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Black Petaltail

Tanypteryx hageni

A member of the family Petaluridae ("Petaltail" dragonflies) this group derives its name from the robust, flat "cerci" (appendages on the tip of the abdomen), which resemble the petals of flowers. Although the family is widely distributed globally, only 11 species persist in widely scattered regions, relicts of a once much larger fauna. The Black Petaltail is the only *Tanypteryx* species in North America.



Ian Lane



Close up of cerci Ian Lane



Close up of head & thorax Ian Lane



Nymph Ian Lane

Characteristics

Length: males 5.5—5.9 cm, females 5.3—5.5 cm. Males and females are similar (females slightly larger). This distinctive dragonfly is black with yellow patterning on the head, thorax and abdomen. The face is yellow and the eyes are well separated (more reminiscent of damselflies) with two yellow spots in between. The pterostigma (coloured, thickened cell on the leading edge of each wing membrane near the tip), is black, long and narrow. Females have a short, curved ovipositor (appendage used to place and lay eggs). The 2.6-3.1 cm larvae (“nymphs”) are squat, black with hairy antennae and hair tufts on the abdominal segments. Larvae are unique in having an amphibious existence (not fully aquatic the way other dragonflies are), and excavate burrows in the wet mud of sloping seeps and saturated areas. Larvae can be observed sitting at the entrance to burrows as night falls waiting for prey items and may also make short foraging trips to find prey.

Status

Global Status:	G4
Provincial Status:	S3
BC List Status:	Blue (Considered to be of Special Concern)

Resources

For further information see

[Living Landscapes Royal BC Museum - Dragonflies](#)

[OdonataCentral](#)

[Northwest Dragonflyer](#)

[BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer: Species and Ecosystems Search](#)

A source for authoritative conservation information on thousands of plants and animals and hundreds of ecological communities in BC. From here connect to all provincial and federal recovery plans (including the SARA Registry), COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada), Identified Wildlife guidance and conservation requirements for specific species and ecological communities of conservation concern impacted by forestry activities) and links to E-Flora and E-Fauna (the Electronic Atlas of the Plants and Wildlife of British Columbia).

[British Columbia’s Coast Region Species & Ecosystems of Conservation Concern](#)

A joint venture resource providing comprehensive information on a range of species and ecological communities specific to the Coast Region of BC (including the South, Central and North Coast, Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii).

[Develop With Care Guidelines \(see Lower Mainland Region section\)](#)

Environmental guidelines for urban and rural land development in BC.

[Species at Risk & Local Governments a Primer for BC](#)

Source URL: <http://sccp.ca/species-habitat/black-petaltail>

Links

[1] <https://www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/exhibits/living-landscapes/northwest/dragonflies/index.htm>

[2] <http://www.odonatacentral.org/>

[3] http://nwdragonflier.blogspot.ca/p/web-resources_06.html

[4] <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/conservation-data-centre/explore-cdc-data/species-and-ecosystems-explorer>

[5] <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/factsheets/>

[6] http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare2006/develop_with_care_intro.html

[7] <http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca/>