Damselfly groups—



American Rubyspot







Plains Forktail



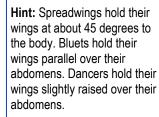
Vivid Dancer

Checklist of Damselflies Broad-winged damsels American Rubyspot

Spreadwings Great Spreadwing Spotted Spreadwing Northern Spreadwing Lyre-tipped Spreadwing



- **Double-striped Bluet**
- Boreal Bluet
- Tule Bluet
- Familiar Bluet
- Alkali Bluet
- Northern Bluet Plains Forktail
- Western Forktail



Great Spreadwing

Books

Common Dragonflies of the Southwest: A Beginner's Pocket Guide Kathy Biggs

Stokes Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies Blair Nikula, Jackie Sones, Donald & Lillian Stokes

Dragonflies and Damselflies of the West Dennis Paulson

Websites

http://www.boulderaudubon.org/dragonflies.htm - for common local species

http://www.odonatacentral.org/ --- for country-wide information



Dragonflies and damselflies have exoskeletons and must shed to grow. They do this several times as larvae in the water. The final molt (shedding) happens when waterbased larvae crawl out onto a stem, twig or rock, split out of their tootight shells, and become flying adults. It takes a while for them to become strong fliers and newlyhatched (tenerals) are fragile and vulnerable-easy prey!

Look for dragonfly and damselfly hatch cases on cattails, twigs, handy trees, the boardwalk and fishing piers at Walden Ponds.



Boulder County Parks and Open Space

Common Dragonflies



Twelve-spotted Skimmer

Dragonflies and damselflies are insects in the order Odonata, or "toothed ones." They are fierce predators, both as larvae growing in the water and adults after they emerge. They are told apart by these features:

<u>Dragonflies</u>	<u>Damselflies</u>
Sturdy, strong fliers	Delicate, weak fliers
Perch with wings out to side (see picture above)	Perch with wings folded over abdomen
Front and hind wings a different shape	Front and hind wings the same shape
Eyes touch, or nearly touch, at top of head	Eyes separated by gap– a "dumbbell" look



Dragonfly groups—

Darners . . . strong fliers that rarely perch



In a "mating wheel, a male clasps the female's head with tip of his abdomen while the female reaches with her abdomen to collect sperm from underneath his second segment. This leads to the heart-shaped arrangement seen to the left.

Paddle-tailed Darners in a "wheel"



Common Green Darners "in tandem"

Many species, like these green darners above, stay in tandem, with the male guarding his mate while she lays eggs. This is one way he ensures the offspring are his!

Clubtails







Pale Snaketail

Dot-winged Baskettail

Checklist of Dragonflies

Darners

- Variable Darner
- Paddle-tailed Darner Blue-eved Darner
- Common Green Darner

Clubtails

- Pale Snaketail
- Sulphur-tipped Clubtail

Emerald

Dot-winged Baskettail

Skimmers

- Calico Pennant
- Halloween Pennant M/F
- Western Pondhawk
- Dot-tailed Whiteface
- Widow Skimmer
- **Twelve-spotted Skimmer**
- Four-spotted Skimmer Blue Dasher
- Eastern Amberwing
- Common Whitetail
- Variegated Meadowhawk
- White-faced Meadowhawk
- Striped Meadowhawk
- Band-winged Meadowhawk
- Autumn Meadowhawk M/F
- Black Saddlebags



Calico Pennants

Males and females of many dragonfly and

damselfly species may

vary greatly in looks.

In some cases, you

different sexes as

could easily mistake the

entirely different species.

The male and female

and Halloween

other.

Pennants. Western

Pondhawk, Widow

"versions" of the Calico

Skimmer, and Common

Whitetail are unlike each

One way to learn these

variations is to watch carefully mating pairswheels and tandems-to see who goes together.



Widow Skimmer male





Blue Dasher



Western Pondhawk male



Dot-tailed Whiteface

Autumn Meadowhawks

Black Saddlebags



Skimmers mostly perchers and easier to watch!

Common Whitetail male



