

Blue-tailed Damselfly

Ischnura elegans

Insects · On the wing May-Sep



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A dark, slender damselfly, black along most of the abdomen with one vivid blue segment near the tip, giving a distinctive matchstick look. Females come in several colour forms — blue, violet, pink, olive and brown — which regularly confuses identification. It is one of the most tolerant damselflies, found at ponds, ditches, canals and even brackish or lightly polluted water around Dumfries.

BEHAVIOUR

Blue-tailed damselflies tolerate conditions many other species will not, including nutrient-rich and slightly brackish water, which is why they turn up in urban ponds and farm ditches. They fly weakly and low among vegetation and perch frequently. The multiple female colour forms are thought to reduce harassment by males, since only one form is recognised as a mate.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Narrow-winged damselflies (Coenagrionidae)
SIZE	Body 29–34 mm
STATUS	Native; common and notably tolerant of poor water quality

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