

## Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii* - a return to Shropshire after 72 years absence

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On 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 Red-veined Darters *Sympetrum fonscolombii* were observed by J. Almond at Venus Pool (SJ5406). On 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2012 I attended Venus Pool accompanied by R. Kemp who determined the identification. The only previous recorded sighting in Shropshire was made at Whixall Moss in 1940 by 'Anon Shropshire BRC.' The darters were on the wing some distance out from the main bird hide, but using a telescope the single pale stripe on the side of the thorax was clearly visible. This is illustrated below in J. Almond's



photographs and one can also make out the blue coloration in the lower half of the eye.

The darters were clearly ovipositing and though this species is regarded as a scarce migrant there has been an increase in the number of breeding records in recent years (Smallshire & Swash, 2010). Red-veined Darter was recorded in a number of nearby counties during 2012 including Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire. Interestingly adults have been recorded at Belvide Reservoir, Staffordshire for

the last few years suggesting possible successful breeding at this site as opposed to an influx of new migrants (Perrin, 2012). The larvae are capable of rapid development enabling 2 generations per year in hot summers (Smallshire & Swash, 2010). Incredibly this was observed in some more southerly locations, individuals still being recorded in Cornwall on 22<sup>nd</sup> October (Parr, 2012).

During 2013 I visited Venus Pool on a number of occasions throughout the flight season but did not observe *S. fonscolombii* suggesting that breeding was not successful on this occasion.

**Recommendations:** Further return visits to Venus Pool

**Action:** Increase awareness of *S. fonscolombii* amongst Shropshire dragonfly recorders via newsletter and website.



### References:

Parr, A. (2012) Wildlife Reports: Dragonflies. **British Wildlife**, 24(2): 124-126

Perrin, V. (2012) Wildlife Reports: Dragonflies. **British Wildlife**, 23(6): 429-431

Smallshire, D. and Swash, A. (2010) **Britain's Dragonflies. A field guide to the damselflies and dragonflies of Britain and Ireland** . 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Hampshire: Wild Guides