

DRAGONFLY

Nymph / Larvae



Species: Insect

Scientific name: *Anisoptera*

Size: 6mm to 60mm (up to 6cm)

Key Features:

Some dragonflies inject their eggs into the stems of pond rush stems or into rotten wood just above the water line (hatching 2-5 weeks later), while other species of dragonfly drop one egg at a time as they skim over and touch the water, with these eggs hatching the following spring.

Once hatched, the dragonfly larvae will live in the pond for up to 5 years, moulting (shedding) its skin between 5-14 times as it grows. They are usually green or brown to camouflage into the pond plants.

Dragonfly larvae have 6 legs and wing-sheaths (wings hidden in a cover for when they change into a flying insect). Their eyesight is quite poor, instead using hairs, legs and antennae to sense prey near them.

Feeding:

Uses its lightning fast hinged jaw to shoot out and grab prey, eating snails, worms, other insect larvae/nymphs, leeches, tadpoles and even small fish.

However, the dragonfly larvae itself can be eaten by fish, water birds and even other (bigger) dragonfly larvae!

Amazing facts:

After several years, the dragonfly larvae will climb a water reed and hatch into a beautiful dragonfly ... but then will sadly live for only 1-2 weeks!