

DRAGONFLYING IN THE BARKLY EAST DISTRICT, E CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA 8-12 FEBRUARY 2010

Barkly East (3058.089°S, 2735.608°E) is a district centre in the high-lying foothills of the Drakensberg in the north-eastern Cape, a sheep-farming area that can have frost in most months of the year and is often snow-bound in winters. We spent four days dragonflying here with Jan, Riëtte and Janette Griesel, spending time on different rivers and streams at different altitudes. We made species lists at 21 sites and recorded a total of 20 species (see table). Our target was to find the rarely-recorded *Africallagma sinuatum*, the most recent South African record of which was from nearby Prentjiesberg in Nov 2000. We failed, probably being too late in the season for it, and we were probably on the late side overall for maximising odonata diversity.

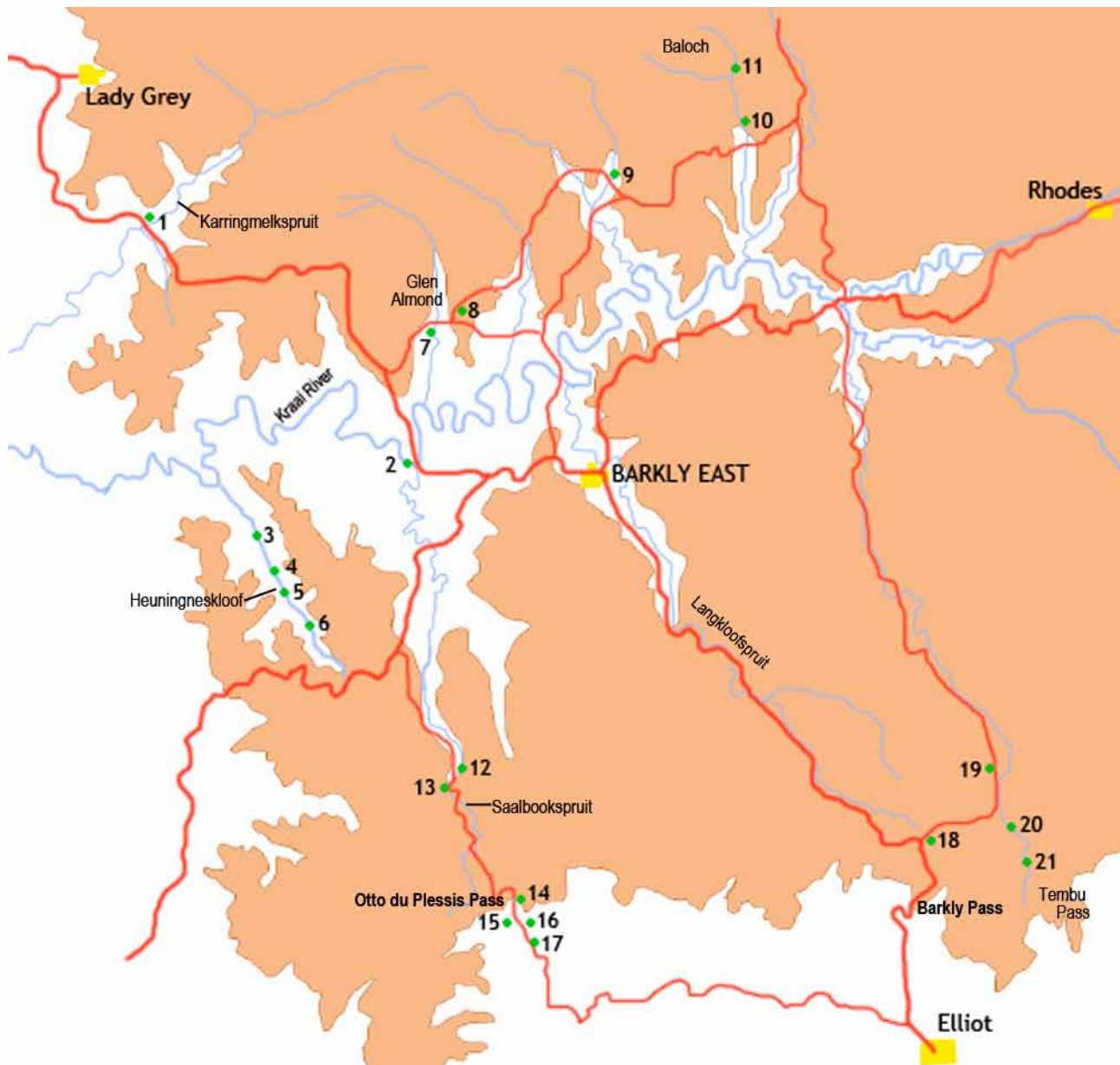
Damselflies were more diverse and more numerous than dragonflies (see table), and along all the rivers and streams the most widespread species was Natal Sprite *Pseudagrion spernatum*, followed closely by Mountain Malachite *Chlorolestes fasciatus*. Also common on the rivers were Stream Hawker *Aeshna subpupillata*, Two-striped Skimmer *Orthetrum caffrum* and Dorsal Dropwing *Trithemis dorsalis*, followed by Mountain Sprite *Pseudagrion draconis* and Yellow-faced Sprite *Pseudagrion citricola*. Friendly Hawkers *Aeshna minuscula* were present wherever there were quiet pools along rivers. On marshy seeps and ponds Swamp Bluets *Africallagma glaucum* were often abundant, and Sapphire Bluets *Africallagma sapphirinum* were also present on some of these.

We are indebted to Sarel and Annamarie Pretorius for their warm and friendly hospitality, for providing accommodation, and for access to their farms in the district.

Warwick & Michèle Tarboton, 26/04/2010



1. Karringmelkspruit: Fast-flowing, stony, clear stream. The richest dragonfly site, with 12 recorded species, dominated by *Chlorolestes fasciatus* and *Pseudagrion spernatum*; also common were *Pseudagrion draconis*, *Aeshna subpupillata* and *Trithemis dorsalis*.



SITES VISITED

1. Karringmelkspruit: Fast-flowing stony clear stream. 3048.586S 2715.989E 1633 m a.s.l. 12 Feb 2010. Sunny, but cool and windy. PHOTO. **2. Kraai River Bridge:** Large, sediment-laden river in spate. 3057.526S, 2727.541E. 1550 m a.s.l. 9 Feb 2010. **3. Heuningneskloof:** Small, slow-flowing, clear stream. 3160.494S, 2720.561E. 1508 m a.s.l. TDS 186. 8 Feb 2010. **4. Heuningneskloof:** Small, slow-flowing, clear stream. 3102.814S, 2721.880E. 1572 m a.s.l. TDS 180. 8 Feb 2010. **5. Heuningneskloof:** Small, slow-flowing, clear stream. 3102.683S, 2721.688E. 1596 m a.s.l. 8 Feb 2010. **6. Heuningneskloof:** Small, slow-flowing, clear stream. 3102.469S, 2721.572E. 1570 m a.s.l. 8 Feb 2010. **7. Waterfall on Klein Wildebeesspruit on farm Outspan:** 3052.426S, 2728.629E. 1754 m a.s.l. 9 Feb 2010, 16h00. Warm. **8. Glen Almond:** A still-water seep with shortly-grazed sedges. 3052.045S, 2729.047E. 1789 m a.s.l. TDS 262. 9 Feb 2010. **9. Lauriston, at bridge over Diepspruit:** Small river in spate. 3048.208S, 2735.478E. 1734 m a.s.l. TDS 81. 9 Feb 2010, 13h20. Warm, sunny. **10. Glengyle, along Vlooiakraalspruit:** Small, boulder-strewn mountain stream fringed by willows. 3043.727S, 2741.909E. 1809 m a.s.l. TDS 67. 9 Feb 2010. PHOTO. **11. Baloche, along Vlooiakraalspruit:** Trout dam. 3042.988S, 2741.955E. 1826 m a.s.l. TDS 67. 9 Feb 2010. **12. Goedehoop, at road bridge along Saalboom River:** Clear stream fringed by grass and sedges. 3109.460S, 2729.404E. 1801 m a.s.l. TDS 67. 10 Feb 2010, 08h20. Warm, sunny. **13. Naapoort, at road bridge along Saalboom River:** Clear stream fringed by grass and sedges. 3110.318S, 2729.358E. 1821 m a.s.l. TDS 54. 10 Feb 2010. Warm, sunny. PHOTO. **14. Radosil, below Otto du Plessis Pass:** Fast-flowing mountain stream. 3114.748S, 2732.006E. 1575 m a.s.l. TDS 54. 10 Feb 2010, 10h30. Hot. **15. Morven, below Otto du Plessis Pass:** Lower-altitude, flat, boulder-strewn stream. 3115.469S, 2732.242E. 1461 m a.s.l. 10 Feb 2010, 11h00. Hot. **16. Raasay, below Otto du Plessis Pass:** Marshy grasses and sedge seep alongside the road. 3116.090S, 2732.749E. 1469 m a.s.l. 10 Feb 2010. **17. Morven, below Otto du Plessis Pass:** Lower-altitude, flat, boulder-strewn stream with steeply eroded banks and filled with wattle debris. 3116.969S, 2733.477E. 1347 m a.s.l. TDS 63/49 at river junction. 10 Feb 2010, 11h00. Hot. **18. Fetcani Pass, above Barkly Pass:** Open pond with sedge edges. 3112.137S, 2750.440E. 2014 m a.s.l. 11 Feb 2010, 9h00. Warm, sunny. **19. Inveruren:** Small farm dam with sedge edges and covered with floating Potamogeton. 3109.044S, 2753.660E. 1967 m a.s.l. 11 Feb 2010. PHOTO. **20. Glenmore:** Mountain stream with grassy banks. TDS 60. 3112.100S, 2754.435E. 1973 m a.s.l. 11 Feb 2010. **21. Tembu Pass:** Carex marsh with deeply incised central channel. 3112.904S, 2755.904E. 1990 m a.s.l. 11 Feb 2010.



10. Glengyle, along Vlooikraalspruit: Small, boulder-strewn mountain stream fringed by willows. *Chlorolestes fasciatus* and *Pseudagrion spernatum* found here in abundance.



13. Naaupoort, at road bridge along Saalboom River: Clear stream fringed by grass and sedges. *Trithemis dorsalis* very common here.



19. Inveruren: Small farm dam with sedge edges and covered with floating *Potamogeton*. Hundreds of *Africallagma glaucum* along the edges.

DRAGONFLIES RECORDED IN BARKLY EAST, EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA, 8-12 FEBRUARY 2010																									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	SITES		
ZYGOPTERA (Damselflies)	<i>Platycypha fitzsimonsi</i> FITZSIMON'S JEWEL																					1	1		
	<i>Africallagma glaucum</i> SWAMP BLUET							10			100				1	10		10	100		1		231	6	
	<i>Africallagma sapphirinum</i> SAPPHIRE BLUET								1		20	1	1			1			2				26	6	
	<i>Ischnura senegalensis</i> AFRICAN BLUETAIL	1																		1			2	2	
	<i>Pseudagrion citricola</i> YELLOW-FACED SPRITE	2	3				1					2	1					1				1	11	7	
	<i>Pseudagrion draconis</i> MOUNTAIN SPRITE	10		3			1					20		1									35	5	
	<i>Pseudagrion salisburyensis</i> SALISBURY SPRITE																	1					1	1	
	<i>Pseudagrion spernatum</i> NATAL SPRITE	20	3	2	10	5	10			10	10		1	1		10		1				2	1	86	14
	<i>Allocnemis leusticta</i> GOLDTAIL																					1		1	1
	<i>Ellatoneura glauca</i> COMMON THREADTAIL	1												1										2	2
	<i>Chlorolestes fasciata</i> MOUNTAIN MALACHITE	20			10	10			1	10	20		4	1		2	1					20	1	100	12
	ANISOPTERA (Dragonflies)	<i>Ceratogomphus pictus</i> COMMON THORNTAIL	2																					2	1
<i>Paragomphus cognatus</i> ROCK HOOKTAIL		5		2					1			1			5								14	5	
<i>Aeshna minuscula</i> FRIENDLY HAWKER		1					1	10				1						1	1				16	7	
<i>Aeshna subpupillata</i> STREAM HAWKER		10				1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1						1		18	9	
<i>Anax imperator</i> BLUE EMPEROR												1	1						1	1			4	4	
<i>Orthetrum caffrum</i> TWO-STRIPED SKIMMER		2				1	2	2	20	6		2	1	1			1						38	10	
<i>Trithemis dorsalis</i> DORSAL DROPWING		20								10	1	20	1	20				1		1		1		75	9
<i>Trithemis furva</i> NAVY DROPWING							1																	1	1
<i>Pantala flavescens</i> PANTALA																					1		1	1	
number of dragonflies recorded	94	6	7	20	17	17	13	31	38	32	165	13	27	1	19	13	5	12	106	24	5	665			
at number of sites	12	2	3	2	4	7	3	3	6	4	7	10	8	1	5	4	5	3	6	4	5				