

Golden-ringed Dragonfly

Cordulegaster boltonii

Insects · On the wing Jun–Aug



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A large and unmistakable dragonfly: jet black with bold golden-yellow rings along the abdomen and brilliant green eyes. Females have a long spike-like ovipositor that makes them Britain's longest dragonfly. Golden-ringed dragonflies breed in acid, stony, fast-flowing hill burns and moorland streams, which makes upland Dumfries and Galloway a national stronghold.

BEHAVIOUR

Adults hunt powerfully along burns, woodland edge and open hillside, and will take large prey including other dragonflies and bumblebees. The female hovers vertically above shallow gravel and stabs her ovipositor repeatedly into the streambed to lay. Larvae bury themselves in silt and gravel and take up to five years to develop in cold running water.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Spiketails (Cordulegastridae)
SIZE	Body 74–84 mm · Britain's longest dragonfly
STATUS	Native; south-west Scotland is a stronghold

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