

Skillet Clubtail

Gomphus ventricosus

STATUS

Special Concern 

Not Listed



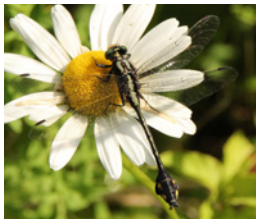
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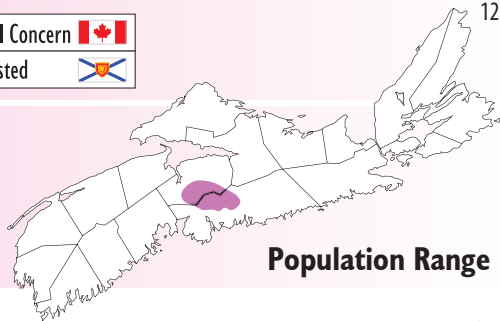
Species Description

The Skillet Clubtail is a 45-48 mm long dragonfly with a dark brown to black body, a yellowish green thorax, and a yellow stripe down the centre of the abdomen. It gets its name from the yellow-sided widened club at the end of its abdomen. Its eyes range in colour from green to turquoise. The abdomens of females appear thicker, with smaller clubs.



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Historical occurrences of this species originate from the Mount Uniacke and Shubenacadie River areas.



Population Range

Habitat

Skillet Clubtail larvae are typically found in slow-running rivers. They require rivers with silt or clay bottoms for burrowing, often accompanied by cobble and bedrock. As adults, they utilize forests and open areas in close proximity to rivers and return to the rivers to mate.



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Adults are elusive and difficult to spot but are most likely to be found close to rivers. Most likely to be sighted in late spring in summer.



Interesting Points

- Since it is rare to observe an adult in the wild, researchers often rely on searching for its exuviae (a shed cast of its exoskeleton) to detect populations.
- Skillet Clubtail are a type of dragonfly, which have three unique life stages; adult, larvae, and egg.
- There are only two known records of Skillet Clubtail in Nova Scotia, one in 1948 and one in 1992.



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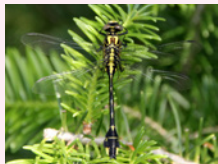


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Similar Species

Cobra Clubtail

In the Maritimes, the only other dragonfly with such a pronounced club on the abdomen is the Cobra Clubtail, a species which has only been recorded in the Saint John/Wolastoq River system. It has a slightly smaller club with smaller yellow spots and a darker face. The larvae of the two species are very similar and can be distinguished by the shape of their mouthparts.



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Threats to Survival

- Increasing urban development (degradation and loss of riparian habitat, human disturbance).
- Water pollution from agriculture and forestry practices (fertilizers, pesticides).
- Vehicle strikes on narrow, high-speed roads in close proximity to rivers.



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Destruction of riparian zone along river

How You Can Help

Learn to recognize this species, and document and report any sightings. Maintain healthy riparian buffers on your property and do not clear riparian vegetation. Avoid using pesticides and herbicides. Participate in citizen science forums such as iNaturalist and BugGuide.

Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

Contact: NS Department of Natural Resources: biodiversity@novascotia.ca

Info: www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Sighting Reports: Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre: john.klymko@accdc.ca;
1-866-727-3447; www.inaturalist.org; bugguide.net