

# Bulletin of the Oregon Entomological Society

## 2011 Oregon *Aeshna* Blitz *Steve Gordon*

Since 1999, Oregon dragonfly enthusiasts have conducted an annual field trip termed the *Aeshna* Blitz. Usually held in late August or early September, the Blitz is geared toward the prime season for the Aeshnidae (darner family). At a strategic planning meeting in February, the site for that summer's Blitz is decided. As past locations indicate, the opportunities for finding darners and other species is high: Gold Lake, Camas Prairie, Anthony Lake, Alvord Desert, Sparks Lake, John Day River, Rogue River Valley, and so on, you get the idea. Past Blitzes have yielded *Aeshna constricta*, *A. walkeri*, *A. juncea*, *A. sitchensis*, and *A. subarctica* (Lance-tipped, Walker's, Sedge, Zig-zag, and Subarctic Darners) and others. This year's *Aeshna* Blitz was held at Horse Lake in Douglas County on Saturday, 27 August. The group began convening at Broken Arrow Campground on Thursday.



Several *Aeshna* Blitz attendees at Horse Lake, 27 August. Photo by Jim Johnson.

This year's attendees were: Steve Berliner, Sherry Daubert, Steve Gordon, Jim Johnson, Cary Kerst, Ron Lyons, Dale and Elva Paulson, Steve Valley and his grandson, Max Speedrow, and Josh and Michelle Vlach with their new daughter, Xabrina.

Small groups of participants stopped at Salt Creek at the outlet of Gold Lake in Lane County on the way to or coming home from the Blitz. At this nice spot they recorded a healthy number of *Octogomphus specularis* (Grappletail), including mating pairs, *Somatochlora albicincta* (Ringed Emerald), *Ophiogomphus morrisoni* (Great Basin Snaketail), *Argia vivida* (Vivid Dancer), and *Ischnura erratica* (Swift Forktail) (26 Aug. is a new Oregon late date). A *Macromia magnifica* (Western River Cruiser) along the North Umpqua River southwest of Windigo Pass was a new Oregon late date record on 26 August.



Left to right: Steve Berliner, Max Speedrow, Cary Kerst, Sherry Daubert, Jim Johnson, Steve Gordon, Josh Vlach holding Xabrina, Michelle Vlach, Elva Paulson, Dale Paulson, Steve Valley (not pictured: Ron Lyons). Photo by Steve Valley.

From the east side of Crescent Lake in Klamath County, one group found *Aeshna canadensis* (Canada Darner) and *Anax junius* (Common Green Darner). On Friday the 26th, a team covered the area north of Diamond Lake and observed *Ophiogomphus morrisoni* (Great Basin Snaketail), *Cordulegaster dorsalis* (Pacific Spiketail), *Cordulia shurtleffii* (American Emerald), *Epitheca spinigera* (Spiny Baskettail) (26

Feel free to distribute this newsletter to others.

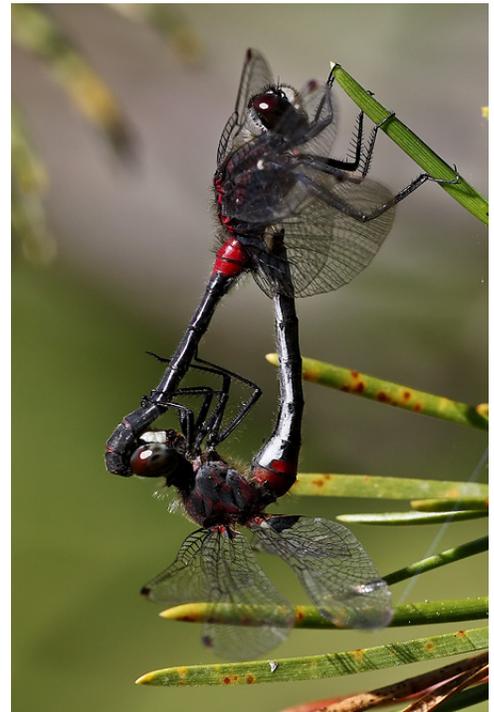
Submit content to **Ron Lyons** (pondhawk@uci.net). To be included on the distribution list contact **Jim Johnson** (jt\_johnson@comcast.net).



Pacific Spiketail (*Cordulegaster dorsalis*) at Lake Creek, north end of Diamond Lake. Photo by Jim Johnson

Aug. is a new Oregon late date), and *Argia emma* (Emma's Dancer).

On Saturday at Horse Lake (elevation 5, 217 feet), all thirteen Blitz participants convened and recorded twenty species. *Aeshna interrupta* (Variable Darner) dominated the *Aeshna* scene with a few *A. palmata* (Paddle-tailed) found, as well. *Cordulegaster dorsalis* (Pacific Spiketail), *Cordulia shurtleffii* and *Somatochlora semicircularis* (American, one female, and Mountain Emeralds) were observed, and *Leucorrhinia hudsonica* and *L. glacialis* (Hudsonian and Crimson-ringed Whitefaces) were common, including many mating pairs. *Sympetrum costiferum*, *S. obtrusum*, and *S. pallipes* (Saffron-winged, White-faced and Striped Meadowhawks), *Lestes congener*, *L. disjunctus*, *L. dryas*, and *L. unguiculatus* (Spotted, Northern,



Copulating pair of Crimson-ringed Whitefaces (*Leucorrhinia glacialis*) at Horse Lake. Photo by Ron Lyons.

Emerald, and Lyre-tipped Spreadwings), and *Nehalennia irene* (Sedge Spite) (27 Aug. is a new Oregon late date) were among other highlights.



Two dragonfly hunters at Horse Lake: Steve Gordon on the left; Max Speedrow on the right. Note the expert net handling in both cases! Photo by Ron Lyons.

Cary's night light attracted hundreds of caddisflies and an adult antlion, and Steve Valley found a *Monochamus scutellatus oregonensis*, a beautiful, long horned beetle. Snakeflies and Pandora Moths were other interesting insects observed on the trip.

On the way home from the Blitz, Cary Kerst and Steve Gordon stopped at a constructed wetland pond at a lower elevation (approximately 3,130 feet) called Thorn Prairie in Douglas County where they recorded thirteen species, including *Aeshna umbrosa* (Shadow Darner), *Cordulegaster dorsalis* (Pacific Spiketail) (a dead female found floating in the pond), *Erythemis collocata* (Western Pondhawk), *Libellula luctuosa*, *L. pulchella* (Widow

and Twelve-spotted Skimmers), *Plathemis lydia* (Common Whitetail), *Sympetrum corruptum* (Variegated Meadowhawk), and *Archilestes californica* and *Lestes congener* (California and Spotted Spreadwings). At a pond in Stewart Park in Roseburg they found *Libellula saturata* (Flame Skimmer), *Pachydiplax longipennis* (Blue Dasher), and *Enallagma carunculatum* (Tule Bluet) as well as an amazing density of *Libellula luctuosa* (Widow Skimmer) and *Tramea lacerata* (Black Saddlebags).

While there were no new county records at this year's Blitz, four new Oregon adult late date records were established, and a total of 43 odonate species were recorded by the group.

## The Brief History of *Paltothemis lineatipes* in Oregon *Jim Johnson*

What a long, strange trip it was . . . Steve Valley and I made a late-summer weekend trip to the Alvord Basin a number of years ago. Some damage to my truck was incurred during the late-night drive to the hinterlands on the east side of Steens Mountain (ask me about it over a beer sometime) and the next day we had a flat tire—I mean a viciously, irreparably flat tire while driving the gravel Fields–Denio Road. But then I had one of the most surprising finds of my odonatological “career” that I could imagine. I guess the Universe had to get back into balance somehow.

We were at Little Cottonwood Creek which flows out of the Pueblo Mountains a few miles south of Fields on 25 August 2001. (Everyone I know just calls it “Cottonwood Creek”.) It was around 10:00 AM and already the temperature was uncomfortably hot. There is a population of *Cordulegaster dorsalis* (Pacific Spiketail) on this stream, which is always fun to see, but we didn’t expect much else besides the odd *Argia vivida* (Vivid Dancer).

Suddenly, a chunky, red dragonfly zips by heading upstream. *Libellula saturata* (Flame Skimmer), I thought—a rather scarce, but not unheard of species in the Alvord Basin. I watched for it upstream when I noticed it coming back my way. It flies by me, I swing, and it’s in the net. As I fish for it in my net bag, I still think it’s a *Libellula saturata*—it’s the right size with lots of orangish-red color on the body and in the wings, but it can be hard to see what’s in your net under very bright sunshine.

When I pull the libellulid out of my net and finally get a good look at it, my eyes pop right out of my head. It isn’t a *Libellula* at all—it’s a *Paltothemis lineatipes*, the Red Rock Skimmer! This is a primarily southwestern species of rocky streams which has been recorded northward to Shasta and Lassen Counties, California. It wasn’t known in Nevada, the border of which is only about 12 miles away from Cottonwood Creek, but here is Oregon’s first! I ran up to the parking area to let Steve know, and when I yelled my discovery at him, his response was simply a look of disbelief. Producing the specimen changed that, however.

We spent the rest of the day on the stream, camped in the adjacent parking area, and spent a significant portion of the following day on the stream too. We caught two more *Paltothemis* and had sightings of one or two others, one of which was a female ovipositing in the creek (Johnson et al., 2002; Johnson & Valley, 2005).

*Paltothemis lineatipes* was only seen a few more times at Cottonwood Creek over the course of a few years after that initial discovery—always along the more sparsely vegetated stretch of the stream near the Fields–Denio Road. I collected one the year after the discovery on 4 August 2002, and that was the last time for me. Eric Coombs last saw the species there in 2003 or 2004. It also hasn’t been found anywhere else in Oregon (and is still unrecorded in Nevada, although it must be in that state).

Cottonwood Creek has been visited by various odonatists a number of times in recent years—somewhat regularly if infrequently, and there has been no further sign of *Paltothemis*. This area is obviously near the edge of the species’ range, and because stream levels can vary widely in this arid region, depending on precipitation and the winter snowpack at higher elevations, the lack of *Paltothemis* for a period of years is perhaps not surprising. Think of it as a tidal ebb and flow of a species’ range driven by environmental factors. Maybe they are always there, but in such low numbers that they often avoid detection during typically short, infrequent visits. That seems unlikely for such a conspicuous species, however.



A male *Paltothemis lineatipes* (Red Rock Skimmer) in Arizona. Photo by Jim Johnson.

An apparent two-day “explosion” of *Paltothemis lineatipes* was observed near San Diego, California, in March 2004 (Aguillard, 2004) which suggests some potential for mass movements in this otherwise sedentary species (as far as anyone is aware). Perhaps an irruptive event like this is what brought the species to Oregon, if only temporarily.

So keep an eye out for *Paltothemis lineatipes* in Oregon during your travels. Males have a dark red body and eyes with irregular black markings on the thorax and abdomen; the wing bases are suffused with reddish-orange, but otherwise clear. The female largely lacks reddish hues being gray or tan with irregular black markings similar to the male; her wings are clear, lacking the orange suffusion. They often perch flat on streamside rocks when they are not flying up and down streams. Let us know if you happen to come across any in the state.

### References

- Aguillard, D. 2004. Breaking News—*Paltothemis lineatipes* Explosion in California. ARGIA 16(1): 28.
- Johnson, J., E. Coombs, and S. Valley. 2002. Recent Highlights in Oregon. ARGIA 14(2): 11–13.
- Johnson, J. and S. Valley. 2005. The Odonata of Oregon. Bulletin of American Odonatology 8(4): 101–122.

## New County Record for *Aeshna constricta*, the Lance-tipped Darner (Odonata: Aeshnidae) *Ron Lyons*

*Aeshna constricta* does not have an extensive history as a recognized member of the Oregon Odonate fauna.

- Joe Schuh (1936) reported a specimen collected by H.A. Scullen from Anthony Lake in the Blue Mountains of Baker County, 7 August 1929. The sex is unstated.
- Jim Johnson and others (Gordon & Kerst 2006) added another point with specimens collected at Lake of the Woods in Klamath County during the 2005 *Aeshna* Blitz. The species has been found at that location repeatedly since then.
- Norman Barrett added a location at Jack Springs in Jackson County on 02 August 2009.
- Jamie Simmons and Hendrik Herlyn added additional points in Benton County in July 2009 and 2011.

The full list of reported locations can be found at <http://OdonataCentral.org/>.

The Schuh report deserves further discussion.

Herman A. Scullen (1887–1981) became an Instructor in Beekeeping at the Entomology Department of OSU in 1920 and remained at OSU throughout his career eventually becoming an emeritus professor in 1953. A number of specimens collected by Scullen are present at OSAC. Unfortunately, Johnson and Valley (2005) were unable to locate the Scullen specimen reported by Schuh so its identification could not be verified. Schuh must have had this specimen available when he wrote his thesis since a picture of its head is shown in Figure 17 (page 194) of his work. However, using the Identification Chart F in Kerst and Gordon (2011), the T-spot in this picture looks more like one from *Aeshna umbrosa* or possibly *Aeshna palmata*. Using the same chart, the picture above in Figure 16, labeled as *Aeshna palmata*, could conceivably be *Aeshna constricta*. Was there merely a transcription/photographic error? It is possible that the specimen no longer exists as indicated by Johnson and Valley. However, a number of Scullen specimens have found their way into collections around the country as evidenced from published records for specimens from Crater Lake National Park, so this is not completely certain. Finding it however would not be easy. It

would be interesting in the sense that Scullen's primary interest was wasps so this was likely a serendipitous catch.

Because Paulson (1997) found *constricta* locally common at ponds in eastern Washington, Johnson and Valley indicated that its occurrence in eastern Oregon seemed likely, although recent surveys had come up empty handed, perhaps due to the drought conditions at the time. Paulson (2009) (with respect to isolated records from the plains) indicated that it might expand its range during wet years, then contract during droughts. There was certainly no drought this year.

This past summer, Marianne Kaplan photographed a female aeshnid during the second week of August around 5 PM near her home. Marianne, a naturalist from La Grande who has attended NW Lepidopterists' meetings in Corvallis, began photographing odonates this year, expanding her areas of expertise. Marianne made the initial identification of *A. constricta* based on Kerst and Gordon, but was uncertain of the result because of the limited information (one point) shown for its distribution in Oregon. The picture was submitted to Jim Johnson who confirmed the identification. Jim submitted the record to OdonataCentral.org for inclusion in the national Odonate Database.

The location of Marianne's find, the edge of Ladd Marsh (a few miles SE of LaGrande, Union Co.) in the NE corner of the state has GPS coordinates N 45° 17.24' W 117° 57.80'. This find is a new county record and the first confirmed specimen found east of the Cascades. Its presence is in line with Johnson and Valley's expectations. For what it is worth, Marianne's record is relatively near the Baker County location of the lost Scullen specimen.



Female *Aeshna constricta* (Lance-tipped Darner) at Ladd Marsh, Union County, Oregon. The first for Union County. Photo by Marianne Kaplan.

Photographically, the appendages of the *Aeshna constricta* males are difficult to separate from those of *A. palmata* and to a lesser degree *A. umbrosa* when viewed from the top or from the side. Other characteristics are needed to make a positive separation. On the other hand, with regards to the female Paulson (2009) writes that it has "pale spots on segment 9 of abdomen large and square, distinctly larger than those on segment 8 and extending lower on sides, unique among female darners".

Of the adjacent states, the species is widespread in Washing-

ton and is known from northern Idaho and northwestern Nevada. No specimens have been reported from California (although California was listed in many references before 2001). At the moment it appears that the distribution of *constricta* extends into Oregon from

the north probably throughout the central valley, and given the southernmost locations in Klamath and Jackson counties probably into northern California as well. Its distribution in eastern Oregon requires further data.



Ladd Marsh, Union County, Oregon, where *Aeshna constricta* (Lance-tipped Darner) was found. Photo by Marianne Kaplan.

Thanks to Jim Johnson for pointing out some data I had overlooked in the initial draft of this article.

## References

- Gordon, S and C. Kerst. 2006. 2005 *Aeshna* Blitz—the Best Ever. ARGIA 17(4): 10–11
- Johnson, J. and S. Valley. 2005. The Odonata of Oregon. Bulletin of American Odonatology 8(4): 101–122
- Kerst, C. and S. Gordon. 2011. Dragonflies and Damselflies of Oregon. OSU Press
- Paulson, D. 1997. The Dragonflies of Washington. Bulletin of American Odonatology 4(4): 75–90.
- Paulson, D. 2009. Dragonflies and Damselflies of the West. Princeton Field Guides
- Schuh, J. 1936. A Contribution to the knowledge of the Odonata of Oregon. Master's Thesis, Oregon State University, Corvallis Oregon

## Pins to Envelopes *Cary Kerst*

The Oregon State University Arthropod Collection has a number of cabinet drawers of pinned Odonate specimens. Pinned specimens require considerable cabinet space for storage, and specimens are less secure from damage by pests. The modern method of storing Odonata specimens is to place them in polypropylene envelopes after processing. The data for each specimen is printed on a 3 × 5 card and placed inside the envelope.



I have begun the process of moving the pinned specimens into envelopes. This is a time-consuming procedure involving relaxing specimens in a moist air-tight environment. After relaxing, the specimens are removed from pins, positioned, and placed in an acetate envelope along with labels. After air drying, the specimen data are entered into a spreadsheet from which the 3 × 5 cards

are printed. The original data labels are glued to the cards along with a bar code and placed in the poly envelopes along with the specimen. The end of the poly envelopes is folded over and taped closed. Specimens are well protected in these envelopes and hopefully will be useful for another hundred years. Data for specimens are also then available in the collection's database.

There are a few interesting specimens that I have come across to date. A specimen of *Gomphus lynnae* (Columbia Clubtail) from Rome, Oregon was collected in 1952. This species was described by Dennis Paulson in 1983. There is a specimen of *Aeshna palmata* (Paddle-tailed Darner) collected by P. P. Calvert on 22 July 1896, and a specimen of *Rhionaeschna californica* (California Darner) labeled J. G. Needham from 5 July of the same year. Both specimens are from Olympia, Washington. It's a delight to come across specimens collected by these pioneering odontologists.

## Where to find the Bulletin On-Line

Currently, you can find PDFs of the latest issues of the Bulletin at <http://odonata.bogfoot.net/oes/>. Any web browser should render a listing of the documents found there. This may be a temporary location until a permanent on-line home is found, but we'll keep you posted if things change. Contact Jim Johnson (jt\_johnson@comcast.net) if you have trouble with access.

## NW Lepidopterists' Workshop

**When:** Saturday and Sunday, 29 and 30 October 2011

**Where:** Cordley Hall, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon

**Hosts:** Drs. Paul Hammond and David McCorkle

Sponsored by the Zoology Department and Arthropod Collection, Oregon State University

### Saturday Program, 29 October

- 9:00 AM Register at Cordley Hall, room 2113 (east wing). No fee.  
Workshop Preview: Arrange study specimens, etc. Cordley Hall room 1070 (west wing)
- 10:00 Welcome and announcements, Cordley Hall room 2113 (east wing)  
Harold Rice Recognition presented by Dr. David R. Maddison
- 11:00 Activity reports: New state and county records, Lepidopterists' Society meeting reports,  
book announcements, etc.
- 12:30 PM Group picture. Location to be announced.
- 12:45 Lunch at local restaurants
- 2:00 Workshop session: Cordley Hall room 1070, 1064 (west wing) (Preceded by a brief  
orientation to this year's groups if requested.)
- Groups of emphasis for this year:  
Butterflies: *Papilio* (Swallowtails) and *Eriogonum* butterflies including *Euphilotes*  
Moths: general moths, especially Geometridae, Microlepidoptera  
Also specimens of any Lepidoptera from recent field trips or of special interest  
Information exchange and specimen gift exchange is encouraged.
- 3:00 Parallel Sessions in Cordley 1064 (west wing):  
Photography: Ron Lyons and Rik Littlefield (roundtable/discussion)  
Lepidoptera web sites
- 5:00 Workshop session conclusion
- 5:30 Buffet dinner at Izzy's Restaurant, Corvallis (\$11.99)
- 7:15 Ag 4001: Brief planning session followed by the evening lecture:  
Buckwheats (*Eriogonum*) of the Pacific Northwest and Their Butterflies, presented  
by Dave Nunnallee
- 9:30 Meeting recessed.

\* Please bring your NW collecting records with you in written form. Dana Ross will put them into the "master file" and send any significant county records to Jon Shepard for inclusion in the Lepidopterists' Society Season Summary. (Include the state, county, location and date, and if available, range and township or longitude, latitude coordinates and altitude.) Ann Potter is also soliciting Washington state records.

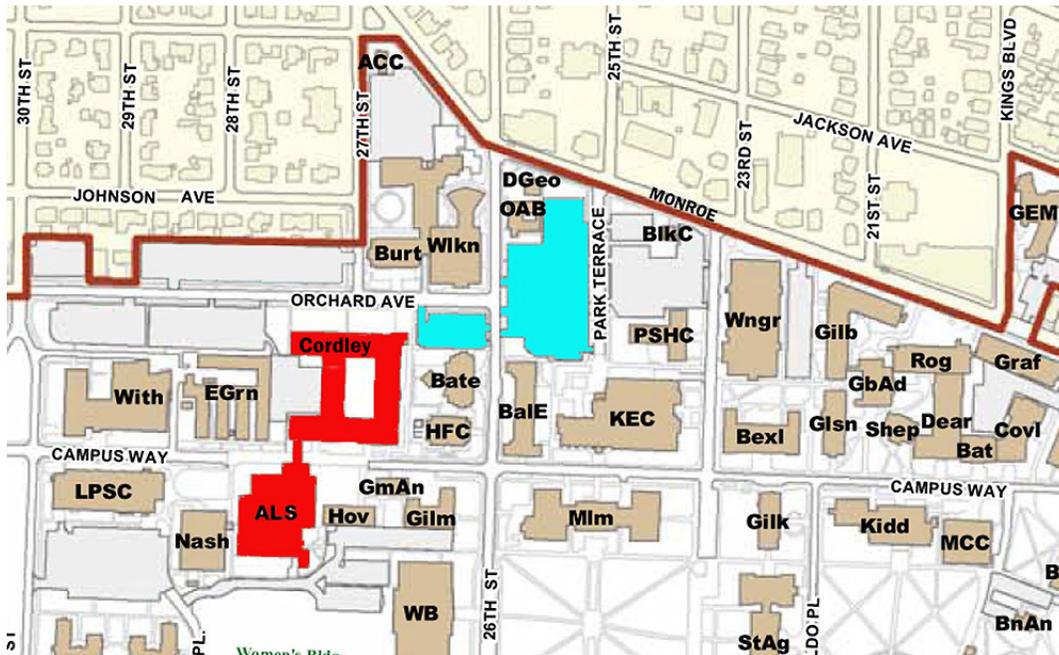
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## Sunday Program, 30 October

- 8:30 AM Workshop session resumed, Cordley Hall room 1070 (west wing)
- 10:00 Field trip reports, power point and other contributions, Cordley Hall room 2113 (east wing)  
This is your opportunity to contribute a presentation on or related to Lepidoptera.  
Please notify Paul Hammond prior to the meeting if you are likely to need more than 10 minutes .
- “12:00” Meeting concluded

The map below shows Cordley Hall and the ALS Building in red. Most of the meeting takes place in Cordley Hall. The Saturday evening presentation in Ag 4001 is on the 4th floor of the ALS building, reached from the 3rd floor of Cordley via a sky bridge.



The small parking area colored in turquoise is the one favored by participants as it is the one closest to the weekend entrance for Cordley Hall. Access this lot via Orchard Ave or Park Terrace and through the parking lot. Street parking is also available along Orchard Ave.

For a full campus map, visit [http://oregonstate.edu/campus\\_map/](http://oregonstate.edu/campus_map/) and click on PDF Map at the bottom of the page.



## Comet Moth Gynandromorph Specimen at OSAC *Ron Lyons*

The Comet Moth (*Argema mittrei* Guérin-Meneville 1846), a very large silk moth (Family Saturniidae), is a native of Madagascar.

This particular specimen is a gynandromorph, an individual with both male and female traits. This specimen appears to be a bilateral gynandromorph in the sense that the left side (as seen in the photograph) exhibits the characteristics of the male moth and the right side exhibits the characteristics of the female moth.

This unusual specimen is emblematic of many of the species donated to the Oregon State Arthropod Collection (OSAC) by Barry E. Sullivan (1955–2009). Barry was an avid student of entomology who regularly took part in the NW Lepidopterists' Workshops.

In honor of Barry, Dr. Christopher Marshall, Curator-Collections Manager at OSAC, will be using some of Barry's spectacular specimens to create "The Barry E. Sullivan 'OOOH AHhh' Outreach Collection" to be used for education purposes both inside and outside the collection. This collection is not yet available, but plaques have been made for the drawers that will house it. Anyone with a specimen that they feel would fit the criteria of "oooh ahhh" and who would like to donate it to this collection is invited to contact Chris. Additionally, if you would like to volunteer time towards building this outreach collection, Chris would be happy to talk to you. You can contact Chris at <Christopher.Marshall@oregonstate.edu>.



## Calling All Nature Photographers

The Fall meeting of the Nature Photographers of the Pacific Northwest (NPPNW) will be 5 November at Chemeketa Community College, Salem, Oregon. The doors open at 8 AM; the program begins at 10 AM. The invited speaker will be David FitzSimmons. David is a Sigma Pro photographer specializing in nature photography. Especially known for his skills as a teacher, David frequently conducts nature photography workshops and authors informative articles in such publications as Popular Photography and Shutterbug. His morning presentation is entitled "Curious Critters: Starting a Series, Building a Book" and his afternoon presentation will be "Wonderful Waterfalls: From Fabulous Vistas to Eye-Catching Compositions."

Attendees are invited to participate in the digital image (maximum of 3) and print (maximum of 2) competitions. The categories are Scenic, Wildlife, and Plantlife. A "limited hand of man" rule is enforced—any man-made object in the entry should not be a major or significant portion of the image. Digital images must be received on a CD with an accompanying cover letter no later than Thursday, 27 October. Prints may be matted, but not framed, and the total external dimensions (including mat) must not exceed 48 inches (length + width).

For complete details including membership/registration information, competition requirements, directions, and contact information, visit <<http://www.nppnw.org/meetings.html>>. The printable online registration form is at <<http://www.nppnw.org/regform.html>>.

## Serving the DSA

Congratulations to Jim Johnson who has recently become President Elect of the Dragonfly Society of the Americas (DSA). Jim, along with other members of the Oregon Dragonfly Survey, has been responsible for the vast improvement in our knowledge of the species present in Oregon and their distribution. Jim also assists in the production of DSA's publications—ARGIA and The Bulletin of American Odonatology, as well as the Bulletin of the Oregon Entomological Society. Congratulations also to Steve Valley, another member of the Oregon Dragonfly Survey and the Oregon Entomological Society, who has served on the DSA Executive Council for many years, first as a Regular Member, and in his current position as Secretary.