

## Illinois County Dragonfly Poster Activity:

**Objective:** students will learn how to identify the dragonflies found in their Illinois County by using the Odonata database list to find the scientific names, searching field guides and the Internet for (1) the common name (2) description (3) life habits and (4) a photograph. The findings can be published as a poster or bulletin board display.



**Age Group:** Grade 4-7

**Time Required:** It varies by county, but one class period for research (each student or pair assigned one or more), and one class period to assemble display.

**WARNING:** Photographs are copyrighted. Include the name of the photographer in the display or image. Usually these digital and print images may be copied for educational use only.

**Online Link:** [http://www.museum.state.il.us/research/entomology/od\\_species4cnty.html](http://www.museum.state.il.us/research/entomology/od_species4cnty.html)  
*Fritillaria on coneflower*

### Materials:

- computer with internet connection
- printer
- (optional) dragonfly field guide book such as *Dragonflies Through Binoculars* by Sidney W. Dunkle, 2000. Oxford University Press. (through an interlibrary loan) OR dragonfly field guides.
- paper
- scissors
- poster board (or half-sheets of construction paper if making a bulletin board)
- glue stick

### Procedure:

Find the listing for your county in the Odonata database URL; print it out or cut and paste it to notepad and print it.

Assign students a species or variety to research on the Web and in field guides.

Students will bookmark their find (searched by scientific name); they can print out the page.

Using the information in their source, students will write an informative label.

- Scientific name
- Common name(s)
- Description (size, color, markings, shape)
- Habitat
- Status (common, rare, threatened, endangered)

Students will compose a digital 'poster' in Photoshop and print it out, or copy or print information out and cut and paste it on a poster board or sheet as part of a bulletin board display.

Students will present the information verbally to the others in class, so that everyone learns about all the dragonflies.

**Extension:** Once the students are familiar with the images and information, they could go out into the field (if available) to search for living examples. Here is a partial list of some very common dragonflies that may be seen between mid-April and Mid October:

Green Darner (*Anax junius*) Mid-April to October (in migration)  
Blue Dasher (*Pachydiplax longipennis*) June 1 to early September  
Widow Skimmer (*Libellula luctuosa*) mid-April to mid-October  
Twelve-spotted Skimmer (*Libellula pulchella*) mid-May to mid-September  
Common Whitetail (*Libellula lydia*) May 1 to mid-September

Eastern Pondhawk (*Erythemis simplicollis*) mid-May to October  
Spot-winged Glider (*Pantala hymenaea*) mid-June to late August

**References for Midwest states:**

Curry, James R. 2001. *Dragonflies of Indiana*. Indiana Academy of Science,. Good photographs of specimens and of habitat.

Legler, Karl and Dorothy and Dave Westover. 1998. *Common Dragonflies of Wisconsin*. 429 Franklin St., Sauk City, WI 53583 608-643-4926. karlndot@bankpds.com