

Dragonfly Nymph

Order: Odonata Families: Aeshnidae– Darners
 Gomphidae– Clubtails
 Libellulidae– Common Skimmers



Number of species in North America: 243

Size: Darners: 45mm (larvae) / 79mm (adult)
 Clubtails: 30mm (larvae) / 50mm (adult)
 Common Skimmers: 21mm (larvae) / 50mm (adult)

Thick, hardened skin on head and thorax

2 pairs of wing pads on thorax

Short antennae

Large eyes

Scooplike lip (called labium) to capture food.
 Large chewing mouthparts.

2 claws at the end of each leg

No tail. Abdomen terminates with 3 stubby wedge-shaped structures.

DARNER NYMPH AND ADULT

COMMON SKIMMER DRAGONFLY NYMPH

3 pairs of segmented legs extend from thorax

CLUBTAIL DRAGONFLY NYMPH

Credits: McCafferty, W. Patrick. *Aquatic Entomology*, 1981.

SIMILAR TO: damselfly

- A dragonfly's head is narrower than thorax and abdomen, while a damselfly's head is wider.

Diet: Insects (and larvae), other dragonfly nymphs, worms, small crustaceans. Will go after movement and even stalk prey.
Food for: Gamefish, frogs, birds, beetles, other dragonflies.
Habitat: Ponds, marshes, lake edges, shallow streams, slow streams and rivers
Movement: Climb and crawl on bottom. Some burrow. Can propel through water by sending water out their rear (rectal chamber).
Breathing: Through gill folds on rear area of body, and thin-walled body regions.
Water Quality Indicator: Group II– can exist under a wide range of water quality conditions; a large number indicates MODERATE water quality.

Life Cycle Corner

Incomplete metamorphosis

Last molt occurs with head out of water. Adult flies away.

Eggs deposited onto plant leaves/stems underwater. Sometimes eggs are just laid in shallow water.

Nymph hatches and molts 12 times.

