

# Dispute Resolution: A Selected Bibliography 1987-1988

## Reproductive behaviour of African Odonata - a review

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This paper presents a review of the reproductive behaviour of African Odonata, outlines our current knowledge, and further defines priorities for gathering information required to understand biodiversity patterns and evolution of mating systems. To date, information on reproductive behaviour is available for approximately 130 of the 850 species of Odonata known from Africa. A full bibliography of published papers in this field is provided. The aim of this paper is to stimulate systematic collection of previously unpublished observations and to encourage a broader approach to behavioural ecology by including experiences and observations of entomologists who regard themselves as non-specialists in this field. Priorities are defined, with special attention being given to the description and analysis of: (1) reproductive habitats, (2) species-specific behavioural patterns, (3) plasticity of behaviour within a species, (4) the search for behavioural patterns on a higher taxonomic level, and (5) placing behaviour in an ecological context.

### INTRODUCTION

A number of published reviews of the reproductive behaviour of Odonata have appeared in recent years, most notably perhaps that of Corbet (1999), who provides a general overview of the ecology and behaviour of Odonata on a world-wide basis. Several published reviews focus on mating systems, including Conrad & Pritchard (1992), and Corbet (1999), who offer an ecologically-based classification of odonate mating systems, while Fincke *et al.* (1997) focuses on natural and sexual selection components in mating patterns. Fincke (1997) draws special attention to the female behavioural perspective, and Wildermuth (1994) provides a review of habitat selection by Odonata. Heinrich (1993) reviewed physiological and behavioural thermoregulatory mechanisms, and Rehfeldt (1995) the impact of predators on adult Odonata, both these factors effectively influencing reproductive behaviour.

Fincke *et al.* (1997) define several general priorities for the study of Odonata, these being the need for: (a) studies of the non-territorial and more

mobile Anisoptera, especially the tropical species, (b) long-term studies using individually marked females to determine the risks and consequences of multiple mating, (c) experimental studies of female mate choice, (d) characterising links between adult reproductive behaviour and quality as well as quantity of larval survival, and (e) phylogenetic studies of behavioural patterns.

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of current knowledge pertaining to the behaviour of African Odonata and to further identify priorities for information required in order to enable a better understanding of biodiversity patterns and the evolution of mating systems.

Behavioural studies on African Odonata are required in order to: (1) apply such knowledge to species-specific behaviour for field identifications, (2) locate species and their special habitats, (3) understand habitat selection and distribution, (4) compare ethology and biology, (5) understand general mechanisms of mating systems, natural and sexual selection and to place these in an evolutionary perspective.

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