

SOUTHERN DAMSELFLY ● COENAGRION BENFRO ● COENAGRION MERCURIALE

**Ecology**

The Southern Damselfly is one of several very similar looking small blue damselflies. This one is distinguished by a black mark near the top of its abdomen which looks like the astronomer's symbol for Mercury (♿). Its behaviour also distinguishes it from other similar damselflies as it is a very weak flier and tends to flutter gently through the vegetation. It flies from June to August. Its larvae live in small slow flowing streams and flushes on heathland and take two years to mature. Adult males are blue and are rather easier to see than the drab olive-green females. Their breeding streams are usually well vegetated but with small peaty open pools in exposed locations. It is considered a Mediterranean species on the edge of its range in the



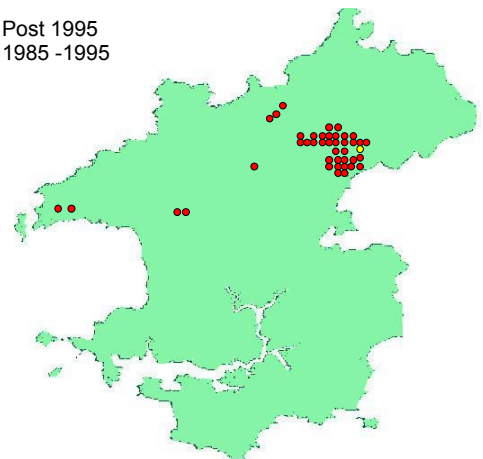
**Where in Pembrokeshire?**

It seems likely that the Southern Damselfly was once widespread across northern Pembrokeshire but today the only thriving population surrounds Mynydd Preseli. Many thousands of individuals still fly here in summer. This is now the biggest population found in the UK. A smaller but still healthy population can be seen at Waun Fawr – Puncheston and tiny colonies persist at Carningli and Hayscastle Cross. On the Preseli Hills, the commons to the north from west of the B4329 to the eastern end of the range and in the south around Mynachlogddu support numerous colonies.

**Outline Distribution Map (1985 – 2004)**

Data source: Stephen Coker County Recorder

- Post 1995
- 1985 -1995



**Why is it in trouble?**

The major current threats to survival are:

- fragmentation and destruction of wetland habitat
- not enough grazing – streams become overgrown
- drainage – destruction of the fine network of runnels and flushes that occurs on stream entrainment and land drainage
- water extraction – springs used as a local supply for farms
- nutrient enrichment by agricultural runoff
- climate change – drought.

**What can you do to help?**

- Look out for this and other damselflies, and send your observations to the county recorder (give address?)
- If you manage a land with springs and flushes ask for an advice booklet

For more information on species identification, where to send records or how you can get involved with specific projects see part 2 of the plan or contact the Biodiversity Officer.

**What's being done?**

This is the only British damselfly to receive protection in both UK and European law. Most of the breeding sites are protected by Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) status and / or management agreements with their owners. Many former or potential sites are being managed to make them suitable for Southern Damselfly.

**FREEPOST**

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The actions listed below are aiming to

- maintain the current population of 2004
- expand the range by linking up existing populations with suitable habitat.

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PARTNERS</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>	<b>BARS CONTACTS</b>	<b>Link to</b>
1	Press Release to coincide with launch of plan. Public Involvement - develop web page of species info, including places to see. Press release and related public event	PBP	2004	Launch event, Western Telegraph/ Pems Radio / Wildlife Trust. Explore ways of raising awareness of this species and its habitat requirements.	Bethan Cox	PBP AWG
2	Existing Sites - review management agreements and implement enhancements	CCW, NAWAD PCNPA, EA-W	2004- 2005	Identify key Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) and Tir Gofal agreements and influence Wetland Management Plan at 5yr review if not before. Use persuasion, PCNPA ranger staff for capital works, additional in-scheme funding, or top-up S15/39 agreement	Bethan Cox	PBP FWG PBP BDAG
3	Potential Sites - expand the review Coker 2002 to cover the whole of North Pembrokeshire (St Davids through to Carmarthenshire) to evaluate potential sites	CCW, EA-W	2004- 2005	Look at catchment hydrology, proximity to existing populations etc. to define potentially suitable sites or 'catchments' and opportunities. Use EA-W river corridor survey and review Coker 2002	Bethan Cox	PBP FWG PBP BDAG
4	Potential Sites - review existing management agreements and implement enhancements	CCW, NAWAD PCNPA	2004- 2005	Where appropriate ensure that prescriptions to enhance habitat requirements of this species are added. Identify potential areas for new management agreements.	Bethan Cox	PBP FWG PBP BDAG
5	Agri-environment schemes - Ensure that the habitat requirements of this species are covered by prescriptions within Tir Gofal and other schemes.	CCW, NAWAD PCNPA	On going	Offer appropriate management advice Raise awareness with Tir Gofal & ESA Officers	Matt Sutton Aisling Carrick(?)	PBP FAG
6	Lobby for legislation to promote the management of common land.	CCW, NAWAD PCNPA, WTSWW	On going		Nigel Ajax- Lewis	WTSWW
7	Implement management projects on common land / land not covered by agreements. Explore the possibility of re-introduction of grazing on section 9 commons through the Pembrokeshire Grazing Network, where appropriate.	PCNPA, CCW, EA-W, NT, PCC, Pems Heathland Partnership. Pems Grazing Network.	On going	On Brynberian seek approval through the steward of the barony for small-scale management actions including gorse control and hydrological manipulation. On other commons work with the Pembrokeshire's Living Heathlands Project, community councils and Pembrokeshire Grazing Network.	Matt Sutton,	PBP BDAG
8	Landscape scale project to re-create suitable habitat around Preseli Hills	FC, CCW , PCNPA	2006- 2010	Return forestry blocks to open habitats with active flush systems that will provide new habitat in the long-term. Devise a project and incorporate southern damselfly requirements.	Richard Curtis	PBP BDAG
9	Hydrological assessments of existing / potential sites	EA-W, CCW	2005 - 2006	Work to develop understanding of hydrological issues and action required to mitigate short and long term threats to flush systems.	Mike Jenkins	PBP BDAG
10	Assessment of existing licensed spring extraction / alternatives	EA-W	2005- 2006	Review all spring extraction licenses that may affect the Southern Damselfly's habitat, suggest removal of redundant systems or an alternative source.	Mike Jenkins	PBP BDAG
11	Monitor conservation status of species and on all known sites.	CCW	2005	SAC monitoring will determine future monitoring programmes.	Matt Sutton	PBP BDAG

This plan contains all known information on May 2004, future schemes will be updated on the website plans. The whole plan will be reviewed in 2010.

**INTERACTION WITH OTHER HAPs AND SAPs**

Management for many species and habitats is compatible with that for the Southern Damselfly, eg. fen, purple moorgrass, lowland raised bog, Pale Butterwort, . However, there could be conflicts between management for Southern Damselfly and, for instance, Marsh Fritillary. Any conflicts can be dealt with on a site-by-site basis.

There is a UK action Plan for this species and the Wildlife Trust are the lead partner.

A glossary for the abbreviations used in this plan can be found in the full Local Biodiversity Action Plan available from the website or the biodiversity officer.

**Website:** [www.biodiversitypembrokeshire.org.uk](http://www.biodiversitypembrokeshire.org.uk)

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