



Andy Cameron
A stream on the Long Beach Peninsula.



The Pacific forktail is a common damselfly in the Columbia-Pacific region.

Rebecca Lexa

Dragons in the sky

Odonates' lives in water, on the wing

BY REBECCA LEXA

With long, sunny days and warm evenings, summer in the Columbia-Pacific is a treasure to be enjoyed. Of course, no summer night is complete without its fair share of mosquitoes, flies and other airborne insects. Thankfully, these critters serve an important purpose as food for a variety of other animals like bats, swallows and spiders. Some of summer's most acrobatic hunters, the dragonflies and damselflies, are also known as odonates. Both groups are

members of the order Odonata, which first arose over 200 million years ago. These have even been placed in their own order, Meganisoptera.

While dragonflies and damselflies do look similar, damselflies are usually smaller and more slender. They also hold their wings differently at rest. Dragonflies hold theirs open, while damselflies keep theirs folded closed along their backs. A close look at their faces also reveals that

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