

Survey of Dragonflies and Damselflies at King's Pond (Alton) in 2026

Survey Visits

Survey visits recording Odonata (Dragonflies & Damselflies) were carried out on these dates:

Date	Time	Temp. in shade	Sun / cloud cover
May 9 th	14:00 – 14:35	20°C	Sun with occasional cloud
May 23 rd	10:55 – 11:25	26°C	Clear sky
June 30 th	14:45 – 15:50	24°C	Sun with occasional cloud
July 18 th	15:10 – 16:10	25°C	Sun with slight haze
August 25 th	12:00 – 12:55	23°C	Sun with occasional cloud
September 29 th	11:10 – 11:55	22°C	Sun with occasional cloud

Survey Results

Date	Species of Dragonfly or Damselfly Observed
May 9 th	None
May 23 rd	None
June 30 th	Common Blue Damselfly
July 18 th	Common Blue Damselfly
August 25 th	Common Blue Damselfly, one Common Darter Dragonfly
September 29 th	Possible pair of Willow Emerald Damselfly (brief glimpse)

Thus, there were only two species definitely observed, Common Blue Damselfly (*Enallagma cyathigerum*) and Common Darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*). In September a pair of damselflies were observed briefly, which based upon their robust size could have been Willow Emerald (*Chalcolestes viridis*).

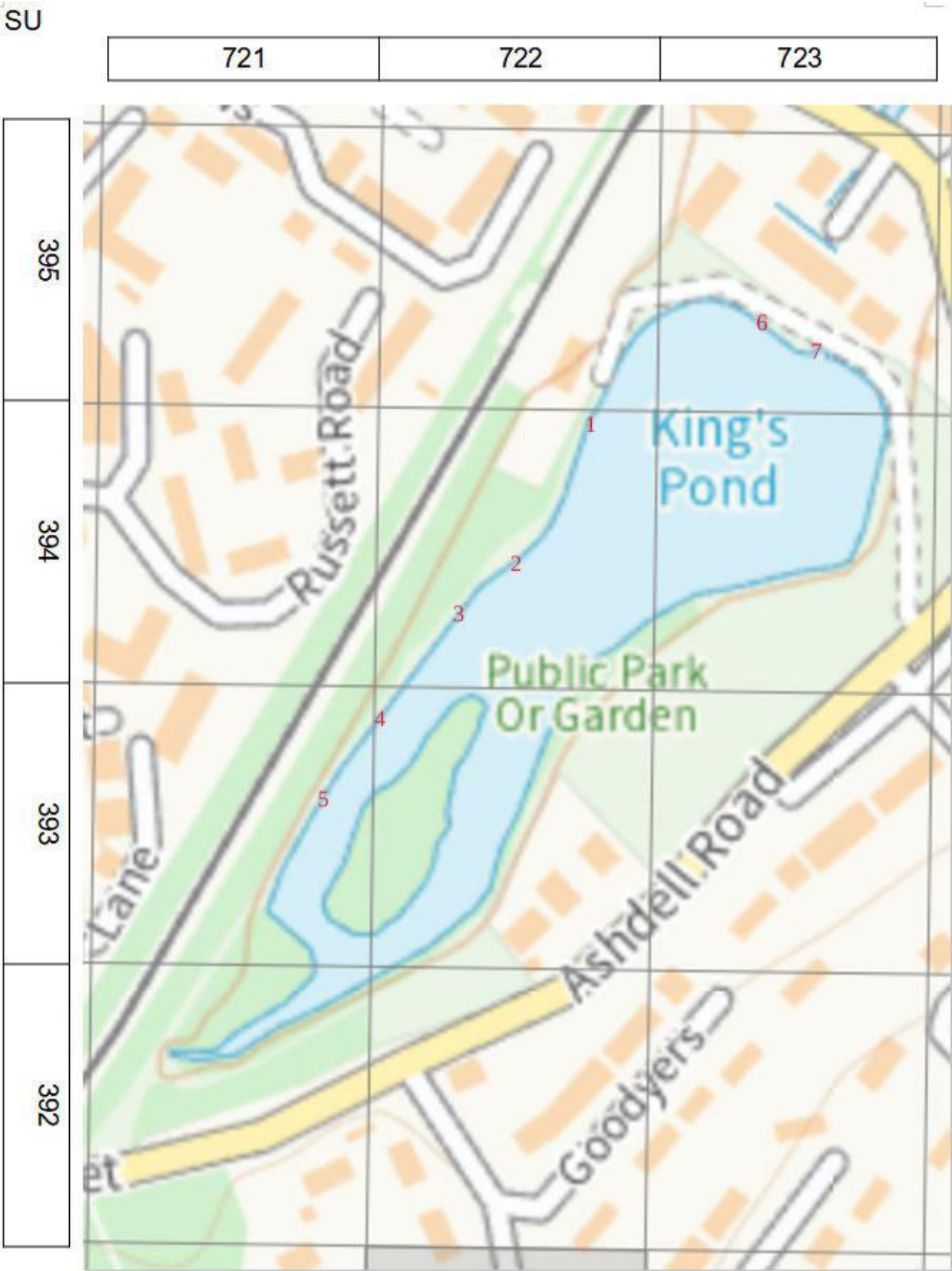
The only points around the pond where Odonata were observed are shown numbered in red in Figure1. The numbers of each species observed at each point on each date are shown in the table below.

	30 th Jun	18 th Jul	25 th Aug	29 th Sep
Point 1	EC: 6-20	EC: 6-20	-	-
Point 2	EC: 4	EC: 3	SS: 1	-
Point 3	EC: 3	EC: 3	-	-
Point 4	EC: 6-20	EC: 6-20	-	-
Point 5	EC: 6-20	-	-	CV: 2 ??
Point 6	-	-	EC: 2	-
Point 7	-	EC: 5	-	-

Note: The count classes 1, 2-5, 6-20, etc are a surveying standard used by the British Dragonfly Society.

The southern end and Ashdell Road side of the pond failed to yield any sightings.

Figure 1: Places where Odonata were observed



Note: Map extract contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright.

Discussion

The total of only two (possibly 3) species of Odonata observed at King's Pond, across the period May to September, is very low for a lowland pond of this size.

The Common Blue Damselfly is known as a species that will tolerate nutrient enriched conditions and may dominate the dragonfly fauna of large eutrophic ponds or lakes. Although, the Common Blue was the most frequently observed species, the numbers seen would be considered to be quite low. In a water body the size of King's Pond one would expect to easily see numbers of 100+ on good flight days. During the August visit a pair of Common Blue were seen flying in tandem, however, at no time was any actual breeding behaviour observed (copulating pairs and/or ovipositing females).

From July onwards (sometimes through to November and December) one would expect to see many Common Darter dragonflies, not just the one individual male observed in August.

While it was pleasing to glimpse a pair of what may have been Willow Emerald damselflies, this was not unexpected. This highly mobile species has been rapidly spreading west and north across England having arrived from continental Europe a few years ago.

At some point during the period surveyed one would expect to have observed the following additional species, at a minimum, assuming reasonable water quality together with reasonable growth of submerged and emergent vegetation:

Damselflies:

Large Red Damselfly (*Pyrrhosoma nymphula*)

Blue-tailed Damselfly (*Ischnura elegans*)

Dragonflies:

Broad-bodied Chaser (*Libellula depressa*)

Southern Hawker (*Aeshna cyanea*)

Migrant Hawker (*Aeshna mixta*)

Emperor Dragonfly (*Anax imperator*)

During the survey visits, attempts were made to find any shed larval skins (exuvia), which are usually found on marginal emergent vegetation. None were found. However, in a way this was not surprising since there was very little emergent vegetation, just bare mud/silt bank(s) around the pond. Likewise there appeared to be little if any pondweed or other submerged waterweed which would normally provide habitat for the larval stages of many dragonfly and damselfly species. Another factor militating against the development of the larval stages of dragonflies and damselflies was the presence of large shoals of sizeable fish (often up to 50/75cm in length), presumed to be carp.

In conclusion, the population of dragonflies and damselflies at King's Pond found by this survey was very restricted both in number of species and the number of individuals.

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8th October 2026