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♂ Pacific Clubtail

Gomphus kribbi

This colorful dragonfly is usually seen away from water along trails and bare patches of ground or perched low in brush or weeds. When flushed they fly with a distinctive bounding, roller coaster-like flight. Males and females are similarly colored, though males may sometimes have green instead of yellow on their thorax.

Body— 1.75 to 2 inches

Wingspan— 2.5 to 2.75

Flight— April through July



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♂ Blue-eyed Darner

Aeschna multicolor

Blue-eyed Darners are probably the most commonly observed dragonfly around. Its most distinguishing feature is its overall bright blue appearance, and as the name says, blue eyes. It is one of our largest dragonflies and it is rarely seen perched.

Body— 2.5 to 3 inches

Wingspan— 3.25 to 4

Flight— April through November



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♂ 8-Spotted Skimmer

Libellula forensis

Body— 2 inches

Wingspan— 3 to 3.25 inches

Flight— April through September

The 8- and 12-Spotted Skimmers have very similar appearances, and in flight, are very difficult to distinguish. The 12-Spotted Skimmer is slightly larger in size. In overall appearance, the 8-Spotted seems more robust and less sleek than the 12-Spotted. In both species you can figure out which is which by counting the number of dark spots on one wing and multiplying by four. The white spots may be faded or absent on very young or very old individuals.



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♂ 12-Spotted Skimmer

Libellula pulchella

Body— 2 to 2.25 inches

Wingspan— 3.25 to 3.75

Flight— April through October



Livermore Area
Recreation & Park District
An independent special district
6941 San Ramon, Livermore, CA 94550

DRAGONFLIES

Dragonflies are robust insects living in our parks, flying near water, protecting territory, seeking food sources, and looking for mates. They are primitive creatures, surviving since the Carboniferous Era—300 million years ago, before dinosaurs and birds inhabited the earth! We have up to 38 species of these fabulous creatures in Alameda County.



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♂ Black Saddlebags

Traesella lacerata

These strong fliers are noted for a distinctive hindwing pattern. Black Saddlebags usually perch horizontally, allowing the black pattern to cast a shadow on their abdomen to remain cool during the heat of the day. They are often spotted foraging over grasslands away from water.

Body— 2.25 inches

Wingspan— 3.75 to 4 inches

Flight— April through October



Flame Skimmer
Libellula saturata

This is one of the brightest and most commonly observed dragonflies in our parks. That striking red color coupled with a bold nature means that many park visitors notice them and get a good view of these aerial acrobats. Flame Skimmers are perch-and-sally feeders, perching on twigs and tall weeds, and then venturing out to capture passing prey.



Body— 2 to 2.5 inches
Wingspan— 3.25 to 3.75 inches
Flight— April through November



Western Pondhawk
Erythemis collocata

The Western Pondhawk is a voracious predator. Preferring to perch on floating vegetation, particularly algae mats or low stems near the water's edge, they target large, low-flying prey— often their cousins the damselflies! Males and females both have green faces, but overall body color is very different with males being pruinose blue and females being emerald green. The green face color is a key field mark to tell the male apart from the similar looking Blue Dasher.



Body— 1.5 to 1.75 inches
Wingspan— 2.5 inches
Flight— April through October



Blue Dasher
Pachydiplax longipennis

The male Blue Dasher, though slightly smaller than the Western Pondhawk, looks almost identical in the field. The distinguishing characteristic is the difference in face color— the Blue Dasher has a white face. The female is very distinctive with buff/ yellow rectangular marks on a dark brown/ black background on the abdomen. When perched, both the male and female tend to cock their abdomens up and sweep their wings forward, or occasionally up and back.



Body— 1 to 1.5 inches
Wingspan— 1.75 to 2 inches
Flight— April through November