

Large Red Damselfly

Pyrrhosoma nymphula

Insects · On the wing Apr–Aug



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A slender damselfly with a bright red-and-black abdomen and black legs. Males are boldly red; females vary from largely red to almost entirely black along the top of the abdomen. It is usually the earliest damselfly to emerge each year and is common at ponds, ditches, canals and slow burns throughout the Dumfries area, including quite small garden ponds.

BEHAVIOUR

Damselflies rest with their wings folded along the body, unlike dragonflies, which hold them out flat. Large reds hunt small flying insects from perches among waterside vegetation and rarely stray far from water. Pairs fly in tandem, the male gripping the female behind the head, and eggs are laid into floating plant material. The larvae spend one or two years underwater as predators.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Narrow-winged damselflies (Coenagrionidae)
SIZE	Body 33–36 mm
STATUS	Native; common and widespread

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