



Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club  
Club des naturalistes d'Ottawa

2025

ANNE HANES NATURAL HISTORY AWARD:

CHRIS TRAYNOR

GILLIAN MASTROMATTEO

*The Anne Hanes Natural History Award recognizes a member or members who, through independent study or investigation, have made a worthwhile contribution to our knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the natural history of the Ottawa Valley. The award is designed to recognize work that is done by amateur naturalists.*

With the intent of introducing others to the fascinating world of dragonflies and damselflies, Chris Traynor began his mission to produce a series of “Species Profiles” for Trail & Landscape. He wanted to highlight dragonflies and damselflies (odonates) found in the Ottawa Field Naturalists’ Club’s study area regardless of whether they were commonly found or extremely rare.

It began in late 2019 with *Stylurus scudderi*, also known as the Zebra Clubtail. Chris chose this species partly because of its striking colour pattern and distinctive clubbed tail, and partly for the thrill of the hunt. After all, it took four years after his first sighting for him to successfully find and document it in our region.

The format of each profile has been consistent pretty much from the start. With his stated aim of “not sounding like a field guide,” he begins with personal observations with respect to its habitat preference, hunting style as well as other interesting behaviours. He then continues by describing the important morphological characters used for identification, listing similar looking species and how to differentiate them, and describing where and

when it may be found. The images are key in each profile. They not only provide a microscopic view of each odonate, but the accompanying arrows indicating what and where to look on the insect are indispensable.

Gillian Mastromatteo has been a keen odonate enthusiast for quite some time. She may not have been on the ground floor of this project, but her contributions occurred early on. Her name first appeared in Profile 4 under an exquisite image of a Dragonhunter with a Widow Skimmer prey (2020), and then again in 2022 under a male Hudsonian Whiteface. In 2023 she was a guest author profiling the Beaverpond and Spiny Baskettails (numbers 15 and 16 respectively) and since then, Gillian authored three others.

Thus far, Chris and Gillian have profiled 27 of the approximately 120 species known from the area, with no desire to stop. They have drawn attention to a further 30 or more species that can be easily confused with the ones profiled. The profiles have proven to be an indispensable teaching tool for identifying dragonflies and damselflies in the Ottawa area. Each entry is not only a joy to read but, judging by the positive feedback it has received, is popular with OFNC members. What a legacy to leave for future generations of entomologists, conservationists and natural history enthusiasts.

*Prepared by Karen McLachlan Hamilton*

