



Newsletter

Dragonfly Conservation Europe

Volume 3
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Contents

Winter is Cold, Science is Multivoltine	2
DCE Instagram	2
8th European Congress on Odonatology – 23–26 June, Teresin, Poland	3
Short article on the history of dragonfly studies in Germany	9
Assessment to Plan-Report	14
A new emergence for the French dragonflies monitoring scheme (Steli): a path for a common monitoring scheme in Europe?	16
CIMaE: a project targeting high-altitude Odonata	18
Communication & Awareness	19
Upcoming conferences	20
Publications	23

Winter is Cold, Science is Multivoltine

by Adam Tarkowski

Happy New Year everyone!

It may be winter outside — frozen ponds, cold fingers, and adult dragonflies strictly limited to memories and slide decks — but dragonfly science clearly decided to be multivoltine this year. While larvae are buried in sediment and exuviae are waiting patiently for spring, ideas keep emerging, datasets are still molting, and analyses refuse to enter diapause.

Field season may be on pause: nets are dry, waders are airing out, and the only larvae we're handling come with error bars attached. But behind the scenes, things are heating up — papers are developing, projects are accelerating, and discussions are flying faster than an *Anax* that ignored the weather forecast.

So grab a warm drink, check your degree-day calculations, and join us as we kick off a new year that promises plenty of emergence — even if it's not happening at the pond just yet.

DCE Instagram

by Eleana Kazila

Instagram



ecoo2022

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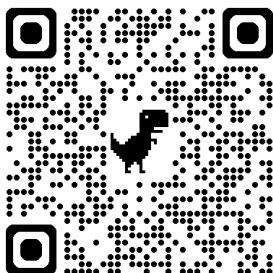
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Dragonfly Conservation Europe

Event

DCE has as goal to promote odonatology and the conservation of dragonflies and their habitats.

ecoo24.wordpress.com



DCE has an Instagram account (Dragonfly Conservation Europe). You can follow that in order to find updates of our vibrant European community, and please don't hesitate to send us your photos and stories - we would love to share them!

8th European Congress on Odonatology – 23–26 June, Teresin, Poland

by Adam Tarkowski



We are delighted to invite researchers, conservation practitioners, and dragonfly enthusiasts to the 8th European Congress on Odonatology, which will take place on 23–26 June in Teresin, located less than 40 km west of Warsaw, Poland. The congress will be hosted at the historic Niepokalanów Monastery, a unique and peaceful venue offering excellent conditions for scientific exchange and collaboration (map: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/xPrHVw1mi352txRf9>).

Registration is now open:

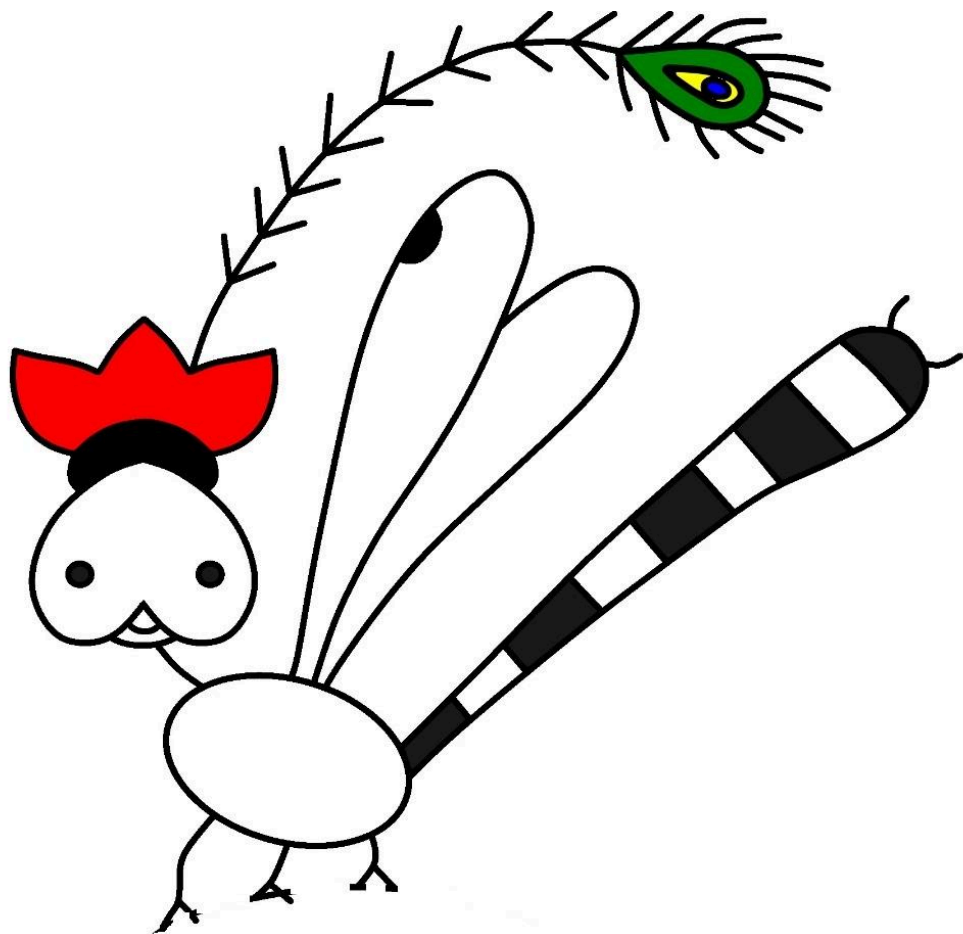
<https://ecoo24.wordpress.com/registration/>

We guarantee check-in from 22 June, but earlier arrival is also possible upon prior contact with the organizers to arrange the details. Accommodation at the monastery will also be available until 28 June for those who wish to extend their stay.



Source: <https://www.franciszkanie-warszawa.pl/>

The European Congress on Odonatology is an important platform for sharing the latest research, conservation strategies, monitoring approaches, and ecological insights related to dragonflies and damselflies. The scientific programme will include oral presentations, poster sessions, and opportunities for discussion covering a broad range of topics—from taxonomy and systematics to ecology, biogeography, climate change, conservation, monitoring and management actions. Equally important are the informal gatherings, which provide valuable space for networking, exchange of ideas, and strengthening collaboration within the odonatological community.



Oduś — the ECOO2026 mascot. Author: Edyta Buczyńska

Participants will be accommodated directly on the monastery grounds in 2–4 person comfortable, fully equipped rooms, ensuring convenient access to all congress activities. Hosting both accommodation and conference sessions in one location will foster close interaction, informal discussions, and networking among participants from across Europe and beyond. Dedicated space will also be available for participants who wish to display or sell books, scientific publications, equipment, or other odonatological materials.

For those who prefer alternative arrangements, participants are welcome to book accommodation independently. The organizers are currently in discussions to negotiate lower

rates; however, due to the high demand in the area and the many other events taking place at the same time, securing discounts is very challenging.

Upon request, the organizers will be happy to provide guidance and practical information regarding nearby hotels and guesthouses to help participants find suitable options close to the congress venue. Explore a range of nearby accommodations here: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/eEnyvGbrsPUvDsMS7>

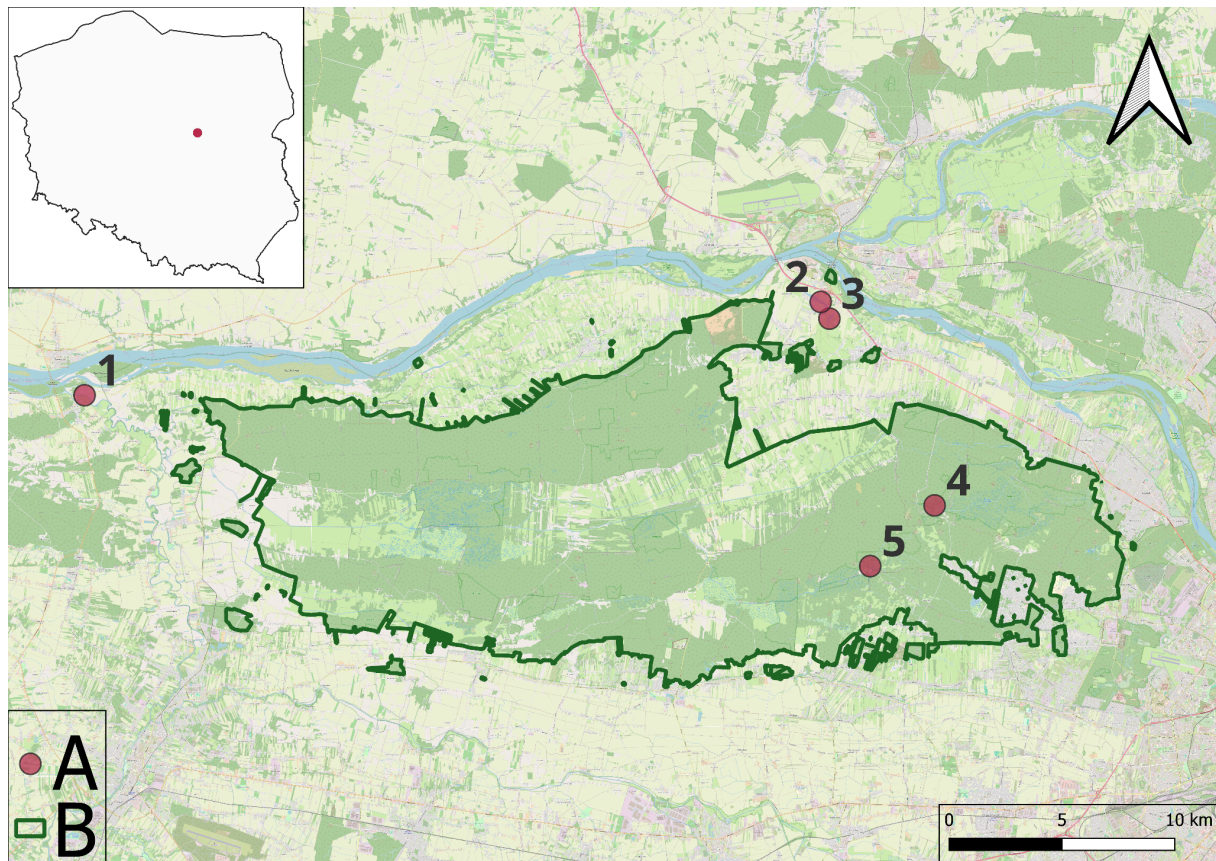
For those seeking higher-standard lodging, we suggest:

- Hotel Kuźnia Napoleońska (<https://kuzniahotel.pl>)
- Hotel Chabrowy (<https://chabrowy.pl>)

A highlight of the congress will be the field excursion on 25 June, during which participants will explore selected sites in the Kampinos region and the Vistula River valley. Located within one of Central Europe's most important lowland river systems, this area forms a dynamic landscape shaped by river processes and extensive forest complexes. The excursion will present a representative selection of sites illustrating the ecological diversity and natural character of the valley.



Butterfly Meadows near Truskaw, Photo: Paweł Buczyński



Sites preliminarily planned for the mid-conference trip. A – sites; B – boundaries of Kampinos National Park. Sites: 1 – The Bzura and Vistula rivers, 2 – “Dolne” Lake, 3 – “Górne” Lake, 4 – Długie Bagno, 5 – A forest pond. Map background: OpenStreetMap Standard. Author: Krystian Oldak

The excursion will provide a unique and immersive opportunity to observe odonate species in their natural habitats, allowing participants to witness firsthand the behaviors, interactions, and life cycles of these fascinating insects. Alongside field observation, there will be focused discussions on habitat conservation, restoration strategies, and management challenges, providing a platform to share knowledge and best practices. Importantly, participants will have the chance to encounter more than 30 dragonfly species, ranging from common to rare and threatened, which highlights the exceptional biodiversity of the region. This combination of direct observation and expert-led discussion



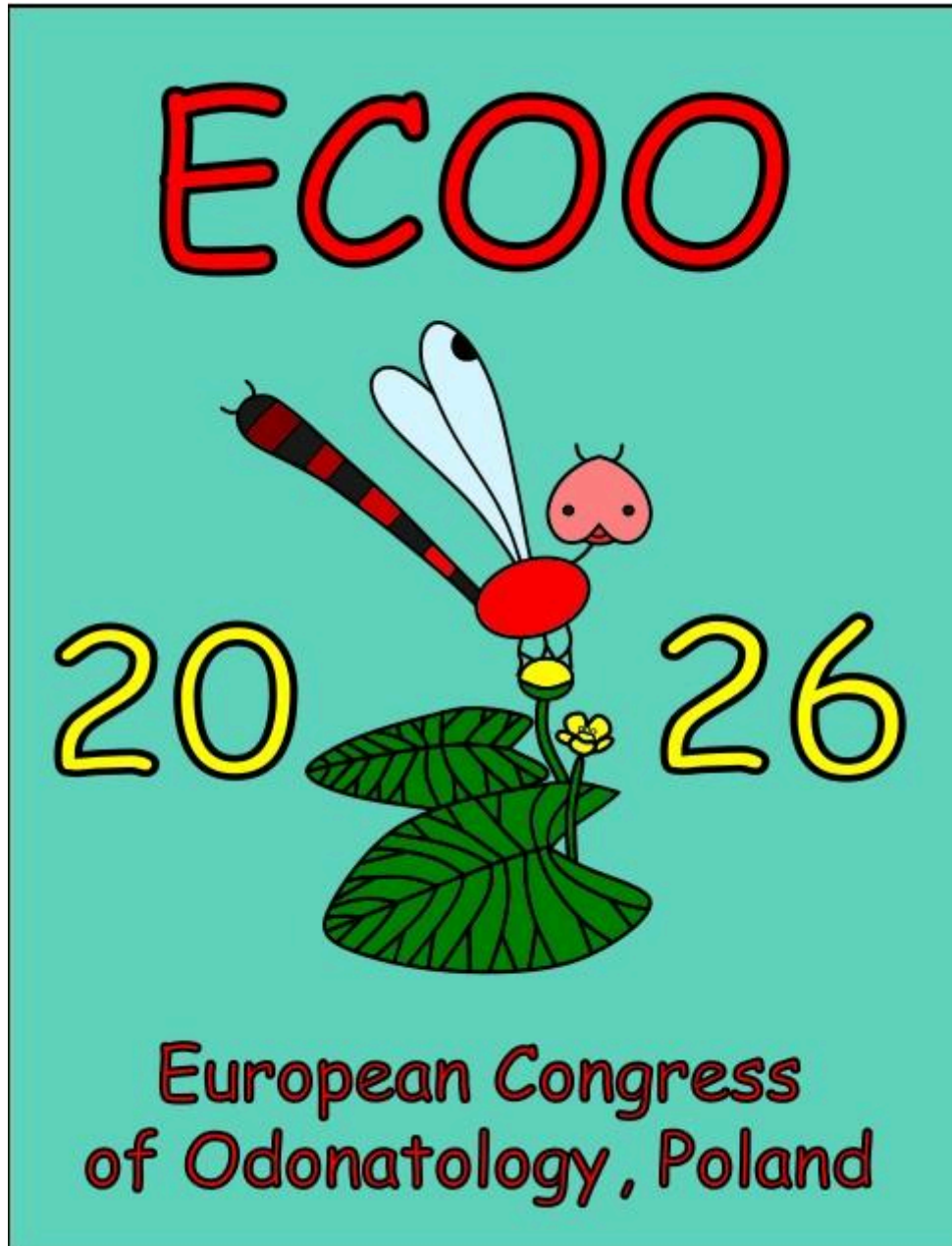
will offer an enriching experience for both seasoned researchers and newcomers, fostering scientific exchange and inspiring future conservation efforts.



Photos: Paweł Buczyńska

For those interested in further exploration, we are pleased to offer a post-conference excursion from **27 June to 3 July**. This extended trip will take participants to protected areas of northern Poland, including the renowned Tuchola Forest (Bory Tucholskie) region and Słowiński National Park. These regions are known for their pristine forests, extensive peatlands, dune systems, and coastal habitats, offering outstanding opportunities to study diverse dragonfly assemblages within large-scale protected landscapes.

We warmly encourage you to visit the official congress website for detailed information about the programme, accommodation and travel: <https://ecoo24.wordpress.com/>



Author: Edyta Buczyńska

Join us in Poland for an inspiring meeting of the European odonatological community — we look forward to your active participation in the 8th European Congress on Odonatology!

Short article on the history of dragonfly studies in Germany

by Klaus-Jürgen Conze

Today, the Society of German-speaking Dragonfly Researchers (GdO e.V.), founded in Bonn in 1982, is one of the largest scientific societies for odonatology worldwide, with approximately 700 members (www.libellula.org).

At an initial meeting in Münster in 1979, participants from Germany and neighboring countries (the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria) came together, giving rise to the name of the society, which may sound strange today but reflects its international character from the beginning onwards.

The first publications on dragonflies date back to the 17th and 18th centuries, which also name local species inventories (e.g., Ludwig 1799). The artistic representations from the era of copperplate engravings, e.g., by Sybille Merian or Rösel von Rosenhof, also from the 18th century, are also famous. However, it was not until the work of Linnaeus that systematic taxonomy and the description of dragonfly species in Europe progressed. A number of experts from Germany also contributed to this work and some of them are still known today as namesakes (e.g., Burmeister, Charpentier, and Hansemann).

It is interesting to note that, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries, there are strikingly frequent reports of dragonflies in connection with the observation of huge migratory swarms of tens of millions of animals, something we no longer see in Europe today (e.g., Altum, B. 1862). Most of these reports concern the four-spotted chaser (*Libellula quadrimaculata*).

A first summary list of dragonfly species in Germany was published by Burmeister in the Handbook of Entomology in 1839.

A hundred years later, in 1940, Fastenrath (1941) was able to identify *Oxygastra curtisii* as the 80th dragonfly species for Germany. Further new records followed in 2002 (*Boyeria irene*, Kuhn & Gutser 2003) and 2019 (*Pantala flavescens*, Günther 2019), so that there are currently 82 species officially listed on the checklist of dragonfly species in Germany (Jödicke & Lohr 2024, see www.libellula.org).

In 2011, the GdO published a bibliography of German dragonfly literature (approx. 6,000 titles) as Volume I of a Germany Atlas (Libellula Supplement 11). This was followed in 2015 by a distribution atlas (Volume II, Supplement 14) based on 1.17 million data records from more than 3,000 reporters from all federal states, as well as a red list and a treatise on species found as fossils in Germany. These works are still available today from the GdO.

Since Germany is structured as a federal republic and nature conservation is implemented at the state level in many areas, volunteer groups and working groups have organized themselves in almost all states to promote dragonfly studies in a decentralized manner. Examples include the Dragonfly Protection Association in Baden-Württemberg and the

Dragonfly Working Groups in Hesse, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, and Saxony. This also applies to eastern Germany, where dragonfly studies were organized in districts during the GDR era and good regional faunas were compiled (cf. Zimmermann, W. 1973 and 1985).

Today, all 16 federal states have their own distribution atlases, some of which have been updated several times already and offer a higher resolution than the above-mentioned D-Atlas.

An overview with information on the current atlases and red lists is included in the following bibliography.

Since reunification in 1990, advances in dragonfly research have been well documented in the publications of the GdO (Libellula and Libellennachrichten), and with the exception of the last three issues, Libellula can be downloaded free of charge from the homepage!

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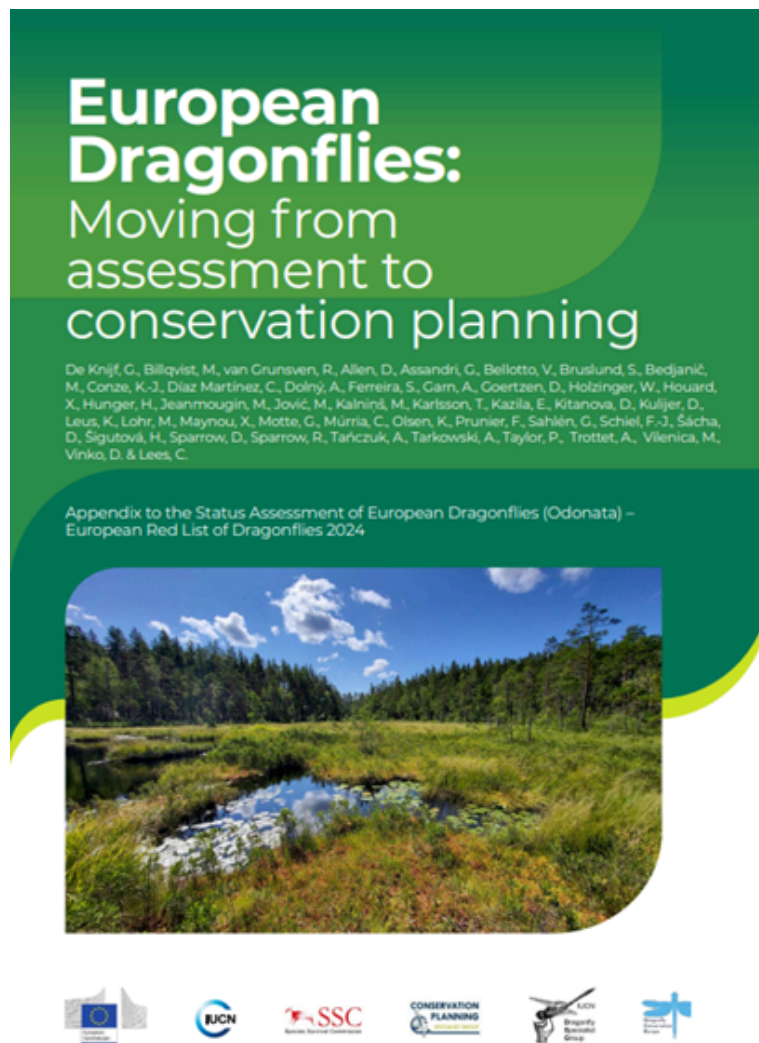
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Assessment to Plan-Report

by Roy van Grunsven



In 2024 the European Red list of dragonflies was published, describing the status of all species and their threats. Of course, the idea behind the Red List is not merely to describe how species are declining and going extinct, but it should serve as a starting point to improve the conditions for the threatened species. The Assessment to Planning (A2P) report is an appendix to the Red List and a first step towards this.

In 2024 37 dragonfly experts from 23 European countries participated in five online conservation action-planning workshops. In these workshops we focused on 30 threatened species and used the “Assess-to-Plan” (A2P) methodology of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Conservation Planning

Specialist Group (CPSG). The threatened species are mainly species that live in Mediterranean streams or in oligotrophic standing waters. The participants discussed the threats and actions needed. As the threats differ between species and locations this was done in three groups, one for species of Mediterranean streams, one for oligotrophic species in the lowlands and one for oligotrophic species in the mountains and at high latitude.

Many topics have been discussed but in the end the actions needed fall into three broad categories:

- Increase the capacity for effective conservation and monitoring.
- Actions to protect, restore and manage key habitats and populations.
- Improve support for dragonfly conservation by improved legislation and implementation of existing legislation.

The challenges and opportunities are described for the different groups of species. The A2P report can be a helpful basis when thinking about the conservation of dragonflies in Europe. Especially the wider view with input from many different countries with sometimes very different issues but also often surprisingly similar challenges is insightful.

This document also works as a guide for what we as DCE should focus on in the coming years.

The report can be downloaded at:

<https://iucn.org/resources/jointly-published/european-dragonflies-moving-assessment-conservation-planning>

A new emergence for the French dragonflies monitoring scheme (Steli): a path for a common monitoring scheme in Europe?

by **Martin Jeanmougin**

The [Steli \(Suivi temporel des Libellules\)](#) is the primary national monitoring scheme for dragonflies in France. Its objective is to collect standardized data on dragonfly abundance across the country using a dedicated protocol, in order to estimate species population trends. Developed through a collaboration between NGOs and institutional partners, the scheme is currently coordinated by the French National Museum of Natural History (Vigie-Nature team) and the Opie (Office pour les insectes et leur environnement), with funding provided by the French Office for Biodiversity. Initiated in 2011, the Steli has enabled the monitoring of more than 500 sites across France at least once, with the participation of over 200 odonatologists. However, Steli faces challenges in maintaining long-term participant engagement and recruiting new contributors. The complexity of the protocol, which involves time-consuming fieldwork and repeated surveys (nine visits throughout the entire flight season), has limited participation levels, thereby constraining the ability to derive robust estimates of species population trends at the national scale.

Based on these observations, discussions were initiated in 2025 among the project partners to reconsider the protocol, with a particular emphasis on improving its applicability for conservation practitioners. These exchanges resulted in a substantial simplification of the protocol, reducing the minimum requirement to no more than three visits over the entire flight season. In parallel, the evolving landscape of biodiversity monitoring schemes in France illustrated by the launch of CIMaE (see above), the [SOGAP program](#) focusing on exuviae monitoring of large river species, and the increasing adoption of 15-minute count approaches has helped to better delineate the objectives of Steli. In this context, a promising perspective is to concentrate sampling efforts and the establishment of new sites on ponds and other standing water habitats. This focus would enable the development of a synthetic indicator reflecting population trends of common species associated with these habitats. Such a 'dragonfly pond indicator' would represent a powerful tool for more broadly advocating the conservation of odonates and wetlands.

steli
Suivi temporel
des libellules

15 june 31 july

1st visit* 2nd visit 3rd visit

15 days min 15 days min

- 15 min (+15 min if new species spotted in last 2 min)
- 3 visits minimum *
- imagos by sighting and/or capture
Exuviae recorded out of protocol
- with good weather and after one day minimum of good weather conditions

Protocol still under construction

*Except in cold habitats, peatbogs, and mountains (altitude > 500m) where 2 visits are enough.

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These developments may be of interest to other European countries seeking to establish or strengthen national-scale dragonfly monitoring schemes. The Steli team would welcome the opportunity to share ideas, tools, and common objectives with European partners, with the aim of building a coordinated European network for dragonfly monitoring under the umbrella of the DCE, taking inspiration from the [European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme \(eBMS\)](#). The upcoming ECOO meeting in Poland would provide an appropriate opportunity to initiate and structure these discussions. All interested parties are invited to contact Martin Jeanmougin (martin.jeanmougin@mnhn.fr).

CIMaE: a project targeting high-altitude Odonata

by Philippe Lambret

In the context of significant biodiversity loss, France Nature Environnement Haute-Savoie (an NGO that aims to preserve biodiversity and nature) has led from 2021 to 2025 a PhD thesis under the supervision of the Savoie Mont Blanc University (USMB) and the National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (INRAE). Through this research, we examined the impact of climate change on pond biodiversity above the altitude tree line. Our project aimed to provide a scientific basis for taking action to bolster endangered Odonata populations and to help them adapt to climate change. Studies of Odonata, Amphibia and macrophytes species demonstrated, among other things, that the drying up of ponds affected 93% of the occupancy probabilities of the species studied, while 83% were influenced by the distance between ponds. Thus, we identified research topics requiring further attention, including species dispersal, drought resistance, and distribution trends.

Based on citizen science, we planned different actions to be carried out in European mountain regions from 2025 onwards. Firstly, you can contribute to the monitoring of the drying up of high-altitude ponds during the summer by using a mobile application (<https://www.fne-aura.org/actualites/haute-savoie/cimae-les-mares-daltitude-ont-besoin-de-vous/>). Secondly, to improve our understanding of the dispersal of mountain species, we are seeking help in collecting samples (exuviae, dead individuals or legs) of *Aeshna juncea* in South-Western Europe:

<https://www.fne-aura.org/actualites/haute-savoie/contribute-to-a-better-understanding-of-mountain-dragonfly-dispersal/>

You can find more information about the project at:

<https://www.fne-aura.org/actualites/haute-savoie/cimae-un-projet-de-recherche-inedit-pour-protoger-les-zones-humides-daltitude/>.

If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Marie Lamouille-Hébert (FNE Haute-Savoie/USMB) at marie.hebert@fne-aura.org.

Communication & Awareness

by Philippe Lambret

To help promote the conservation of dragonflies, the Office for the insects and their environment (Opie, a French NGO) released six short movies in the frame of the French National Action Plan for threatened dragonflies.

Through breathtaking landscapes of several regions of France and mind-blowing pictures of dragonfly adults and larvae, these visual gems directed by Fabien Mazzocco immerse you in the challenges we have to take up to preserve our biodiversity. Aimed at all audiences, they offer an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of protecting these fascinating insects.

You can watch these five minute movies for free on Opie's YouTube channel (don't forget to activate automatically generated subtitles by clicking on the cogwheel logo on the bottom right and selecting the translation into your language). You can share them as much as you wish during awareness campaigns. In addition, HD versions are available on request by email (at valerie-anne.lafont@insectes.org), so that you can broadcast the videos in the best possible quality. After a [general presentation](#) of the French National Action Plan for threatened dragonflies, you will discover more about the conservation of dragonflies living in [rivers](#), [brackish waters](#), [oligotrophic ponds](#) and [mountains](#). You may also promote the study of exuviae and citizen science through the [SOGAP protocol](#) that aims at monitoring Gomphids and priority Anisoptera along large rivers. Now your turn!

(The realisation of these movies was funded by the French Regional Directorate for Environment, Planning, and Housing (DREAL) of the Hauts-de-France Region.)

general presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grz92Oe7dtY>

rivers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N66L-IXMnC0>

brackish waters: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFC8TL9Zb1A>

oligotrophic ponds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrwNVdBY2pY>

mountains: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwleGY-ISRU>

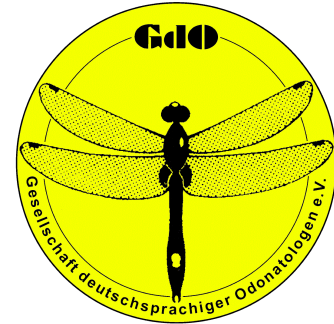
SOGAP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjPKw7roLnI>

Upcoming conferences

43rd Annual Meeting of the Gesellschaft deutschsprachiger Odonatologen (GdO)

The 43rd Annual Meeting of the Gesellschaft deutschsprachiger Odonatologen (GdO) will be held from 13–15 March 2026 in Saarbrücken, the capital of Saarland, Germany.

The meeting will take place at Saarrondo (Europaallee 4a), located directly next to the main railway station (“Eurobahnhof”), ensuring easy access for participants. The programme will feature scientific presentations, the GdO General Assembly, and social events in the city centre, offering ample opportunity for professional exchange and networking.



Detailed information on the venue, accommodation (including reserved hotel contingents within walking distance), travel options, and registration is available on the conference website: <https://eveeno.com/204869350>

Participants are invited to join colleagues for a weekend dedicated to odonatology in the German–French border region.

15th Conference “Dragonflies in Italy”

The 15th Conference “Dragonflies in Italy”, organised by Odonata.it, the Italian Society of Odonatology, will take place on 18–19 April 2026 at the Manifattura dei Marinati in Comacchio (Ferrara). The deadline for abstract submission is 15 March 2026, and further information on submission procedures will be provided shortly. As in 2024, the best student presentation will be awarded a prize of € 100. Additional information about registration and the conference will soon be available on the “Convegni” page of our website at www.odonata.it. During the conference in Comacchio, the Annual Members’ Assembly will also take place, during which the President and the other Board members for the 2026–2030 term will be elected.



15th European Conference on Ecological Restoration

Ecological restoration is now central to biodiversity policy. The UN declared 2021–2030 the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and the EU Nature Restoration Regulation sets binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems and protected habitats.



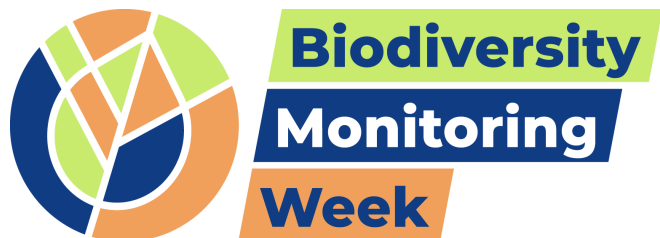
Stronger collaboration between scientists and practitioners is therefore essential - a key aim of the [Society for Ecological Restoration Europe](#) (SERE) conferences.

Although restoration often focuses on vegetation, it can also support threatened insects such as dragonflies. Dragonflies may serve as target, flagship, and indicator species in wetland restoration, strengthening the integration of insects into restoration practice.

Researchers are invited to present odonatological studies at the next SERE conference, which will take place in Brest (Brittany, France) on 24–28 August 2026 (www.sere2026.org). Registration opens on 7 March.

European conference for Biodiversity Monitoring

The inaugural edition of Biodiversity Monitoring Week (BioMonWeek) brings together monitoring experts from across Europe to strengthen transnational cooperation and coordination at multiple scales.



Guided by a vision to establish a high-impact biannual event, BioMonWeek connects science, policy, and business communities to exchange knowledge, build strong networks, and drive tangible societal impact. The shared goal is to support effective action in reversing the global biodiversity crisis.

By creating an open and welcoming space for the biodiversity monitoring community, the conference fosters a common culture and shared understanding of biodiversity monitoring in Europe, while advancing cross-border and cross-sector collaboration.

[BioMonWeek - European conference for Biodiversity monitoring](#), held in Montpellier 4-9 May.

8th European Congress of Conservation Biology (ECCB)

The 8th European Congress of Conservation Biology (ECCB) 2026 will take place from 6–10 July 2026 in Leiden, The Netherlands. Organised by the Europe Region of the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) and Leiden University (FWN/CML), in collaboration with Hortus botanicus, Wageningen University & Research (WUR), NIOO-KNAW, and supported by the Leiden Biodiversity Network, the congress will bring together researchers, policymakers and practitioners from across Europe and beyond.



Bringing together researchers, policymakers and practitioners in Leiden, the congress addresses one of the greatest challenges of our time: reversing biodiversity loss across terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems. Effective conservation requires not only scientific expertise, but also strong cooperation across disciplines and sectors. Throughout the week, participants will share knowledge, present innovative research, highlight successful collaborations, and build bridges between science, policy and society. Together, we will explore practical solutions and reflect on our key question: how can biodiversity be safeguarded effectively in the long term?

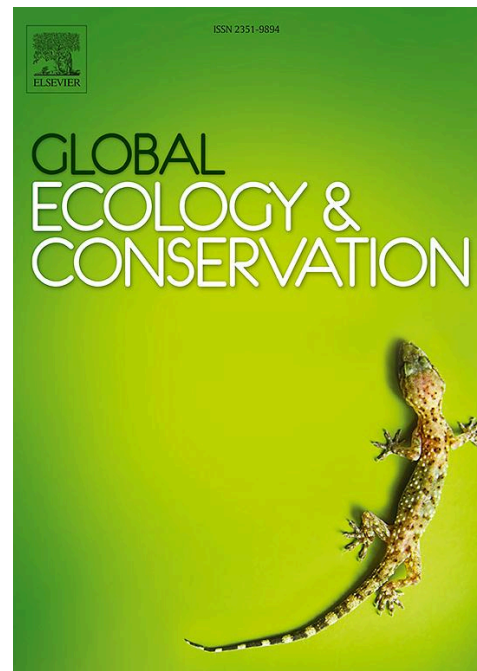
Registration is now open — secure your place and find information on fees and waivers here: <https://eccb26leiden.eu/eccb2026-registration-fee-waivers/>

Publications

Artificial ponds do not support the natural functional and taxonomic composition of alpine dragon- and damselfly communities

by Felix Puff, Christian H. Schulze, Roberto Novella-Fernandez, Andreas Hilpold, Stefan Pinkert, Elia Guariento

Alpine regions host diverse habitats and rich biodiversity. Yet, aquatic environments, crucial for many threatened alpine species, are underrepresented in conservation throughout the Alps. Among many factors, anthropogenization impacts alpine aquatic ecosystems. While anthropogenic ponds are proposed for biodiversity support, their suitability for the natural alpine fresh water biota remains unclear. Dragonflies and damselflies, with their ectothermic physiology and semi-aquatic life cycle, are greatly constrained by both temperature and habitat features, thus potentially facing additive constraints in alpine artificial waters. This study investigated Odonata communities in artificial and natural water bodies at 41 different elevations, analyzing abundance, diversity and traits associated with thermoregulation (body size and color lightness), life history (voltinism) and habitat preference (thermophily and habitat breadth). Temperature differently affected traits related to thermoregulation in dragonfly and damselfly communities, with an increase in body size and decrease in color lightness along with decreasing temperature (i.e. increasing elevation) in dragonflies and an increase in color lightness in damselflies. Concurrently, damselfly abundances strongly decreased towards cold temperatures. In both suborders thermophily and habitat breadth decreased with decreasing temperature, but these trends were less pronounced in anthropogenic sites. Trait variation of dragonflies follows trends predicted by thermal melanism and Bergmann's rule, while the absence of such trends in damselflies suggest limited thermoregulatory potential. The additive constraints of temperature and anthropogenic disturbance in alpine anthropogenic sites prevent alpine species from utilizing such water bodies and challenges their potential for nature conservation in the face of global warming and biodiversity decline.



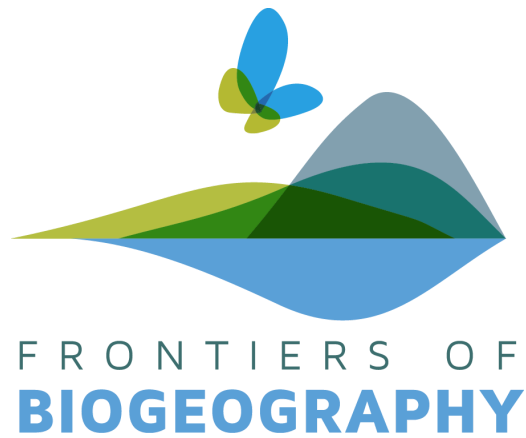
Link: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351989425003099>
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gecco.2025.e03708>

Ice age, current climate, habitat availability, and the diversity of European dragonflies and damselflies

by **Mónica Gómez-Vadillo, Joaquín Calatayud, Fernanda Alves-Martins, Cristina Ronquillo, Joaquín Horta**

Several studies show that species richness patterns are determined by current climate and Pleistocene climatic oscillations. Additionally, habitat availability is an important driver of current species diversity, especially in aquatic ecosystems where lentic (standing water) and lotic (running water) habitats play distinct roles in species composition and richness. Odonates, an order of aquatic insects, exhibit distinct adaptive traits in response to climate and to lentic and lotic habitats. In this work, we study the species richness patterns of European odonates and the influence of past and current

climate, and habitat availability. The study covers 124 species distributed across Europe (excluding Russia and all European islands except Great Britain and Ireland), divided into three groups: all odonates, lentic species, and lotic species. Notably, lentic species total 70% of the studied Odonata species, thus influencing overall species richness patterns. We analyzed their diversity in Northern and Southern Europe, divided according to the 0 °C Isotherm of the Last Glacial Maximum (21,000 years ago), using data on current and Last Glacial Maximum climate (temperature and precipitation), as well as on habitat data from land cover and hydrology GIS maps. Our results suggest that the species richness patterns of dragonflies and damselflies are largely determined by the water-energy balance, with temperature influencing the decline in richness towards the north and precipitation determining the decline towards the south. Past climate oscillations affect species richness in southern and northern Europe. Habitat availability also influences odonate diversity to a lesser extent, with a positive correlation between lotic species richness and their habitat availability. In contrast, lentic species richness showed a negative correlation with the availability of lentic habitats.



Link: <https://biogeography.pensoft.net/article/136933/>
<https://doi.org/10.21425/fob.18.136933>