

Newsletter of the Thai National Office of the International Odonatological Society

SOCIETAS INTERNATIONALIS ODONATOLOGICA (S.I.O)

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Saint Gabriel's College, Bangkok 10300

November 2006

WRITER F.

EDITORIAL

On March 31, 2006, Dr. B. Kiauta sent me a copy of "The journey of a Dilettante", which is a report by Dr. Oleg Kosterin on his trip to SE Thailand (Chonburi, Rayong and Chantaburi) with Dr. Nikita Vikhrev in January 2005. This article had appeared in an issue of AGRION. Dr. B.Kiauta advised me to get in touch with Dr. Oleg Kosterin. It would be nice, he said, if a similar account of his Thailand trips would be published in MALANGPO as well.

As you know we did not publish MALANGPO in 2004-2005, due to lack of contributions for our Newsletter. So I at once contacted Dr. Oleg Kosterin and he immediately sent me a report of his two trips to Thailand in 2005 and 2006. Three weeks later he gave me another report of his trip to Cambodia in January 2006. And last month he sent me another brief account written by Dr. Phil Benstead from England, who had visited Siem Reap, Cambodia twice. From this report you'll find a number of Odonate species encountered there neither by Dr. Nick Donnelly in 2000 nor by Dr. Oleg Kosterin.

For our MALANGPO 2006 I selected these two reports from Cambodia. After reading you'll be tempted to visit Cambodia and to collect dragonflies as well. Kosterin's and Vikhrev's article of their trips to Thailand in 2005 and 2006 will appear in the next issue of MALANGPO.

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Odonata seen during three days in a populated lowland part of Cambodia

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Abstract. A report about Odonata met during a three-day long trip to the Siem Reap area of Cambodia on January 7-9, 2006 is given in a form of field notes. 24 species were met with, of which Heliocypha biforata (Selys, 1859), Lestes concinnus Hagen in Selys, 1862, Aciagrion borneense Ris, 1911, Agriocnemis minima Selys, 1877, A. nana (Laidlaw, 1914), Ceriagrion praetermissum Lieftink, 1929, Diplacodes trivialis (Rambur, 1842), Brachydiplax chalybea Brauer, 1868, Brachythemis contaminata (Fabricius, 1793), Crocothemis servilia (Drury, 1770), Neurothemis tullia (Drury, 1773), Rhodothemis rufa (Rambur, 1842) have not been reported for Cambodia in literature (although the published records are very scarce per se).

Introduction

So far there is no list of the odonate fauna of Cambodia compiled. The list present in Tsuda (2000) is very incomplete (Hämäläinen, 2004) and misses even many species common everywhere in Indochina. Further data by some authors remain still unpublished. Even a preliminary list is not to be expected in near future, since the densely populated lowland mainland of Cambodia is almost deprived from natural habitats while the little explored mountains are hardly accessible for a number of reasons including absence of roads, mines and even remainders of Khmer Issarak. In this situation we feel useful to provide a short report about odonates seen by us in our three-day long trip to Cambodia to see Angkor Wat, which, although an invaluable area in historical and cultural respects, is at the same time one of the most uninteresting places in Cambodia with respect to its Nature.

Field notes

In late morning of January 7, we took a taxi at the Khao-Khitchakut National Park, Chanthaburi, Thailand and departed to the border pass at Ban Laem. The road was excellent, and plantations and groves at its sides were very neat and lovely. At the left we passed the famous and monumentally looking Khao-Soi-Dao Mountain, the top of which was hidden in a low cloud. We had little idea how long the way is and were quite struck seeing ahead in some village the Thai and Cambodian banners together. Coming closer we saw quite explicit a scenery: behind a bridge through quite a deep ravine, with a lot of rubbish and a narrow stream, we saw a square of a dusty barren ground surrounded by gloomy grey 1-2 floor buildings adorned with naive advertisement, and a lot of people, partly on motorcycles, partly obviously being beggars. Except for the latter, the picture looked like some remote village in a perypherial Soviet Union (South Siberia or Central Asia) about 20 years ago and so left no doubt that we faced a recent reign of communism. The Thai car could not pass the border. After quite a long anticipation of visas among many similar Europeans (who all proceeded to or from Angkor) we had to take a taxi proposed by a border officer. She was a lovely looking 'slightly' pregnant young women with a typical Khmer face and in an uniform, smiley but in fact made of steel in her intentions. We paid her but not to two taxists who changed one another in the depth of country, that means that all the chain was firmly controlled by her or someone else. She looked like a personage of some film like "Indochina' and as if illustrated some aspects of the recent Cambodian history. At the border office we encountered the first odonate: on a shady branch of a large tree growing above the ravine, a female of *Heliocypha biforata* (Selys, 1859) was perching at above a head height.

So we immersed into Cambodia on board of a snow-white Toyota. The ground road with rough margins as if yesterday piled by a bulldozer, the right-side traffic and the KAMAZ trucks and BELARUS tractors met repeatedly again reminded us a deep province of Russia. Yet there were differences: a lot of bicycles, palms, every rare car signaling permanently, abundance of children, exotic food like fried crickens or frogs sold at roadsides, and houses mised on piles. The land was almost entirely used for agriculture, mostly arboreal, only rare grassy pastures with sparse trees looked semi-natural. We noticed a curious evidence of agricultural pressure: by the road the butterfly Papilio demoleus frequently occur: the species is a common pest of Citrus, but in Thailand we met with the only individual for a fortnight. After hours of passing a very regular land, we reached a huge lake spread behind the horizon and surrounded with several conical hills. Its surface was totally covered with a carpet of and lotus which left no open water. Our driver, although hardly speaking a couple is, readily communicated us, mostly by gestures, that in this lake Pol Pot had ple but did not help us with its name. All we could infer from the map was ed near Phumi Kdol Kraom. We made a short stop and saw several a nullia (Drury, 1773) of both sexes. At the very bank we collected a tiny female magnion practermissum Lieftinck, 1929, grey with a bright red on eyes (naturally we at awaring that this small and stout damsel belongs to the genus Ceriagrion as some representatives which we saw in Germany and Thailand).

Soon we were to change the taxi, and the road acquired an asphalt cover. But the fuel are also changed to some terrible surrogate, and the air in the car was hard to resist. The surroundings appeared more or less suburban, with shallow dirty reservoirs with lotuses and dacks at the houses. After a while, we entered and left the city of Battambang. The landscape changed to quite a specific and boring type. It was an absolutely flat greyish plain covered with remnants of cut grass – obviously rise, and regularly crossed with shallow and dirty channels, full of fishing nets and with some almost naked fishermen as well. There were sparse groves, and when no channel or palm was seen, the whole scenery looked like a Russian countryside in some steppen region in October. The road was, however, brick red and produced huge amount of red dust (nothing like this in the first half of our trip). This was a laterite ground, that evidenced of quite recent coverage by a tropical rainforest. The rare villages looked also quite 'Russian', with schools being the largest buildings, and with some transparants spread above the road. In one of those, any passing transport stopped as if to wash the car or couch, but in fact to allow people to sell something to strangers.

After quite a long way of the red road, asphalt suddenly re-appeared. Those days in Cambodia we noticed a strange fact: along the roads we permanently saw some cows grazing, but if the road was asphalted then buffaloes also added. We had no idea what kind of false correlation we faced (perhaps, with a welfare of the district). We proceed moving already in twilight. In villages around there appeared electricity, but mostly it was used in constructions we supposed to be cricket traps: a vertically set sheet of white linen with a luminiscent lamp above a small reservoir with water made of polyethilen. We were also struck of huge herds of ducks at some houses. After quite a long way, illuminated luxuriant hotels appeared in plenty, all with the word 'Angkor' in the title. This already resembled not Soviet Union but United States: to us it looked like some Las Vegas (at last as soon as we haven't been there). It was Siam Reap. All the people there ware white shirts and spoke a good English, all the currency was US dollars, mostly one and two dollar banknotes used in markets and for transportation.

Next day we started with visiting the famous Angkor Wat. The complex was surrounded with a wide artificial pond. At its banks, the most numerous dragonfly was *Trithemis pallidinervis* (Kirby, 1889), in plenty sitting on the foremost sandstone constructions of Angkor but preferring the ropes bordering the stone passage to the complex. On stones on the bank of a pond males of *Orthetrum sabina* (Drury, 1770) perched, in grass we found *Aciagrion borneense* Ris, 1911. Also we observed an ovipositing female of *Tramaea* (most probably *T. transmarina euryale* Selys, 1878).

In front of the main temple, there were two square-shaped shallow ponds with stony banks, full or flourishing purple nymphaeas. There was quite a set of common odonates: very many O. sabina, quite common Neurothemis tullia, Trithemis pallidinervis, Crocothemis servilia (Drury, 1770), few Brachythemis contaminata (Fabricius, 1793). Of damselfiles, there were many Ischnura senegalensis (Rambur, 1842) and Agriocnemis. Among the latter, there were some males of A. nana (Laidlaw, 1914). Most of the rest Agriochemis were identifiable as A. minima Selys, 1877. The males were greenish with orange tip of abdomen, there were two oval-shaped spots of the ground colour on a black mark of abdominal tergite 2, and diffuse dark more or less triangular dorsal marks on three last abdominal segments. Unfortunately, we did not collect any male and only three females. Two had a blueish-green ground colour and a well espressed dark pattern, with dark patches slightly inflating on abdominal segments 8 and 9; there were also well-expressed humeral stripes on the thorax. The third female was striking: it was radically red, the black pattern was reduced to some hardly noticeable remnants of streaks between abdominal segments, some tiny dots at wing bases, the spines on the legs, a black trapezoid area on the occiput, a black streak between the rhynarium and nasus and a black basal half of the labrum. In both female forms, the prothorax had a slight and very wide ledge of its hind margin which well looked like that despicted for A. minima by van Tol (1990), maybe with a trend of ledge to more strongly protrude at the centre than at the sides. All three females are kept with me, and their live photos can be seen at http://www.asia-dragonfly.net in a search for Agriocnemis minima. Inside the inner court of the temple, several Pantala flavescens (Fabricius, 1798) flew above the lawn.

In the afternoon we decided to visit the famous huge ancient artificial reservoir, loc. 'barai'. It was an impressive amount of hot and clean water, seemingly with a level greatly variable seasonally, with steep artificial clayey banks and lacking any aquatic and semiaquatic vegetation. There were no odonates at the water, at the bushes along the surrounding road there were, as usual, many O. sabina, few Neurothemis tullia and one male of Neurothemis fulvia (Drury, 1773). Apart of Barai, there was something like a seminatural habitat: some pasture with groves and bushes, and along the road there went a good channel several metres wide surrounded with various emerging vegetation. And there were quite many odonates. In grass hanging above the water, there were plenty Copera ciliata (Selys, 1863), both mature (white) and immature (reddish). Perches at the water were occupied by males of C. servilia. We also encountered several females of Diplacodes trivialis (Rambur, 1842) and a male of Brachydiplax chalybea Brauer, 1868. In small grass in several metres of water, and above some shallow pools, we found plenty of Agriconemis, among which there were not so scarce A. nana, and also Aciagrion borneense. Besides, we collected another female and took a photo of a young male of Ceriagrion practermission. The male has brownish grey thorax, legs, head and eyes (still not red) and a tan-reddish abdomen. We also collected quite a large Ceriagrion female with green thorax, blueish eyes and reddish-ochraceous abdomen, with segments 3-7 turned above towards tan-brown. Although it had no blue colour but on the eyes, the unique lamina mesostigmalis allowed to identify it as C. cerinorubellum (Brauer, 1865), as depicted in Asahina (1976). Probably it was a young, not fully coloured female. Not

far from a channel, high in air at some trees several *Rhyothemis* were soaring. We collected one and it appeared to be a male of *R. phyllis* (Sulzer, 1776) (that is the first male of *Rhyothemis* we met for both our Indochinese trips). In a gap between the bushes between the channel and barai, we found an old, strongly darkened female of *Rhodothemis rufa* (Rambur, 1842) which perched on a bush branch.

In the evening we revisited Angkor Wat. At the temple walls we collected and photographed a young male of *Ceriagrion olivaceum* Laidlaw, 1914 which was somewhat smaller than those we saw at Pattaya and in the Khao Khitchakut National Park in Thailand several days earlier (abdomen 30 mm, hind wing 18 mm while those had abdomen 32 mm, hind wing 19 mm) but coloured in the same way: abdomen fulvous-ochraceous, head dullbrownish, eyes and pterothorax greenish, on the sutures of the latter marked with inconspicuous reddish-brown stripes. Unfortunately, the appendages of this young specimens were later broken, but the mesostigmal plate and penile organ were identical to the Thai specimens. On the moat pond bank we observed several teneral *Ceriagrion* sp., which remained unidentified. Above the nymphaea ponds, many *Tholymis tillarga* (Fabricius, 1798) flew in twilight.

Next day was nearly lost. We took a taxi and for several hours were brought to the pass at the north-western border, next to Aranyaprathet settlement on the Thai side. The red dusty road went through the same empty flatland as two days before. During two stops we examined roadside pools and found them very poor in odonates. In first case (the pool was with flowering Nymphoides sp. with white flowers) we saw males of Crocothemis servilia and Ortherrow sabing, a female of Brachythemis contaminata and a blue male of Preducerion (most probably P. australasiae); in the second case (near the town) both sexes of C serville and again a female of B. contaminata. At the pass we were struck with information that Thailand issues visa upon arrival only in airports but not in terrestrial entries. We had to take another taxi back and in the afternoon arrived at the Siam Reap international airport. We had to wait for our flight to Bangkok and examined a wasting land near the airport. It was a poor grassland with some bushes and quite high termite hills, there were some very shallow pools with water hyacynth. Odonates were not too scarce in that wasting land. We met many Aciagrion borneense of both sexes, one male of Pseudagrion australasiae Selvs, 1876 and one female of the same genus and probably the same species (it had a reddish pterothorax without black pattern and greenish abdomen with a black dorsal stripe throughout), many Diplacodes nebulosa (Fabricius, 1793) of both sexes, one D. trivialis (Rambur, 1842), a female of N. tullia and met with the only Lestid for all our the Thailand-Cambodia trip: it was a male of Lestes concinnus Hagen in Selys, 1862. At the bank of an almost dried pool there was T. pallidinervis.

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A list of localities, with their conventional names.

Ban Laem: a border pass at Ban Laem

Lake: a large lake at Phumi Kdol Kraom, between Ban Laem and Battambang, surrounded with several hills, with the surface clad with lotos and salvinia.

Angkor Wat: artificial ponds at the Angkor Wat historical complex at Siem Reap Barai: surroundings of the artificial lake Barai at Siem Reap, including an artificial ditch and small pools

Siam Reap Airport: a bushy wasting land at the Siam Reap Airport, with some pools.

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List of collected specimens

Heliocypha biforata (Selys, 1859) Ban Laem, 1 f, 7.I. Lestes concinnus Hagen in Selys, 1862 Siem Reap Airport: 1 m, 9.I. Aciagrion borneense Ris, 1911 Angkor: 1 f, 8.I. Siem Reap Airport, 3 m 1 f. Agriocnemis minima Selys, 1877 Angkor, 2 f, 8.I. Agriocnemis nana (Laidlaw, 1914) Angkor: 2 m, 8.L Ceriagrion cerinorubellum (Brauer, 1865). Barai, 1 f, 8.I. Intents langest to made and shall been too the Ceriagrion olivaceum Laidlaw, 1914. Angkor: 1 m. 8.I. Ceriagrion praetermissum Lieftink, 1929 Lake, 1 f. 7.I; Barai, 1 f. 8.L. Pseudagrion australasiae (Selys, 1876) any foor Siem Reap airport, 1 m ?1 f, 9.L; a year much based based based Copera ciliata (Selys, 1863) Barai, 1 m 1 f, 8.L. a contrary stand board to stants be annihus more to C. be Diplacodes trivialis (Rambur, 1842) Siem Reap Airport, 1 f, 9.I. Diplacodes nebulosa (Fabricius, 1793) Siem Reap Airport: 1 m, 9.I. Neurothemis tullia (Drury, 1733) Barai: 1 m 1 f, 8.I. in an and the in the star build and the Rhodothemis rufa (Rambur, 1842). hand of 8: Barai: 1 f, 9.L. st and the ablence to shart and seases mitted and Rhyothemis phyllis (Sulzer, 1776) mem . to Barai, 1 m, 8.L. Instob share a nitro store bids risingare but maren suntana Brabendar 1 951 - Seeh estas and D minutes (Hambur, 1842), a

Discussion

Hāmālāinen (2004) has pointed out that the list of 36 species Odonata of Cambodia published in Tsuda (2000) is extremely incomplete and estimates the number of species already collected in Cambodia without record publication as 60-80. Three more species were added in the same year by Donnelly (2000). For three days in densely populated areas of Cambodia we saw 24 species of odonates (including a not identified *Tramaea*), most of them very common and widespread. Twelwe of them were not, however, listed for Cambodia either by Tsuda (2000) or Donnelly (2000): Heliocypha biforata, Lestes concinnus, Aciagrion borneense, Agriocnemis minima, A. nana, Ceriagrion praetermissum, Diplacodes trivialis, Brachydiplax chalybea, Brachythemis contaminata, Crocothemis servilia, Neurothemis tullia, Rhodothemis rufa. Seven of these species are in parallel reported for the Siam Reap area by Phil Benstead in this issue as well.

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peared to be set in Republic (Sulzer, 1

The sad events of the recent Cambodian history left so many mines in that country and so restricted the places frequently visited by foreigners at present to the areas of Phnom Pehn and Siam Reap, both being densely populated. The area of Siam Reap is most popular for the famous Angkor Wat and other ancient constructions, and it still retains some remnants of natural habitats. It is natural that most recent reports, such as that by Donnelly (2000), Benstead (this issue) and this one, concern mostly this area. Noteworthy that even these short lists of species occasionally seen for very short visits to this place (but in different seasons) do not overlap to a great extent. This may indicate that even this easily accessible area is quite rich of odonates and deserves a special study.

Acknowledgements

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We are greatly indebted to Matti Hämäläinen, Finland, and Rory Dow, England, for valuable consultants and the help with literature.

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Casual observations of Odonata recorded in Cambodia in 2005 and 2006

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Abstract. The Odonate fauna of Cambodia is poorly known, the list for the country presented in Tsuda (2000) is incomplete and many widespread Indochinese species are missing. This short note hopes to fill some of these gaps. The author recently made two threeday visits to Cambodia and spent some time identifying Odonata. The trips took place in March 2005 and March 2006 and cumulatively 27 species of Odonata were recorded. Visual observations were in most cases backed up by photographic records. No specimens were taken.

Field notes and beaution in any Alarabia terral and a boot five . The

The author recently spent two three-day periods in Cambodia in the vicinity of Siem Reap whilst leading organised natural history tours. These trips occurred in March of 2005 and 2006. Sadly not all the time in the field was spent looking at dragonflies and damselflies as other taxa and indeed the splendid temple complex at Angkor Wat all demanded attention. This casual approach did however turn up a number of widespread species that have no published records for the country.

Itinerary

In both years the same itinerary was followed:

Map ref.	Date (2005)	Date (2006)
13°24'40"'N 103°52'02"'E	14 th March	13th March
13°47'44"N 103°18'06"E	15 th March	14 th March
	16 th March	15 th March
13°22'35"N 103°52'06"E	14 th to 17 th March	13 th to 16 th March
	Map ref. 13°24'40''N 103°52'02''E 13°47'44''N 103°18'06''E 13°22'35''N 103°52'06''E	Map ref. Date (2005) 13°24'40''N 103°52'02''E 14 th March 13°47'44''N 103°18'06''E 15 th March 16 th March 16 th March 13°22'35''N 103°52'06''E 14 th to 17 th March

Sites

Angkor Wat - the world famous temple complex is studded with small artificial ponds, reservoirs and moats. Much more effort made with Odonata recording on second visit.

Ang Trapeang Thmor - this large, well-vegetated Khmer Rouge era reservoir was visited on two dates but unfortunately most of the time was spent looking for mammals and birds.

Prek Toal - a famous bird reserve on the shores of the vast Tonle Sap lake visited by boat. Most species observed up small forested creeks in flooded forest.

Siem Reap - observations made in the grounds and environs of the Angkor Village Resort, which has a small most and nearby there is a deep drainage ditch.

Species observed

Species Agriocnemis pygmaea

Agriocnemis minima

Ceriagrion auranticum

Cercion calamorum dyeri Pseudagrion rubriceps

Pseudagrion australasiae Ischnura senegalensis

Ictinogomphus decoratus Ictinogomphus rapax

Acisoma panorpoides

Brachythemis contaminata Crocothemis servilia

Orthetrum sabina Tholymis tillarga

Hydrobasileus croceus Trithemis pallidinervis

Diplacodes trivialis Diplacodes nebulosa

Potamarcha congener

Pseudothemis jorina

Urothemis signata

Brachydiplax chalybea

Neurothemis fulvia

Neurothemis tullia

Rhodothemis rufa

Rhyothemis variegata

Rhyothemis phyllis

Sites Siem Reap – several around moat at resort. Also at Prek Toal. Siem Reap – single around moat at resort. Present in Siem Reap (2005) and at Angkor Wat (2006). Angkor Wat – common.

A single individual at Angkor Wat. Angkor Wat

Angkor Wat - single.

Angkor Wat - single.

Angkor Wat - common.

Several around Siem Reap. Also at Prek Toal. Present in Siem Reap and around Angkor Wat. Widespread in Cambodia.

Angkor Wat – common. Siem Reap – several at dusk around the Angkor Village Resort moat and at Angkor Wat. Angkor Wat – small numbers. Angkor Wat, Ang Trapeang Thmor – common. Widespread in Cambodia. Angkor Wat – single. Ang Trapeang Thmor – single. Present at Angkor Wat.

Angkor Wat.

Angkor Wat - small numbers.

Angkor Wat - small numbers.

Angkor Wat – small numbers daily. Present in Siem Reap and Angkor Wat. Angkor Wat – small numbers.

Angkor Wat – common, including a huge feeding cloud by one of the gates. Also noted at Ang Trapeang Thmor in 2006. Angkor Wat and Ang Trapeang Thmor.

Comments Only noted in 2005.

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Noted in both years. Photographed. Of 27 species recorded, the following 17 species were not listed for Cambodia by Tsuda (2000): Agriocnemis minima, Cercion calamorum, Ceriagrion auranticum, Pseudagrion rubriceps, Ictinogomphus decoratus, I. rapax, Acisoma panorpoides, Brachydiplax chalybea, Brachythemis contaminata, Crocothemis servilia, Diplacodes trivialis, Hydrobasileus croceus, Neurothemis tullia, Pseudothemis jorina, Rhodothemis rufa, Rhyothemis variegata and Trithemis pallidinervis

Acknowledgements

My thanks to Oleg Kosterin for drawing my attention to the paucity of published information about Cambodian Odonates and ensuring that I wrote this short note! Thanks also to Ian Green of Greentours for consistently sending me to some of the most exciting parts of Asia.

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References

Tsuda, S. (2000) A distributional list of world Odonata 2000. Privately published, Osaka.

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Angilor Wat - Single.

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Crocothemic seculia

PINRATANA, A., Editorial

Photographed Only noted in 2006 Photographed

Only noted in 2005

Photographed. Noted in both years.

BENSTEAD, P. Casual observations of Odonata recorded in Cambodia (2005 and 2006). 218-220

MALANGPO was founded in 1985 by Dr. B. Kiauta at Utrecht University, the Netherlands and edited from 1985-1986 by Dr. Manus Titayavan at Chiang Mai University.

Angkot We' - small numbers.

This newsletter is meant to give news about the activities of Odonatologists and Odonatology. It is produced as a public service to all those who are interested in Odonata.

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