

DRAGONFLIES

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Sources of information

To my knowledge there has been no comprehensive or systematic assessment of the dragonfly fauna of the Soutpansberg. Van Son, Pinhey and others have done some collecting here, mostly in the 1940s and 1950s. From this, a total of 52 species from the Soutpansberg are represented in South African museum collections and these are listed below.

Summary statistics

This list of 52 species, comprising about a third of the known South African dragonfly fauna (which totals 159 species), would undoubtedly be increased — perhaps by another 30–40 species — if a dedicated dragonfly survey of the area were to be undertaken. Given the area's close proximity to Zimbabwe, it is likely that one or more species new for the South African list will be found here (e.g. *Actoneura biordinata*), and it is not inconceivable, given the mountain range's relative isolation, that species new to science could be discovered here as well.

As it stands the list includes two species that are endemic to South Africa (*Aeshna subpupillata*, *Allocnemis leucosticta*) and three that are listed in the recently published dragonfly Red Data list (*Aeshna ellioti* — vulnerable; *Chlorolestes elegans* — vulnerable; *Pseudagrion makabusiense* — critical).

Major studies and publications

Not listed.

Recommendations for priority studies required to fill any gaps identified

Not listed.

“Hot spots” of particular importance

Not known.

Annex 1. List of dragonfly species known from the Soutpansberg

Order ODONATA

Suborder Zygoptera (Damselflies)

Family Calopterygidae Demoiselles

Phaon iridipennis Glistening Demoiselle

Family Chlorocyphidae Jewels

Platycypha caligata Dancing Jewel

Family Synlestidae Malachites

Chlorolestes elegans Elegant Malachite

Chlorolestes fasciatus Mountain Malachite

Family Lestidae Spreadwings

Lestes plagiatus Highland Spreadwing

Lestes virgatus Smoky Spreadwing

Family Protoneuridae Pinflies

Elatoneura glauca Common Threadtail

Family Platycnemididae Stream-Damsels

Allocnemis leucosticta Goldtail

Family Coenagrionidae Sprites

Ceriagrion glabrum Common Orange

Pseudagrion commoniae nigerrimum Black Sprite

Pseudagrion hageni Hagen's Sprite

Pseudagrion hamoni Hamon's Sprite

Pseudagrion kersteni Kersten's Sprite

Pseudagrion makabusiense Makabusi Sprite

Pseudagrion massaicum Masai Sprite

Pseudagrion salisburyense Salisbury Sprite

Pseudagrion spernatum Natal Sprite

Pseudagrion sublacteum Cherry-Eye Sprite

Ischnura senegalensis Bluetail

Africallagma glaucum Swamp Bluet

Agriocnemis exilis Little Whisp

Suborder Anisoptera (Dragonflies)

Family Gomphidae Clubtails

Ictinogomphus ferox Tigertail

Ceratogomphus pictus Common Thorntail

Paragomphus cognatus Rock Hooktail

Paragomphus elpidius Corkscrew Hooktail

Paragomphus genei Green Hooktail

Family Aeshnidae Hawkers

Aeshna elioti Eliot's Hawker

Aeshna subpupillata Stream Hawker

Anax ephippiger Vagrant Emperor

Anax imperator Blue Emperor

Anax speratus Orange Emperor

Family Cordulidae Emeralds

Phylloacromia picta Darting Cruiser

Family Libellulidae Skimmers

Orthetrum abbotti Abbott's Skimmer

Orthetrum chrysostigma Epaulet Skimmer

Orthetrum julia Julia Skimmer

Orthetrum machadoi Machado's Skimmer

Orthetrum trinacria Long Skimmer

Nesciothemis farinosa Black-Tailed Skimmer

Palpopleura jucunda Yellow-Veined Widow

Palpopleura lucia St Lucia Widow

Crocothemis erythraea Broad Scarlet
Crocothemis sanguinolenta Little Scarlet
Brachythemis leucosticta Banded Groundling
Sympetrum fonscolombii Nomad
Trithemis arteriosa Red-Veined Dropwing
Trithemis donaldsoni Donaldson's Dropwing
Trithemis furva Navy Dropwing

Trithemis kirbyi ardens Kirby's Dropwing
Trithemis pluvialis River Dropwing
Trithemis stictica Jaunty Dropwing
Zygonyx natalensis Blue Cascader
Zygonyx torridus Ringed Cascader
Tramea basilare Keyhole Glider