

Swaziland's Odonata

Damselflies and Dragonflies



Checklist sources:

- SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist. Compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge. Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum, P O Box 4085, Durban, 4000 South Africa. (<http://www.ru.ac.za/static/departments/zoo/Martin/odonata.html>)
- Presence confirmed by photos by Kate Braun, A. Manson and G. Diedericks, Virtual Museum - Odonata of southern Africa. <http://vmus.adu.org.za/>
- Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Details and descriptions from Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Names as per South African Dragonflies (W. Tarboton), February 2013.
(<http://www.warwicktarboton.co.za/images/Dragonfly%20checklist.pdf>)

Photos to illustrate the checklist provided by Christopher K Willis, G Diedericks, J H Wilkinson, A Manson, Peter Webb, Felicity Grundlingh and Kate Braun, Virtual Museum - Odonata of southern Africa. <http://vmus.adu.org.za/>

This checklist includes a total of 83 species. Compiled by Kate Braun, updated June 2014.



Swaziland National Trust Commission
www.sntc.org.sz

Calopterygidae - Demoiselles

Phaon iridipennis

Glistening Demoiselle

Mlawula Nature Reserve, Mbuluzi Nature Reserve

Features: Very large, metallic greenish brown with large, rounded glistening wings which have dense and delicate net-like venation and small or absent pterostigmas. Wooded streams East of Drakensberg escarpment.

Distribution: Eastern Cape Province, then North along the coastal plain, up to 800 m a.s.l. To Central Africa and Madagascar.

Body length: 69-70 mm **Hindwing length:** 37-38 mm

Habitat: Among bushes and trees, especially with a tangle of dead twigs at or near swift streams or rivers. Occasionally in deep forest up to 1 km from water.

Behaviour: Rarely seen in flight, unless disturbed, when its iridescent wings are striking. Normally rests horizontally along dead twig.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.



Photos: Christopher K Willis

Photo: Kate Braun

Chlorocyphidae - Jewels

Platycypha caligata

Dancing Jewel

Mlawula Nature Reserve, Pine Valley, Maphalaleni Valley

Features: Small, stocky, colourful thorax, orange, red and black, abdomen brilliant blue, legs leaf-like and bright red and white. Swift, rocky, bush-lined streams and rivers East of Drakensberg.

Distribution: Common along eastern seaboard and lowveld, with records from Eastern Cape Province and interior, 100-800 m a.s.l. Occasionally to 1500 m a.s.l. To Angola and Ethiopia.

Body length: 31-33 mm **Hindwing length:** 21.5-22 mm

Habitat: Bush-lined or tree-lined, shallow, rocky, permanent streams and rivers. Sometimes river pools and also open streams with tall grass margins.



Behaviour: Mostly resting on boulders, twigs or leaf blades in/over the water. Flight short and bee-like. Has an elaborate court ship dance where the male hovers in front of the resting female, with legs dangling and waving, with the white very conspicuous.

Flight period: December to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Synlestidae - Malachites

Chlorolestes fasciatus

Mountain Malachite

Pine Valley

Features: Fairly large to large, metallic green with pale yellow markings and usually with strongly black and white banded wings. Young individuals are bright metallic green, which darkens with age to shiny copper in very old individuals. Common in all montane areas of South Africa, except W of Western Cape Province.

Distribution: Common between 1200-1800 m a.s.l. (but almost to sea level at Umtamvuna, and up to 2400 m a.s.l. in Southern Drakensberg). Western Cape Province (rare), Eastern Cape Province, FSP, KwaZulu Natal, Lesotho, Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

Body length: 51-54 mm **Hindwing length:** 29-30 mm

Habitat: Streams and small rivers with pools and abundance of tall grass, reeds and small bushes over the water. In the north, occasionally in forested areas.



Photo: Christopher K Willis



Photo: Kate Braun

Behaviour: Mostly at rest, wings outstretched on vegetation over water. Banded winged males vigorously territorial, actively chasing unbanded males away. Banded males space themselves along water's edge.

Flight period: December to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Chlorolestes tessellatus
Forest Malachite

Possibly found in Swaziland

Features: Fairly large, slender, dull metallic green, with indistinct straw-coloured thoracic markings, and in Eastern Cape Province and occasionally KwaZulu Natal, with black and white, banded wings. Clear, bushy or forested streams at moderate elevations through most of South Africa lowmontane areas.

Distribution: Western Cape Province (rare), Eastern Cape Province, KwaZulu Natal Midlands, Mpumalanga highveld and Limpopo (Soutpansberg).

Body length: 54 mm **Hindwing length:** 30.5-31.5 mm

Habitat: Small, clear streams with pools in forests (mostly 400-1200 m a.s.l., although occasionally sea level).

Behaviour: Highly camouflaged when it is clear-winged, but very conspicuous in its banded form, and highly territorial. Hangs from twigs or stems under bushes or trees, becoming more conspicuous when it moves into a sunfleck.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photo: Christopher K Willis



Lestidae - Spreadwings

Lestes pallidus

Pallid Spreadwing

Features: Medium-sized, very variable in patterning and colour, inconspicuous greyish, striped with light blue eyes. Shallowpools in warmer parts of South Africa.

Distribution: FSP, Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal (especially north coastal), Mpumalanga lowveld, North West Province, Limpopo and one Eastern Cape Province record. Common in iSimangaliso Wetland Park and South of Kruger National Park. To Sudan and West Africa.

Body length: 40-42 mm **Hindwing length:** 22-23.5 mm

Habitat: Semi-permanent, shallow pools and pans, with short, emergent sedges and grasses, mostly in hot areas.

Behaviour: Hangs over and close to water surface, very still for long periods. Mating pairs common.



Flight period: November to April

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Lestes plagiatus**Common Spreadwing**

Features: Medium to fairly large, and highly variable in colour, although distinctly striped. Widespread at upland or montane pools, dams and sluggish reaches of rivers where there are margins of tall grass.

Distribution: At Umtamvuna almost to sea level. Elsewhere, mostly 700-1400 m a.s.l. throughout all South Africa, but rare in Western Cape Province. To East and West Africa.

Body length: 44-47 mm **Hindwing length:** 44-47 mm

Habitat: Grassy and bushy borders of dams, pools and sluggish reaches of rivers away from the coast.

Behaviour: Hangs from tall grass stems, sometimes in large numbers. Mating pairs common.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Photo: Alan Manson

Lestes tridens**Spotted Spreadwing**

Possibly found in Swaziland

Features: Small to medium, greyish green to greyish blue, with wavy 'oak leaf' dorsal band and dark spots and speckles. Pools and dams with grassy margins in warmer parts of South Africa.

Distribution: Localised, mostly below 200 m a.s.l. on northern KwaZulu Natal coast. Also Mpumalanga lowveld, and Limpopo. To East and West Africa.

Body length: 35-38 mm **Hindwing length:** 19-19.5 mm

Habitat: Grassy and bushy margins of pools, dams and waterholes in hot areas.

Behaviour: Hangs inactively from grass stems or twigs over water. Female often with male.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photo: G Diedericks



Lestes virgatus
Smoky Spreadwing

Pine Valley

Features: Fairly large, slender, dull metallic green, striped, and with strongly smoky wings. Localised at forest pools in moist areas of South Africa.

Distribution: Localised in all moist, forested areas of South Africa (but very rare in Western Cape Province) to about 1600 m a.s.l. To North and West Africa.

Body length: 45-49 mm **Hindwing length:** 26.5-27.5 mm

Habitat: Pools with tall grass, herbs and bushes, usually near trees or in forest. Occasionally shady streams.

Behaviour: Mostly among tall grass and herbs at pool edge, and occasionally away from water in forest. Populations appear and disappear often, as conditions change.

Flight period: November to May



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Kate Braun

Platycnemididae - Stream-damsels

Allocnemis leucosticta

Goldtail

Malolotja Nature Reserve

Features: Striking, slender, mostly black, with black and pale blue thorax, smoky wings, white pterostigmas and abdomen with golden tip.

Distribution: Endemic to South Africa, and in montane areas, rarely coastal forest, from Western Cape Province to Soutpansberg, but not yet recorded in the lowveld. Up to 2000ma.s.l.

Body length: 39-43 mm **Hindwing length:** 22.5-24 mm

Habitat: Clear, shallow, forest streams, or open streams with bushes and occasionally trees. These streams may only be a trickle.



Photo: Kate Braun



Behaviour: This strikingly coloured damselfly flits in sunflecks among branches overhanging streams, landing and perching in a conspicuous position. Its white pterostigmas are clearly visible in flight.

Flight period: September to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Mesocnemis singularis
Riverjack

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Fairly robust, heavily pruinescent pale blue, almost whitish, with short, brownish black pterostigmas. Perches mostly on reeds or grasses over swift reaches of savanna rivers.

Distribution: Localised in hot areas with wide, fast, shallow, rocky streams. Northern Cape Province, North West Province, Limpopo, northern KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga lowveld. To East and West Africa.

Body length: 41-42 mm **Hindwing length:** 26.5-27.5 mm

Habitat: Fast-moving, shallow streams or rivers in savanna or semiarid areas. May be confined to pools when water level drops.

Behaviour: Perches on reeds, sedges or grasses over flowing water, or on rocks in a glide. Female usually in association with male.

Flight period: December to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.



Photo: Kate Braun

Protoneuridae - Threadtails

Elatoneura glauca

Common Threadtail

Malotja and Nature Reserves, Pine Valley

Features: Small, slender, pale bluish grey and black. Sluggish reaches of rivers throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Abundant and widespread, but less common near the coast and in lowveld. Up to 1700 m a.s.l. To Kenya and D R Congo.

Body length: 34-35 mm **Hindwing length:** 18-18.5 mm

Habitat: Tall grass beside sluggish reaches of rivers, and occasionally pools, marshes and dams.



Behaviour: Reluctant to fly, mostly perching on grass stems. Flight slow and hovering for just a few centimetres.

Flight period: October to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun

Photos: Kate Braun

Coenagrionidae - Sprites

Ceriagrion glabrum

Common Citril

Mlawula and Mbuluzi Nature Reserves

Features: Medium-sized, all orange, with two, minute projections on S10. Pools, marshes, dams, sluggish reaches of streams in the open or in forest, at lower elevations throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Widespread in South Africa. Mostly low elevations, occasionally to 1000 m a.s.l. and warmer areas of highveld, but not the driest areas. To East and West Africa, also Madagascar, Seychelles and Mascarenes.

Body length: 39-41 mm **Hindwing length:** 20-20.5 mm

Habitat: Pools, marshes and sluggish reaches of rivers with an abundance of tall grass, sedges and reeds. Sometimes an open habitat, with trees nearby, or even in thick forest.

Behaviour: Rests and hovers among tall grass and other vegetation, sometimes many tens of metres from the water's edge. Female often with male, and mating pairs common.



Photo: Kate Braun



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Flight period: October to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Pseudagrion acaciae**Acacia Sprite***Mlawula Nature Reserve*

Features: Medium-sized, rusty-headed with light green back of head, and orangy red thorax with green, black-ringed

abdomen and blue tip. Swift, hot-savanna streams and rivers.

Distribution: Localised, below 300 m a.s.l. in the east. Northern Cape Province, northern KwaZulu Natal, becoming more abundant in Mpumalanga (Kruger National Park). To Tanzania.

Body length: 38-39 mm **Hindwing length:** 18.5-19 mm

Habitat: Swift, hot-savanna lowveld streams and rivers with grass fringes. Perches on emergent sticks and vegetation in main current.

Behaviour: Glides rapidly over and close to water surface when disturbed, regularly returning to favoured perch.

Flight period: November to May



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Pseudagrion caffrum
Springwater Sprite

Malotja Nature Reserve

Features: Small, dark blackish blue body, bright rusty red pterostigmas, no postocular spots and yellow face. Grassy, montane streams along all of the Drakensberg.

Distribution: Mostly 1400-2200 m a.s.l., and endemic to the Amatola-Winterberg, Eastern Cape Province, KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga Drakensberg.

Body length: 33-34 mm **Hindwing length:** 20.5 mm

Habitat: Small and shallow, rocky feeder streams with riffles, occasionally rivers, and with dense grass and sedge-covered banks in mountains.

Behaviour: Cryptic species that rests among grass and sedge stems close to and over water. Reluctant to fly. Female often with male.

Flight period: October to May



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun.

Photos: Kate Braun

Pseudagrion commoniae nigerrimum
Black Sprite

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Small to medium-sized, black with no postocular spots, a dull maroon face and with grey-tipped abdomen. Sluggish savanna streams and rivers.

Distribution: KwaZulu Natal (up to 700 m a.s.l.), Mpumalanga and Limpopo. To Ethiopia.

Body length: 33-38 mm **Hindwing length:** 18.5-23 mm

Habitat: Pools, water holes but mainly sluggish reaches of streams and rivers, even those that are highly turbid.

Behaviour: Rests, and flies reluctantly, among rushes and sedges at water's edge. Also perches close to water on emergent twigs.

Flight period: December to May



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Pseudagrion gamblesi
Gamble's Sprite

Possibly occurring in Swaziland

Features: Fairly large, greenish blue and black striped, with yellowish orange and black head and large light blue postocular spots, and blue or pruinescent whitish abdominal tip. Localised at reed-fringed, swift, rocky rivers in middle-elevation grassy savanna.

Distribution: Localised, northern KwaZulu Natal to South of Mpumalanga (700-1400 m a.s.l.). To Angola and D R Congo.

Body length: 45-46 mm **Hindwing length:** 27.5-28 mm

Habitat: Fast, rocky-bottomed rivers with quieter, reed-fringed pools in upland, grassy savanna.

Behaviour: Inactive, mostly resting on a reed stem overhanging water.

Flight period: October to April

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Pseudagrion hageni
Hagen's Sprite

Features: Small to medium-sized, slender, orangy red face. The northern form (*P. h. tropicanum*) has a light green and black striped thorax. Black abdomen with violet tip. Among tall grass at shaded pools and still reaches of streams and rivers at low elevations.

Distribution: Common throughout the warmer areas north of Port St Johns where there is clear water and deep shade, but most common at lower elevations on coast. To East and West Africa.

Body length: 36-43 mm **Hindwing length:** 21.5-23.5 mm

Habitat: Under tree cover, even in very dark locations. Sluggish parts of streams and rivers, seeps, bogs and lakes, with non-turbid water, some tall grass stems and shade.

Behaviour: Often conspicuous by its delicate, bright and contrasting colours as it flits and hovers in sunflecks over dark water.



Flight period: November to May
Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Pseudagrion hamoni
Hamon's Sprite

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Small to medium-sized, mostly maroon to blackish, contrasting colours, with thorax above very dark and light below, light patches between wings and multi-coloured abdomen. Perches conspicuously over slow-moving rivers in hot savanna.

Distribution: N of KwaZulu Natal Swaziland, Mpumalanga lowveld, Limpopo (1600 m a.s.l.). To East and West Africa.

Body length: 36-38 mm **Hindwing length:** 19.5-20 mm

Habitat: Usually sluggish reaches of hot savanna streams and rivers, even with very turbid water, but occasionally pools and dams.

Behaviour: Perches on tall grass over water or on emerging stems and lilies in water.

Flight period: November to May



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Pseudagrion kersteni
Kersten's Sprite

Mbuluzi and Mlawula Nature Reserves, Maphalaleni Valley

Features: Medium-sized, pruinescent powdery blue and black striped, with bold, blue postocular spots and black labrum. Tall grass-fringed streams and rivers throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Very common throughout much of South Africa 50-1600 m a.s.l., but rarely on coast. Throughout tropical Africa.

Body length: 38-41 mm **Hindwing length:** 20-21 mm

Habitat: Grass-, herb- and reedfringed, shallow, fairly fast streams and rivers.

Behaviour: Sits conspicuously on a reed or grass stem beside running water. Female mostly away from water in tall grass. All year, but scarce in winter.



Photo: Christopher K Willis



Photo: Kate Braun

Flight period: All year, but scarce in winter.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Pseudagrion massaicum
Masai Sprite

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Small, red-headed, vermilion red thorax, with bright blue pruinescent area between wing bases and cobalt blue abdominal tip. Stillwater throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Common throughout much of South Africa, but rarely above 1300 m a.s.l., except in Limpopo. To North Africa.

Body length: 31-35 mm **Hindwing length:** 16.5-20.5 mm

Habitat: Well-vegetated ponds, pools and sluggish reaches of rivers, with lilies, reeds and sedges, and an abundance of submerged water weed and floating algal mats.

Behaviour: Perches horizontally close to the water on lilies, grass stems and small twigs, and on floating algal mats, usually away from the margin.

Flight period: October to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun.



Photo: Kate Braun

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Pseudagrion salisburyense
Salisbury Sprite

Features: Small to medium-sized, all dark, slate blue, with greenish blue labrum, and two, round bright blue postocular spots and abdomen with bluish tip that later turns whitish. Reedfringed sluggish streams and rivers, and occasionally pools. Very common across much of South Africa.

Distribution: Very common throughout much of South Africa 200-1600 m a.s.l., although scarce in Western Cape Province. To Kenya.

Body length: 35-38 mm **Hindwing length:** 20.5-21 mm

Habitat: Mostly sluggish or still reaches of streams and rivers with an abundance of reeds, grasses and herbs. Common at reservoirs. Occasionally faster water, and also pools and water holes.

Behaviour: Inactive, resting mostly along reed blades overhanging water. Mating pairs common.

Flight period: Can fly all year, but scarce Jul-Aug.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Pseudagrion spernatum natalense
Natal Sprite

Features: Medium-sized, all dark, slate blue, but when mature with heavily pruinescent white powdery face and body, and with large roundish bright blue postocular spots. Grass fringed montane streams through most high-elevation areas.

Distribution: Widespread and abundant, 800-2000 m a.s.l. in mountains of Western Cape Province, Eastern Cape Province, KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga, although much rarer in Western Cape Province. Subspecies to Malawi. Other subspecies north to Ethiopia.

Body length: 38-43 mm **Hindwing length:** 23-26.5 mm

Habitat: Clear, fast-flowing montane streams and rivers with a rich growth of tall grass, reeds and herbs on the banks.

Behaviour: Conspicuous in its powdery blue, perching along reed blades overhanging water. Female also very conspicuous, being bright blue when mature, and among males, close to the water.

Flight period: October to May, with some overwintering adults.



Photo: Peter Webb

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: G. Diedericks

Pseudagrion sublacteum**Cherry-eye Sprite***Mlawula Nature Reserve*

Features: Medium-sized, dark, red-faced, bright red-eyed, rusty to mauvish brown and dull black striped, with bright blue abdominal tip. Swift reaches of warm, savanna rivers.

Distribution: Central KwaZulu Natal (up to 700 m a.s.l.), Mpumalanga, Northern Cape Province. Namibia north to Central Africa, with different subspecies in West Africa, Arabia and Israel. Also Mayotte.

Body length: 37-41 mm **Hindwing length:** 21.5-22.5 mm

Habitat: Swift savanna rivers, with glides and riffles, and profusion of grass and herbs at margins.

Behaviour: Perches on algal mats, twigs, weeds and reeds, and occasionally boulders, in or next to fast-flowing water away from bank.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.



Photo: Kate Braun

Ischnura senegalensis
African Bluetail

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Small, hairy, brightly coloured, blue, greenish blue and shiny black, with blue and black pterostigmas and bright cobalt blue abdominal tip. Very common in pools and marshes.

Distribution: Very common throughout South Africa, up to 2000 m a.s.l. Throughout tropical Africa, Asia and Indian Ocean islands.

Body length: 29-30 mm **Hindwing length:** 14.5-15.5 mm

Habitat: Edges of pools, pans, dams, waterholes and marshy sectors of rivers. Can inhabit very stagnant habitats, and even slightly brackish conditions. Highly tolerant of disturbed conditions and may be present in very trampled waterholes.



Behaviour: Conspicuous as it flits and rests among reeds, sedges and grass in marshy areas. Mating pairs common.

Flight period: September to May, with occasional overwintering individuals.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Africallagma elongatum
Slender Bluet

Features: Small, very slender, striped, bright sky to cobalt blue and black, with large postocular spots and bright blue abdominal tip. Localised among tall grass in streams and pools at middle elevations in KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo.

Distribution: Very localised and not always present in same locality from one year to next. KwaZulu Natal (600-1200 m a.s.l.) and Limpopo. To Ethiopia.

Body length: 30 mm **Hindwing length:** 16.5-17 mm

Habitat: Tall grass and herbs in small streams and pools in bush of forest openings.

Behaviour: Conspicuous as it sits high on tall grass stems, gently waving its abdomen up and down and often engaging in territorial disputes.

Flight period: December to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Christopher K Willis



Africallagma glaucum
Swamp Bluet

Features: Very small to small, all sky blue and black, with no black marking on abdominal S8, which is all blue. Very common in marshy areas throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Common throughout South Africa from sea level to alpine zone of Drakensberg. To tropical Africa, and La Réunion.

Body length: 28-29 mm **Hindwing length:** 15.5-16.5 mm

Habitat: Pools, dams and still parts of streams and rivers where conditions are swampy and with an abundance of short grasses and sedges.

Behaviour: Glides swiftly across the water, close to the surface, frequently landing on an emergent grass blade, small stick or lily.

Flight period: Flies all year, but scarce in winter.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Christopher K Willis



Azuragrion nigridorsum
Black-Tailed Bluet

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Very small, bright blue and black with black patch on S8. Coastal pools in KwaZulu Natal and marshy margins of Cape rivers.

Distribution: Southern Cape coast, Eastern Cape Province and coastal, central and northern KwaZulu Natal to about 1200 m a.s.l. Other local South Africa records. To Ethiopia.

Body length: 25-26 mm **Hindwing length:** 15-16 mm

Habitat: Pools, vleis, and small lakes, usually fringed with bushes or trees, and with an abundance of grasses, sedges and lilies. Sometimes grassy margins of slow reaches of rivers.

Behaviour: Flies rapidly across water surface, frequently landing on single, emergent grass stems, or lily pads, often away from bank.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.

Photo: Kate Braun



Agriocnemis exilis**Little Wisp**

Features: Minute to very small, mostly shiny black with green face, fine green thoracic stripe and bright orange abdominal tip. Flooded pools thick with grasses and reeds in hot areas.

Distribution: Localised, Eastern Cape Province, KwaZulu Natal coastal plain, Limpopo, Swaziland. To Ethiopia and West Africa, also Madagascar and Mauritius.

Body length: 18-22 mm *Hindwing length:* 8.5-10 mm

Habitat: Flooded margins of open pools, dams and pans with an abundance of fairly short, reddish grass, sedges and reeds.

Behaviour: Rests, head upwards, on grass stems close to water. Cruises down low among the thick vegetation.

Flight period: December to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Felicity Grundlingh



Aeshnidae - Hawkers
Zosteraeschna minuscula
Friendly Hawker

Features: Large, striped and speckled greenish yellow and brownish with distinct blue saddle at base of abdomen. Hawks over reedy pools in many parts of South Africa.

Distribution: Most of South Africa, but only common in Eastern Cape Province and KwaZulu Natal Drakensberg. Records from Namibia.

Body length: 54-55 mm *Hindwing length:* 37-38 mm

Habitat: Small, open pools with abundance of fringing reeds. Occasionally marshes and pools along streams running through grassland. Mostly montane (up to 2000 m a.s.l.) but occasionally at sea level.

Behaviour: Hawks slowly up and down along margins of pools, often approaching closely, when its colour and pattern can be easily seen.

Flight period: November to May, most common in December.

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photo: A. Manson

Pinheyschna subpupillata
Stream Hawker

Features: Large, all green and brown striped, and spotted. Flies rapidly up and down wooded streams throughout all high montane areas.

Distribution: Throughout hilly to montane areas of South Africa (up to 2000 m a.s.l.), with records from Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Body length: 58-60 mm **Hindwing length:** 40-41 mm

Habitat: Forested or wooded, swift, montane streams and rivers.

Behaviour: Hawks rapidly up and down over flowing water, resting on bushes at edge.

Flight period: October to April

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Christopher K Willis



Anax ephippiger
Vagrant Emperor

Malotja Nature Reserve

Features: Large to very large, stout, dark brown and relatively unmarked, with very large blue abdominal saddle, and slightly to very smoky, pointed wings. Flooded grassy and marshy pools in warm areas.

Distribution: FSP, Gauteng, Eastern Cape Province, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu Natal Namibia. To Europe, Indian Ocean islands and West Asia.

Body length: 60-61 mm **Hindwing length:** 44-45 mm

Habitat: A wide-ranging migrant, it mates and breeds in shallow, flooded, grassy pools, often fringing larger pools.

Behaviour: Hawks rapidly and very close to water surface. Unlike other South Africa aeshnids, tandem pairs are common.

Flight period: November to April, but most common early summer.

Comments: Possible Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by G. Diedericks.

Photo: A. Manson



Anax imperator
Blue Emperor

Nisela

Features: Very large, bright blue and black. Hawks across pools and dams with abundance of fringing reeds. Throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Widespread and common throughout South Africa, from sea level to 2000 m a.s.l. Continental Africa, to Europe and West Asia.

Body length: 74-75 mm **Hindwing length:** 50-51 mm

Habitat: Mostly pools and dams with an abundance of waterweed, lilies and fringing reeds.

Behaviour: Hawks rapidly up and down about 1-2 m above water surface, especially along reedy fringes.

Flight period: October to June, occasionally July to September.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by A. Manson.



Photos: Christopher K Willis

Photo: A. Manson



Anax speratus
Orange Emperor

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Enormous, all orange. Flies swiftly up and down streams and small rivers close to water surface. Common along small, montane rivers throughout southern and eastern areas. Localised elsewhere.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa from sea level to 1700 m a.s.l. To East and West Africa.

Body length: 76-78 mm **Hindwing length:** 53-54 mm

Habitat: Bush- or reed-lined streams and small rivers with moderate current, occasionally pools.

Behaviour: Hawks at speed along streams and small rivers in fynbos, grassland, bushy or forested areas, barely 1 m from water surface. Sometimes visits pools. Often seen ovipositing in vegetation just below surface at stream's edge.

Flight period: Late September to April.



Photos: Christopher K Willis

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Kate Braun



Gomphidae - Clubtails
Notogomphus praetorius
Yellowjack

Features: Fairly large, yellow and black, without a club, with long, mid-dorsal bright yellow stripe running length of abdomen. Clear montane streams.

Distribution: Common in KwaZulu Natal Drakensberg, also Eastern Cape Province, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Lesotho. To Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Body length: 45-48 mm *Hindwing length:* 29-30 mm

Habitat: Tall grass or on boulders beside or in clear, open, fast high-elevation (usually above 1000m a.s.l.) streams, very occasionally near high-elevation dams.

Behaviour: Unlike most other gomphids, this species is a weak flier, easily disturbed from bankside grassland, where it soon lands again. Also, sits on warm stones in small streams. Mostly a late-season species.

Flight period: Late December to May



Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Ictinogomphus ferox
Common Tigertail

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Very large, black and dull yellow, tiger-striped, big head and thorax, long thin abdomen with large club. Perches conspicuously at margins of sluggish rivers and marshes, coastal KZNP northwards.

Distribution: Gauteng, Limpopo, common in coastal KwaZulu/Natal (up to 250 m a.s.l., rarely 700 m a.s.l., one individual 1400 m a.s.l.). North to Central Africa.

Body length: 73-75 mm **Hindwing length:** 42-43 mm

Habitat: Dams, pools, marshes and still reaches of rivers with abundance of reeds, grasses and stout twigs on which to perch.



Behaviour: Perches with abdomen straight or slightly raised on strong twig or reed 1-2 m above water margin. Sometimes hawking among savanna trees, even at dusk.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.

Photos: Kate Braun
 (see also cover photo)

Gomphidia quarrei
Quarre's Fingertail

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Fairly large, with a very clearly yellow and black striped thorax, very slender abdomen with a club without foliations. Edges of flowing, lowveld rivers with fringes of reeds and bushes.

Distribution: Kruger National Park. To Kenya and D R Congo.

Body length: 51-52 mm *Hindwing length:* 38-39 mm

Habitat: Bushy fringes of large streams and rivers in savanna areas.

Behaviour: Perches conspicuously on tops of reeds.

Flight period: September to April

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.

Photo: Kate Braun



Phyllogomphus brunneus

Bold Leaftail

Features: Very large, black and yellow striped, with short, black pterostigmas, narrow abdomen with very large, black foliations. Flies among bushes and trees in Mpumalanga lowveld.

Distribution: Mpumalanga lowveld. Also Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Body length: 65-66 mm **Hindwing length:** 38-39 mm

Habitat: Large meandering rivers in lowveld savanna bush and forest near rivers. Adults usually in bush away from water.

Behaviour: Flies high and fast among bushes and trees, settling occasionally, but alert.

Flight period: November to April

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photo: J.H. Wilkinson



Crenigomphus hartmanni
Hartmann's Talontail

Mantenga Nature Reserve

Features: Fairly large, dull yellowish green and brown striped, with very distinct club of two small foliations on each side. Perches on tall grass and herbs fringing swift, savanna rivers.

Distribution: Widely distributed but localised in Eastern Cape Province, KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Western Cape Province up to about 1000 m a.s.l. To Kenya and D R Congo.

Body length: 45-46 mm **Hindwing length:** 28-29 mm

Habitat: Swift, open savanna streams and rivers, with tall grass nearby.

Behaviour: Perches conspicuously on tops of tall grasses, sedges and short bushes, sometimes many metres from the river. Flight is low over the tall grass.



Photo: Kate Braun

Flight period: November to June

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Ceratogomphus pictus
Common Thorntail

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Large, yellow, greenish yellow and brownish black, with yellow costa, narrow club formed mostly by large foliations only on S8, and a sharp, forward-pointing dorsal spike on S10. Perches on ground near open pools and on boulders in streams throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Common throughout most of South Africa, up to about 1200 m a.s.l. To D R Congo.

Body length: 53-54 mm **Hindwing length:** 29-30 mm

Habitat: Open dams, pools, and rivers with pools.

Behaviour: A ground percher, this species frequently rests on bare patches of soil or a small boulder, darting off rapidly when disturbed.

Flight period: Mostly December to April, occasionally October and May.

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photos: Christopher K Willis

Paragomphus cognatus
Rock Hooktail

Features: Medium-sized, dark brown and yellow, with reddish brown club. Perches on boulders midstream, very common throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Common throughout much of South Africa from sea level to 2000 m a.s.l. To Kenya and D R Congo.

Body length: 41.5-44 mm *Hindwing length:* 24-25.5 mm

Habitat: Streams and small rivers with boulders in grassland, bush or woodland.

Behaviour: Short flights, returning mostly to a boulder midstream to perch in sunshine. It manoeuvres on the rock to find the optimal position, often raising club.

Flight period: October to May



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Paragomphus elpidius
Corkscrew Hooktail

Features: Medium-sized, greenish, yellowish and brown, with reddish brown club. Alert as it perches on low vegetation or stones beside savanna rivers.

Distribution: Dry river valleys of KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Occasionally Western Cape Province. To Kenya and D R Congo.

Body length: 40 mm *Hindwing length:* 25 mm

Habitat: Open, fast, savanna rivers with wide, rubbly banks.

Behaviour: Alert and camouflaged as it perches on twigs, low vegetation and stones close to river.

Flight period: December to April

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: A. Manson



Paragomphus genei
Green Hooktail

Features: Medium-sized, with green head and thorax, and yellow and dark brown abdomen with reddish brown club. Wet, gravel beaches of savanna rivers.

Distribution: Sporadic records from Western Cape Province and Eastern Cape Province, but mostly below 800 m in KwaZulu Natal Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Namibia, Swaziland. Common in Kruger National Park. To Mediterranean and Arabian Peninsula.

Body length: 40-40.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 24-25 mm

Habitat: Moist, gravel or sandy shores of savanna rivers with low water levels, and occasionally pools and reservoirs.

Behaviour: Perches, with abdomen raised at an angle, at water's edge. Darts off rapidly, returning again to shore.

Flight period: November to June

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Christopher K Willis



**41 *Onychogomphus supinus*
Claspertail**

Malolotja Nature Reserve

Features: Fairly large, pale bluish green, yellowish green and brownish black, with reddish brown club. Very local at middle elevation, hot bushy or wooded montane streams and rivers.

Distribution: Very localised, KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga, and possibly Limpopo. To Zimbabwe and Angola.

Body length: 45 mm *Hindwing length:* 27-27.5 mm

Habitat: Rocky streams and shallow, fast rivers in bushy or wooded montane areas, 500-1100 m a.s.l.

Behaviour: Perches on stones in rivers, and on grass stems on bushy banks.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by A. Manson.



Photos: A Manson

Corduliidae - Cruisers, Emeralds

42 *Phyllomacromia contumax*

Two-banded Cruiser

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Very large, all black and yellow, with distinct yellow waist and wide yellow band near abdominal tip.
Cruises

in forest clearings in warm, low-elevation, open, coastal forest.

Distribution: Coastal KwaZulu Natal, occasionally up to 1250 m a.s.l., mostly in Mpumalanga and Limpopo. One Western Cape Province record. To Central Africa.

Body length: 76-78 mm **Hindwing length:** 53-54 mm

Habitat: Mostly away from water, at forest margins and along vehicle tracks. Mostly moist, open, coastal forest, although some hinterland records at streams. In coastal areas, females frequent lake edges.

Behaviour: Mostly cruising up and down forest margins, rarely flying more than 2 m above the ground, often passing close by. Sometimes cruises along lake edges and streams.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in *Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa*. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Phyllomacromia picta
Darting Cruiser

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Fairly large to large, very striped-and-ringed, black-and-yellow. Bushy habitats throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Scattered records 100 - 1600 m a.s.l. across South Africa. To Central Africa.

Body length: 50-55 mm **Hindwing length:** 32-35 mm

Habitat: Large dams and rivers in association with trees in open grassland or in thick bush.

Behaviour: Fast, darting flight over grassland between trees and along rivers.

Flight period: November to April



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Libellulidae - Skimmers, Dropwings

Tetrathemis polleni

Black-splash

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Small, unmistakable, pale blue, slender, with huge, roundish black splashes on ends all wings. Perches conspicuously on twigs over shaded, forest pools east of Drakensberg escarpment.

Distribution: East coast of Eastern Cape Province, coastal KwaZulu Natal, Kruger National Park and Limpopo. To West Africa, Madagascar and Comoros.

Body length: 30-32.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 24-25 mm

Habitat: Forest pools and still reaches of rivers with a bush or forest canopy over water.

Behaviour: Perches conspicuously, often with wings forward, head down and abdomen up at an angle, on a twig in shade over still water. Occasionally at forest edges away from water. Flight fluttering but strong, and soon returns to perch.

Flight period: October to March

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photo: Christopher K Willis



Photo: A Manson

Orthetrum abbotti abbotti
Abbott's Skimmer

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Small to medium-sized, all pale blue with slightly smoky wings and long, light-brown pterostigmas. Mostly marshy, upland stream margins.

Distribution: Western Cape Province and Eastern Cape Province northwards, up to 1800 m a.s.l. To Central Africa, the subspecies *malgassicum* in Madagascar.

Body length: 36-37 mm **Hindwing length:** 26-26.5 mm

Habitat: Marshy pools beside montane grassy, trickling streams, especially in rolling, open grass land. Occasionally lowland pans. **Behaviour:** Weak flight, frequently returning to same grass or reed perch.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.



Photo: Kate Braun



Photo: Christopher K Willis

**46 *Orthetrum caffrum*
Two-Striped Skimmer**

Malolotja and Mlawula Nature Reserves

Features: Medium-sized, pale blue, with brownish thorax, with two, pale side stripes, and a distinctive cream line between wings. Pools and still parts of streams, mostly in montane areas.

Distribution: Throughout most of montane South Africa, above 700 m a.s.l. in KwaZulu Natal although almost to sea level in SW of Western Cape Province. To Central Africa, and Madagascar.

Body length: 40-41 mm **Hindwing length:** 28.5-29.5 mm

Habitat: Montane pools, still reaches of streams and marshes.



Behaviour: Perches on sticks or reeds over water, darting out to feed, defend territory or court, returning to perch.

Flight period: October to March

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Orthetrum chrysostigma
Epaulet Skimmer

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Medium-sized to fairly large, brownish and pale blue, with a light, single stripe on side of thorax. Rocky streams in fynbos or bushy savanna.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa up to 1500 m a.s.l. To Mediterranean.

Body length: 42-45.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 31-32 mm

Habitat: Shallow, rocky streams and pools in fairly dry areas.

Behaviour: Darts swiftly over water or grassy river flats, frequently returning to same perch, which may be a stem, boulder or ground.

Flight period: Oct to May, with occasional winter individuals.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum; photos by Christopher K Willis and Kate Braun.



Photos: Kate Braun



Orthetrum hintzi
Hintz's Skimmer

Malolotja Nature Reserve

Features: Medium-sized, fairly slender, all pruinose blue.
 Marshy, mostly warm areas.

Distribution: Eastern Cape Province, KwaZulu Natal (up to 800 m a.s.l.), North West Province, Limpopo and Swaziland.
 To Central Africa.

Body length: 37-38 mm **Hindwing length:** 25-26 mm

Habitat: Marshes and marshy sectors of rivers.

Behaviour: Rather slow, zig-zag flight, frequently returning to same perch, which is usually a grass stem close to the ground and not usually overwater.

Flight period: November to April

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by G. Diedericks and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.



Photo: Christopher K Willis



Photo: Peter Webb

Orthetrum icteromelas
Spectacled Skimmer

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Medium-sized, fairly slender, all evenly pruinescent blue. Grassy and reedy pools in warm areas.

Distribution: Widespread in Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal (up to 1100 m a.s.l.), Mpumalanga, North West Province, Limpopo. To Central Africa, Madagascar and Mauritius.

Body length: 43-44.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 28-29 mm

Habitat: Shallow, flooded pools and flooded margins of rivers with an abundance of long, emergent grasses.

Behaviour: Perches on grasses and reeds in shallow water, darting out, and returning to same perch. Frequently takes dragonflies as prey, some as large as itself.

Flight period: Oct to May



Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in *Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa*. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photos: A. Manson

Orthetrum jullia falsum
Julia Skimmer

Mantenga Nature Reserve, Pine Valley

Features: Fairly large, robust, with a brownish to bluish weakly mottled and striped thorax, and light blue abdomen. Streams and pools in wooded areas in most of South Africa, but in more open habitats in Western Cape Province.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa. Eastern Cape Province northwards.

Body length: 45-49 mm **Hindwing length:** 31-36 mm

Habitat: Dappled shade in thick bush or forest. Often in shady gardens and along hedgerows.

Behaviour: Conspicuous as it perches in sunflecks in woodlands, forests or gardens, darting fast after prey or to chase an intruder, or perches conspicuously on grass stems, often over water. Females often enter houses.



Flight period: Throughout year, although scarce in winter.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Orthetrum machadoi
Machado's Skimmer

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Medium-sized, fairly robust, all pruinescent blue. Localised at swamps and marshes in the warmer areas of South Africa.

Distribution: Localised in Cedarberg (Western Cape Province), Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal (up to 1100 m a.s.l.), Limpopo. To Ethiopia and Sierra Leone.

Body length: 37.5-41 mm **Hindwing length:** 28-30 mm

Habitat: Marshy grassland, shallow grassy swamps and grassy, flooded margins of rivers. **Behaviour:** Perches on grasses and sedges, darting out, then returning to perch.

Flight period: September to April

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photos: Christopher K Willis

Orthetrum trinacria
Long Skimmer

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Large, elongated, all deep pruinulent blue. Pools and marshes throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa, including Cape Peninsula. To Mediterranean.

Body length: 53-58 mm **Hindwing length:** 35-37 mm

Habitat: Shallow pans, pools and grassy margins of lakes and dams. In the Cedarberg it patrols grassy margins of streams.

Behaviour: A strong flier at water margins and over marshy areas, frequently perching on reeds or stems, usually over water. Often preys on large insects, including other dragonflies and butterflies

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photo: Christopher K Willis



Photo: A Manson

Nesciothemis farinosa
Eastern Blacktail

Mantenga and Mlawula Nature Reserves

Features: Medium-sized to fairly large, fairly robust, strikingly blackheaded, very pale powdery bluish-grey with a black tail. Pools and quiet reaches of rivers in much of South Africa.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa, but more common in warm areas and local on highveld. Up to 1200 m a.s.l. in KwaZulu Natal. To Egypt and southern Arabia.

Body length: 40-46 mm **Hindwing length:** 30.5-35 mm

Habitat: Pools, pans and particularly sluggish reaches of rivers with an abundance of tall grass and reeds.



Photo: Kate Braun



Behaviour: Very conspicuous as it perches on reeds and makes short sorties and returns to its perch.

Flight period: October to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Palpopleura deceptor
Deceptive Widow

Features: Small, very pale greyish blue pruinescent species, with black tail tip and blackish streak and spot on each forewing. Marshy pools in warm areas.

Distribution: Localised, Limpopo, North West Province and Kruger National Park. To Central Africa and Somalia.

Body length: 29-31 mm **Hindwing length:** 24-24.5 mm

Habitat: Clear, shallow pools and margins of dams with an abundance of tall grass and reeds.

Behaviour: A darting flight, but instantly returns to a reed perch over water. Female rarely at the water's edge.

Flight period: December to April

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.



Photo: J H Wilkinson

Palpopleura jucunda
Yellow-Veined Widow

Malolotja and Mantenga Nature Reserves, Maphalaleni Valley

Features: Very small, brown and powdery pale blue with striking wings splashed in dark brown and yellow. Marshy parts of rivers in much of South Africa.

Distribution: Widespread but localised across the southern and eastern regions of South Africa. To Ethiopia and Sudan.

Body length: 22-24 mm **Hindwing length:** 16-17 mm

Habitat: Marshy spots along streams and shallow rivers, and sometimes pools and vleis.

Behaviour: A butterfly-like flight but darting on hot days, low among vegetation, especially grasses. Frequently perches high on grass stems.



Flight period: October to May, but most common late season.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Palpopleura lucia
Lucia Widow

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Very small to small, powdery blue body and extensive jet black patches, with undulating hind margins on all wings, and that run from wing bases to pterostigmas.

Pools, marshes and sluggish reaches of streams in warm areas.

Distribution: Very common, east coast to lowveld, north and northwest. Up to 200 m a.s.l. in KwaZulu Natal. Throughout tropical Africa.

Body length: 28.5-31 mm **Hindwing length:** 23-24.5 mm

Habitat: Garden ponds, natural pools, pans, swamps, marshes and, sluggish reaches of rivers with an abundance of grasses and reeds.



Photo: Kate Braun

Behaviour: Very conspicuous with its blue body and extensive black wing markings as it perches on stems, usually over water or marshy land.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Palpopleura portia
Portia Widow

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Very small to small, powdery blue body and jet black, deeply notched patches on all wings, and that run from wing bases to pterostigmas. Pools, marshes and sluggish reaches of streams in warm areas.

Distribution: Very common, east coast to lowveld and arid north and northwest. To Central Africa. Up to 800 m a.s.l. in KwaZulu Natal. To East and West Africa, Madagascar and Comoros.

Body length: 25-29 mm **Hindwing length:** 20-25 mm

Habitat: Garden ponds, natural pools, pans, swamps, marshes and sluggish reaches of rivers with an abundance of grasses and reeds.



Photo: Kate Braun

Behaviour: Very conspicuous with its blue body and distinctive black wing markings as it perches on stems, usually over water or marshy land.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun

Photo: Christopher K Willis



Acisoma inflatum
Stout Pintail

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Very small to small, bluish grey and black mosaic, with a conspicuously bulbous then very slender abdomen. Pools and still reaches of rivers with lilies and sedges in warm areas.

Distribution: Coastal North KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga lowveld, Limpopo. To North Africa and Madagascar.

Body length: 28.5-33.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 21-23 mm

Habitat: Pools, pans, marshes and still reaches of rivers with an abundance of lilies, sedges and grasses.

Behaviour: Almost a wasp-like, darting flight low over floating vegetation, frequently settling on emergent vegetation, usually at least a metre from bank.



Flight period: November to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Diplacodes lefebvrei
Black Percher

Features: Very small to small, all black. Grassy pools in many parts of South Africa up to 1800 m a.s.l.

Distribution: In many parts of South Africa. To North Africa and many neighbouring islands. The subspecies *tetra* occurs in Madagascar and Mauritius.

Body length: 27-33 mm *Hindwing length:* 20.5-25 mm

Habitat: Pools, swamps, marshes, tarns and occasionally quiet reaches of rivers with an abundance of grasses and other swamp vegetation.

Behaviour: Only flies short distances, rarely perching more than 0.5 m above the water, and usually on tall grass.

Flight period: All year, although rare in winter, in warm areas, and November to May at higher elevations.



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Crocothemis erythraea
Broad Scarlet

Mlawula Nature Reserve, Lubombo Mountains

Features: Medium-sized, wide-bodied, all bright red, with small basal amber patch on hindwing. Pools and still reaches of rivers throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Throughout South Africa from sea level to 1600 m a.s.l. To Europe and West Asia.

Body length: 39-40 mm **Hindwing length:** 29-30 mm

Habitat: Pools and shallow, still reaches of streams and rivers, usually with an abundance of floating and emergent vegetation, although sometimes rocky.

Behaviour: Perches conspicuously, usually close to water surface, on lilies, reeds and twigs, sometimes on rocks. Strong, darting flight when disturbed.

Flight period: October to May



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Kate Braun

Crocothemis sanguinolenta
Little Scarlet

Malotja and Mlawula Nature Reserves, Pine Valley

Features: Small to medium-sized, all bright red. Usually on stones or bare soil near rocky streams throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa, rarely above 800 m a.s.l. in KwaZulu Natal but occasionally up to 1600 m in Limpopo. To Middle East and also Madagascar.

Body length: 35-37 mm **Hindwing length:** 27-28 mm

Habitat: Rocky streams with pools, in open situations, such as low fynbos or open savanna.

Behaviour: Alert as it perches on stones or bare soil, in or away from streams. Very rarely perches on vegetation.



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun

Photo: Kate Braun

Bradinopyga cornuta**Horned Rock-dweller/Don-Dwala**

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Medium-sized, all mottled brown and grey, with horned head, long wings and short abdomen. Settles on rocky domes.

Distribution: Fairly common in southern Mpumalanga lowveld

Body length: 42-43 mm *Hindwing length:* 33-35 mm

Habitat: Rocky outcrops and domes with rain pools, in which it breeds, close to rocky, fast, lowveld rivers.

Behaviour: Settles on bare rocky outcrops and domes where it is very camouflaged. Extremely alert, and flies off rapidly when disturbed and usually returning later. Female usually with male.

Flight period: September to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun.



Photos: Kate Braun

Brachythemis lacustris
Red Groundling

Mnjoli Dam

Features: Small, stocky, bright red, with large orange splashes on wings. Gregarious on grass stems, edges of small, tree fringed meandering rivers in hot areas.

Distribution: Northern KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga lowveld.

Body length: 31.5-32.5 mm *Hindwing length:* 22-22.5 mm

Habitat: Meandering, partially tree-lined, streams and rivers fringed with tall grass.

Behaviour: Very gregarious, often with several individuals of both sexes perching along same grass stem at water's edge.

Flight period: November to April.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun.



Photos: Kate Braun

Brachythemis leucosticta
Banded Groundling

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Small, unmistakable, black-bodied with black bands on each wing and yellowish pterostigmas. Ground perching in warm savanna.

Distribution: Northern Cape Province, Western Province, Limpopo, northern KwaZulu Natal (up to 700 m a.s.l.) and Mpumalanga lowveld and Swaziland. To East and West Africa.

Body length: 29-31 mm **Hindwing length:** 23.5-25 mm

Habitat: Dry, heavily-grazed savanna near pools, dams and sluggish reaches of rivers. Mostly away from water, along dirt tracks, between trees, or on fringes of receding pools with unvegetated beaches.



Behaviour: Gregarious, flying low to ground, often following observer, as it would follow walking game, catching small insects put to flight by the movement. Frequently perches on bare ground. Female often with male, but mating pairs rarely seen.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Sympetrum fonscolombii
Nomad

Malotja Nature Reserve

Features: Medium-sized, reddish orange, with brownish head and thorax. Reedy margins of pools throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Throughout South Africa even up to 2700m a.s.l., but may not breed at such high elevations. To Europe, Madagascar and Asia.

Body length: 38-41 mm **Hindwing length:** 27-30 mm

Habitat: Reedy and grassy margins of pools and dams, although sometimes in grassland far from water.

Behaviour: A wanderer or migrant, particularly in early summer. At pools, perches conspicuously on reed stems over water along fringes of still water.

Flight period: September to May but most abundant October to November and a few individuals may be seen mid-winter.



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Trithemis annulata
Violet Drowping

Mlawula Nature Reserve

Features: Small to medium-sized, distinctly stout and violet red. Perches on twigs at or near still or sluggish water in warm areas.

Distribution: Widespread and locally common. Western Cape Province, Eastern Cape Province, coastal KwaZulu Natal (up to 200 m a.s.l.), Mpumalanga lowveld, Limpopo. Common in Kruger National Park. To Europe and Asia

Minor. Also Madagascar and Mascarenes.

Body length: 35-37 mm **Hindwing length:** 30-31 mm

Habitat: Pools, marshes and sluggish reaches of rivers, with bushes and trees nearby.

Behaviour: Perches conspicuously on a twig or reed, over water. On hot days and evenings will move away from water and perch on twigs on trees.



Photo: Kate Braun

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Trithemis arteriosa**Red-Veined Drowping**

Mantenga and Mlawula Nature Reserves

Features: Small, slender, bright red, with bright red wing veins and black on side of tip of abdomen. Very common at still water throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Very common and abundant throughout South Africa. To North Africa, Canaries and Asia Minor.

Body length: 32-36 mm **Hindwing length:** 26-27.5 mm

Habitat: Pools, dams, marshes and still and sluggish reaches of rivers.

Behaviour: Perches conspicuously on emergent twigs or reeds at water's edge, but on hot days will move into the shade of trees.

Flight period: All year, but more common in summer months.



Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Trithemis donaldsoni**Donaldson's Dropwing**

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Medium-sized, slender, all light blue with contrasting dark brown eyes, and very metallic top of head. Open, shallow, rocky savanna rivers.

Distribution: Localised, northern KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga lowveld, Limpopo. To Ethiopia and West Africa.

Body length: 40-41.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 32-33.5 mm

Habitat: Shallow, rocky, rivers in open, hot, savanna.

Behaviour: Perches mostly on stones midstream, occasionally on twigs. Very alert, and with strong flight, frequently darting off, to return to same perch. Female usually far from water.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in *Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa*. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photo: Christopher K Willis



Trithemis dorsalis
Dorsal Dropwing

Malotja Nature Reserve

Features: Medium-sized, all deep blue. Tall grass bordering lakes, dams and river pools, mostly at higher elevations. Throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Common at elevations above 700 m a.s.l., especially above 1000 m a.s.l., although at lower elevations in Western Cape Province. Throughout South Africa, except coastal areas. Principally a Drakensberg and highveld species. To East and Central Africa.

Body length: 37.5-38.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 27.5-29 mm

Habitat: Mostly large lakes and dams, and still reaches of rivers. Rarely smaller pools or swift rivers.

Behaviour: Perches on tall grass and reeds at water's edge, rarely on stones. Female usually nearby.



Flight period: November to May

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by G. Diedericks and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Christopher K Willis

Trithemis furva**Navy Dropwing**

Malolotja and Mantenga Nature Reserves, Pine Valley

Features: Medium-sized, all dark blue. On stones and twigs mostly in swift, lowland rivers throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Very common at low elevations (below 700 m a.s.l.) throughout much of South Africa. Occasionally at higher elevations, especially in Limpopo, with one record at 1700 m a.s.l. Localised on highveld. To Ethiopia and West Africa.

Body length: 37.5-38.5 mm **Hindwing length:** 27.5-29 mm

Habitat: Usually rocky, shallow rivers with clumps of tall grass among rocks. Rarely pools and stiller reaches of rivers.



Behaviour: Mostly perches on rocks, where it looks almost blackish, or on twigs and reeds at water's edge. Female usually away from the water, among tall grass or small bushes.

Flight period: All year, but much more common in summer.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Trithemis kirbyi ardens
Kirby's Dropwing

Malolotja, Mantenga and Mlawula Nature Reserves, Lubombo Mountains

Features: Small to medium-sized, bright orangish red, with large orange splashes on all wings. Perches mostly on rocks in or beside shallow rivers, mostly in arid or savanna areas. Common in Kruger National Park.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa. To West Africa and Arabian Peninsula, and across Asia.

Body length: 35-38 mm **Hindwing length:** 25-26.5 mm

Habitat: Shallow, rocky rivers and rock pools, even temporary ones, in arid areas or hot savanna. Around water troughs and swimming pools.



Behaviour: Very conspicuous with its bright colours as it perches on rocks. Female rarely seen, but darts over a river pool to cast its eggs, and rapidly escorted by male. When water levels drop and when conditions are very hot, male may perch on twigs over drying-o

Flight period: November to May, with occasional winter individuals.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photos: Kate Braun

Trithemis pluvialis
River Dropwing

Mantenga and Mlawula Nature Reserves

Features: Medium-sized, bright orange tending to bright reddish, with small rounded, orange splashes on hindwing. Perches conspicuously on reed and sedge stems in swift, rocky, reedlined, bushy savanna rivers. Localised in S, North and East of South Africa.

Distribution: Localised, Limpopo highveld and middle-elevation KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga, 600-1500 m a.s.l. Occasionally Western Cape Province. To East Africa.

Body length: 37-39 mm **Hindwing length:** 29-30 mm

Habitat: Swift, wide, rocky rivers in bushy savanna, and with extensive reed margins. Often occurs singly in isolated and unexpected localities.



Photo: Kate Braun

Behaviour: Conspicuous as it perches on reeds at margins of riffles.

Flight period: November to April

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Trithemis stictica
Jaunty Dropwing

Pine Valley

Features: Small, unmistakable, powdery blue thorax, black and yellow abdomen, turquoise eyes, and a faint, central, orangy area in hindwing. Conspicuous and alert at margins of stillwater. Common throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa, 0-2000 m a.s.l. To Ethiopia and West Africa.

Body length: 35-37 mm **Hindwing length:** 26.5-28 mm

Habitat: Margins of pools along quiet reaches of rivers and streams, and pools

Behaviour: Very alert as it perches conspicuously on a stick or reed at river or pool margins, often darting out to defend territory. Readily responds to hot sunlight by moving its abdomen into almost vertical, obelisk position, with wings well forward.

Flight period: November to May, with occasional winter individuals.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photos by Kate Braun.

Photo: Christopher K Willis

Photos: Kate Braun



Zygonyx natalensis
Blue Cascader

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Fairly large, medium build, blackish brown with thin, pale blue pruinescence that is usually patchy and scuffed. Cruises up and down, low over rapids and around waterfalls. Common throughout much of South Africa.

Distribution: Common throughout much of South Africa up to 1000 m a.s.l. KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, local in Western Cape Province. To East and West Africa.

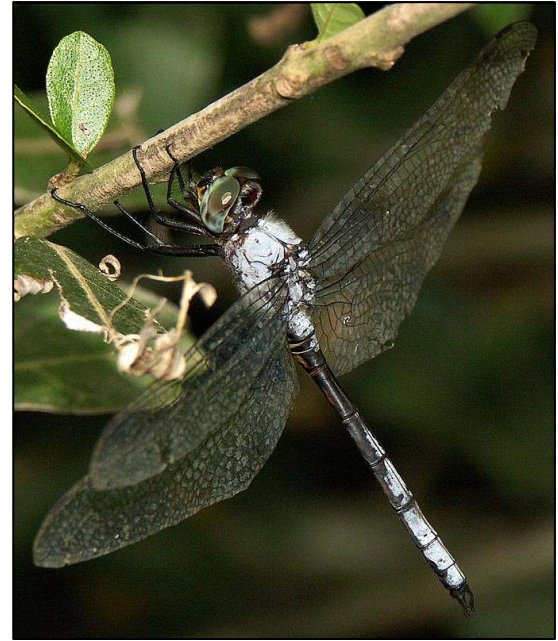
Body length: 50-52 mm **Hindwing length:** 39-40 mm

Habitat: Rocky rivers with water falls, riffles and glides, usually bordered by bushes and trees. Also hawks among bushes and trees away from water.

Behaviour: Hawks rapidly up and down, and hovers, low over riffles and splash zones.

Flight period: September to May but often most abundant October to November

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in *Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa*. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photos: Christopher K Willis

Zygonyx torridus
Ringed Cascader

Features: Large, black and yellow ringed. Hawks swiftly up and down over open streams and rivers with riffles. Common throughout warmer areas.

Distribution: Common in KwaZulu Natal up to 800 m a.s.l., Mpumalanga and Limpopo, with occasional Western Cape Province record. North to Spain and India, and Mauritius.

Body length: 53-54 mm *Hindwing length:* 44-45 mm

Habitat: Riffles of streams and rivers, with bush-lined or open banks.

Behaviour: Hawks up and down over riffles and glides, hovering over open stretches of fast water. May hawk rapidly and high over and between bushes and trees away from water, both in daytime and at dusk. Female rarely close to water, hawks among bushes and trees.

Flight period: November to April

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.



Photo: J H Wilkinson

Zygonoides fuelleborni
Fulleborn's Riverking

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Fairly large to large, black and yellow, robust, with very swollen base to abdomen. Patrols swift rivers. Settling on rocks, in hot savanna.

Distribution: Localised, KwaZulu Natal below 850 m a.s.l., Mpumalanga, Limpopo. To Sudan and West Africa.

Body length: 50-53 mm **Hindwing length:** 38-40 mm

Habitat: Broad, rocky, swift, hot savanna rivers with bushy or open banks.

Behaviour: Patrols swift rivers regularly settling on bushes, sticks or rocks. Hunting swarms wheel around high between trees at dusk.

Flight period: December to April

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in *Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa*. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photo: A Manson



Rhyothemis semihyalina
Phantom Flutterer

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Small, unmistakable, slender, black body, with large, metallic black basal splash on hindwings. Fluttering flight at lily and grassy pools in warm areas.

Distribution: East Cape coast northwards along coastal KwaZulu Natal (occasionally to 1000 m a.s.l.), Mpumalanga, Limpopo and occasionally Western Cape Province. To North Africa and western Indian Ocean islands.

Body length: 34-35 mm **Hindwing length:** 31-32 mm

Habitat: Marshy, shallow pools with lilies, and fringed with grasses and reeds.

Behaviour: Distinctly fluttering flight, like a butterfly, landing on lilies or reeds in pool. Sometimes flying in tree tops.

Flight period: November to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Pantala flavescens**Pantala***Mlawula Nature Reserve*

Features: Fairly large, tapered abdomen, yellowish brown or light orange. Usually away from water, in small groups, wheeling back and forth, between bushes and in forest clearings. Very common throughout South Africa.

Distribution: Throughout South Africa, even to over 2000 m a.s.l., but especially common in bushy savanna and coastal

KwaZulu Natal. Panglobal in tropics and subtropics.

Body length: 47-50 mm **Hindwing length:** 38.5-41 mm

Habitat: Breeds in shallow, grassy, warm, temporary pools, although usually seen away from water, especially in savanna.

Behaviour: Wheels and glides, sometimes singly but usually in small groups, along roadsides, gardens, forest clearings and between bushes. Often oviposits in swimming pools, and even attempting on windscreens, mistaking shiny surface for water.



Photo: Christopher K Willis

Flight period: Late November to May. Highly migratory.

Comments: Occurrence in Swaziland confirmed by photo by Tina Petterson and SA damselflies and dragonflies checklist, compiled by Tanza Crouch and Tessa Hedge, Department of Entomology & Arachnology, Durban Natural Science Museum.

Photo: Kate Braun

Tramea basilaris
Keyhole Glider

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Fairly large, tapered abdomen, light reddish and brown, with black abdominal tip, and very jagged, dark red, basal hindwing patches. Perches on tops of bushes and glides between trees, especially in bushy savanna.

Distribution: Throughout South Africa, although by far most common in the bushy savanna and coastal wetlands of KwaZulu Natal. All Africa, and to Asia.

Body length: 45-49 mm **Hindwing length:** 38-39 mm

Habitat: Although breeds in pools with abundance of reeds, adult is usually in bushy savanna.

Behaviour: Perches on top of low bushes or glides in the open among trees, usually singly but sometimes in small groups.

Flight period: December to May

Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.



Photo: A. Manson

Tramea limbata
Ferruginous Glider

Possibly occurring in Swaziland.

Features: Fairly large, tapered abdomen, deep red and brown, with black abdominal tip, and rounded droplet-shaped, dark red, basal hindwing patches. Perches on tops of bushes and glides between trees, especially in coastal northern KwaZulu Natal.

Distribution: Throughout much of South Africa, but rare on highveld, and by far most common in coastal northern KwaZulu Natal. Tropical and sub-tropical Africa, especially coastal, and Western Indian Ocean islands.

Body length: 45-50 mm **Hindwing length:** 38-42 mm

Habitat: Breeds in shallow pools and pans, but flies in humid, bushy country.

Behaviour: Glides singly or in small groups between bushes and trees usually within a few tens or hundreds of metres of breeding pools. In cloudy conditions and on very hot days perches on top of bushes.

Flight period: December to May, with occasional individuals in winter



Comments: Possible occurrence based on distribution maps in Dragonflies and Damselflies of South Africa. 2008. Michael J. Samways.

Photos: Alan Manson

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