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Common Arizona Pond Dragonfly Identification Guide

Dragonflies and damselflies are dimorphic, which means that males and females often look completely different. Females are less common than males at water, so they are not pictured here. If you see a dragonfly that you can't find a picture for, try reading the descriptions—you might find a female you observe described there!

Dragonflies



Green Darner (*Anax junius*)

Very common and widespread. **Male** with blue and black abdomen and green thorax, **female** usually with green thorax and abdomen with grey or brown markings on abdomen. Large yellow-green eyes wrap around the top of the head, touch in center, with distinct eyespot. Large dragonfly, length 6.8—7.8cm, wingspan 4.6—5.3cm. Typically flies near water.



Flame Skimmer (*Libellula saturata*)

Common in southern Arizona. **Male** with reddish body, red face, and orange-red eyes. **Female** with brown body, brown eyes and face. Both with orange-red markings at base of all wings, though more extensive in males than females. Large dragonfly, length 5.2—6.1cm, wingspan 4.1—4.5cm. Typically perches on vegetation near water.



Roseate Skimmer (*Orthemis ferruginea*)

Common in southern Arizona. **Male** with dusky pink body, red eyes, **female** with brown body, yellow stripes on sides of thorax, reddish brown eyes. Mostly clear wings, though with some reddish coloration on some wing veins. Large dragonfly, length 4.8—5.3cm, wingspan 3.6—4.4cm. Typically perches on vegetation near water.



Mexican Amberwing (*Perithemis intensa*)

Common at small ponds in the area. **Male** with orange-brown body, pale brown face and eyes, wings almost entirely orange. **Female** with brown body, brown eyes and face, several dark brown spots on wings. Small dragonfly, length 2.3—2.6cm, wingspan 2.0—2.3cm. Usually found perching on vegetation overlooking water.



Western Pondhawk (*Erythemis collocata*)

Common near small ponds in the area. **Male** with dusky blue body, dark blue eyes, green face. **Female** with bright green body, light green eyes, green face. Mostly clear wings with dark wing veins. Medium dragonfly, length 4.0—4.2cm, wingspan 3.1—3.2cm. Typically perches on vegetation or on the ground near water.



Variegated Meadowhawk (*Sympetrum corruptum*)

Common at small ponds in southern Arizona. **Male** and **female** with brownish red bodies with patterns of white and brown along abdomen, though females are often less vividly colored. Mostly clear wings, though with some reddish coloration to the wing veins. Medium dragonfly, length 3.9—4.2cm, wingspan 2.9—3.0cm. Typically perches on vegetation near water.

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Dragonflies



Blue Dasher

(*Pachydiplax longipennis*)

Very common at small ponds in the area. **Male** with dusky blue thorax and abdomen, green eyes. **Female** black with yellow stripes on abdomen, red eyes. May have a small dark amber spot at the base of hindwings. Medium dragonfly, length 2.8—4.5cm, wingspan 3.0—4.2cm. Typically perches near water.



Wandering Glider

(*Pantala flavescens*)

Typically seen only during the monsoon season. **Male** and **female** with yellow-brown body, appearing orange or orange-yellow in flight. May have small dusky colored spots at tips of wings. Will often use small ponds only for breeding and then leave. Large dragonfly, length 4.5—5.0cm, wingspan 4.0—4.5cm. Flies constantly near water.

Damselflies



Arroyo Bluet

(*Enallagma praevarum*)

A common blue and black damselfly. **Male** has blue abdomen with broad black bands, blue eyes with black cap. **Female** brown with broad black bands, eyes greenish-brown with black cap. Medium damselfly, length 2.6—3.5cm, wingspan 1.5—2.1cm. Typically perches near water. Photo by R. Behrstock.



Rambur's Forktail

(*Ischnura ramburii*)

Brightly colored damselfly. **Male** with yellow-green abdomen with black markings, abdomen black with gold sides, ends in blue tip. **Female** green with black markings. Medium damselfly, length 2.7—3.6cm, wingspan 1.5—1.9cm. Perches on vegetation near water. Photo by R. Behrstock.



Painted Damsel

(*Hesperagrion heterodoxum*)

Brightly colored. **Mature male** with blue thorax, abdomen dark on top with yellow-green sides, ending in bright red tip. **Mature female** similar, but with no red tip. Medium damselfly, length 2.8—3.5cm, wingspan 1.6—2.1cm. Perches near water. Photo by R. Behrstock.



Desert Firetail

(*Telebasis salva*)

Common species in southern AZ. **Male** with red body and red eyes, black stripes on thorax. **Female** with brown body and brown eyes, black stripes on thorax. Small damselfly, length 2.4—2.9cm, wingspan 1.2—1.6cm. Perches on vegetation near water.



Violet Dancer

(*Argia hinei*)

Male with violet thorax and abdomen with black markings, abdomen ends in blue tip. **Female** brown with faint reddish coloration, black markings. Medium damselfly, length 3.0—3.5cm, wingspan 1.7—2.1cm. Perches near water. Photo by R. Behrstock.

Unless otherwise noted, text and dragonfly images by Christine Goforth, Biosphere II Science and Society Fellow 2009-2010. Printable guides available at dragonflywoman.wordpress.com/educationalmaterials/.