium sized dragonfly. It has a metallic greeny bronze sheen and its thorax is coated in fine hairs which makes it appear downy, this gives it its name. Males have a constricted waist and clubed abdomen.

Habitat

This species prefers woodlands near waterbodies like lakes and ponds.

Food

The adult downy emeralds feed on many species of invertebrate, whereas the larva probably feed on a range of macroinvertebrates.

Life Style

This species is very territorial, which could explain why very few individuals are seen at the same site.

The females spend more time foraging in the canopy and clearings.



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Copulation takes place away from water, usually amongst trees or bushes.

The female then deposits the eggs either straight into shallow water or into wet sphagnum moss or peat, in vegetation close to or floating on the water.

Current status

A local species in the British Isles, which is mainly concentrated south of the Thames but with scattered populations elsewhere. In Cheshire this dragonfly can only be found at Abbots Moss, Gull Pool and the narrow area of forest between where it appears to be increasing in number. There is an unconfirmed record for Little Budworth Common and old records for Wybunbury Moss and Pet-typool.

The larvae live amongst leaf litter in the bottom of ponds. The Cheshire population is unusual as seems to be breeding in the sphagnum edges of Abbots Moss, where there is little leaf litter. This is Cheshire's only 'emerald' dragonfly, and can quite easily be observed rapidly flying along the Whitegate Way at tree top height.

Threats

- * Removal of broad leaved trees from the south western side of Gull Pool
- * Any loss in water quality on the current sites.

How are we helping to conserve the Downy Emerald in the Cheshire region?

- * All records collated by the county recorder.
- * Ongoing monitoring at key sites.

Objectives, targets and actions

The objectives, targets and actions to help conserve the downy emerald in the Cheshire region can be found on the [Biodiversity Action Reporting System \(BARS\)](#) along with full details of our progress so far.



How to find out more about the Downy Emerald

Cheshire Dragonflies and Damselflies website - <http://www.brocross.com/dfly/dfly.htm>

British Dragonfly Society - www.british-dragonflies.org.uk

Contact details

LBAP Chair

Cheshire Wildlife Trust

Contact: 01948 820728

References and Glossary

Brooks S & Lewington R (1999): The Dragonflies and Damselflies of Great Britain and Ireland

Gabb R & Kitching D (1992): The Dragonflies and Damselflies of Cheshire. Liverpool Museum and Gallerie

<http://www.dragonflysoc.org.uk/mffcoenfull.htm>

<http://www.habitas.org.uk/dragonflyireland/5632.htm>

