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### Grappletail

*Octogomphus specularis*

A member of the family Gomphidae ("Clubtail" dragonflies). The name is derived from the club-like widening of the end of the abdomen (though this feature is not as pronounced in females and may be absent from some species) which resembles a small pair of grappling hooks. Another feature of this family is the widely separated eyes, a feature shared with "Petaltail" dragonflies. Clubtails are more sensitive to cooler temperatures and tend not to fly on cool or overcast days.



Male Nick Block



Close up of 'tail' on male Nick Block



Immature Stephen Dowlan



Male Ian Lane



Male Ian Lane

## Characteristics

*Length: males 4.6—5.0 cm, females 4.4—4.5 cm.* Males and females similar in colour pattern. The face is yellow-green striped with black, the eyes greenish-black or black and yellow. The top and sides of the thorax are pale green to green-yellow with a broad black lateral stripe on each side. The abdomen is nearly all black and narrow, with the tenth segment being the widest. Males have a broad, spiky abdominal tip. Females have slightly more yellow patterning on the abdomen (mid-dorsal line extends down to the seventh abdominal segment and lateral spotting is more extensive). The pterostigma (coloured, thickened cell on the leading edge of each wing membrane near the tip), is narrow and black. The 2.4 cm larvae (“nymphs”), have antennae with four segments, the third segment being half as wide as long. The abdomen is oval with a rounded, upturned tip and short lateral spines on the abdominal segments. Larvae burrow into substrate with just the abdominal tip protruding, using it to breathe by pumping water in and out through it.

## Status

**Global Status:** G4

**Provincial Status:** S2

**BC List Status:** Red (Candidates for- Extirpated, Endangered, or Threatened status)

## Resources

### For further information see

[Living Landscapes Royal BC Museum Dragonflies](#)

[Odonata Central](#)

[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**

Learn what species are at risk in your area, search by name, habitat type, regional district and forest district.

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**Source URL:** <http://sccp.ca/species-habitat/grappletail>

#### **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](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](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare2006/develop_with_care_intro.html)

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