



Dragonflies

By Ivy Jeffery

Dragonflies

Dragonflies are a part of an Order called the Odonata family.

Dragonflies are not actually flies.

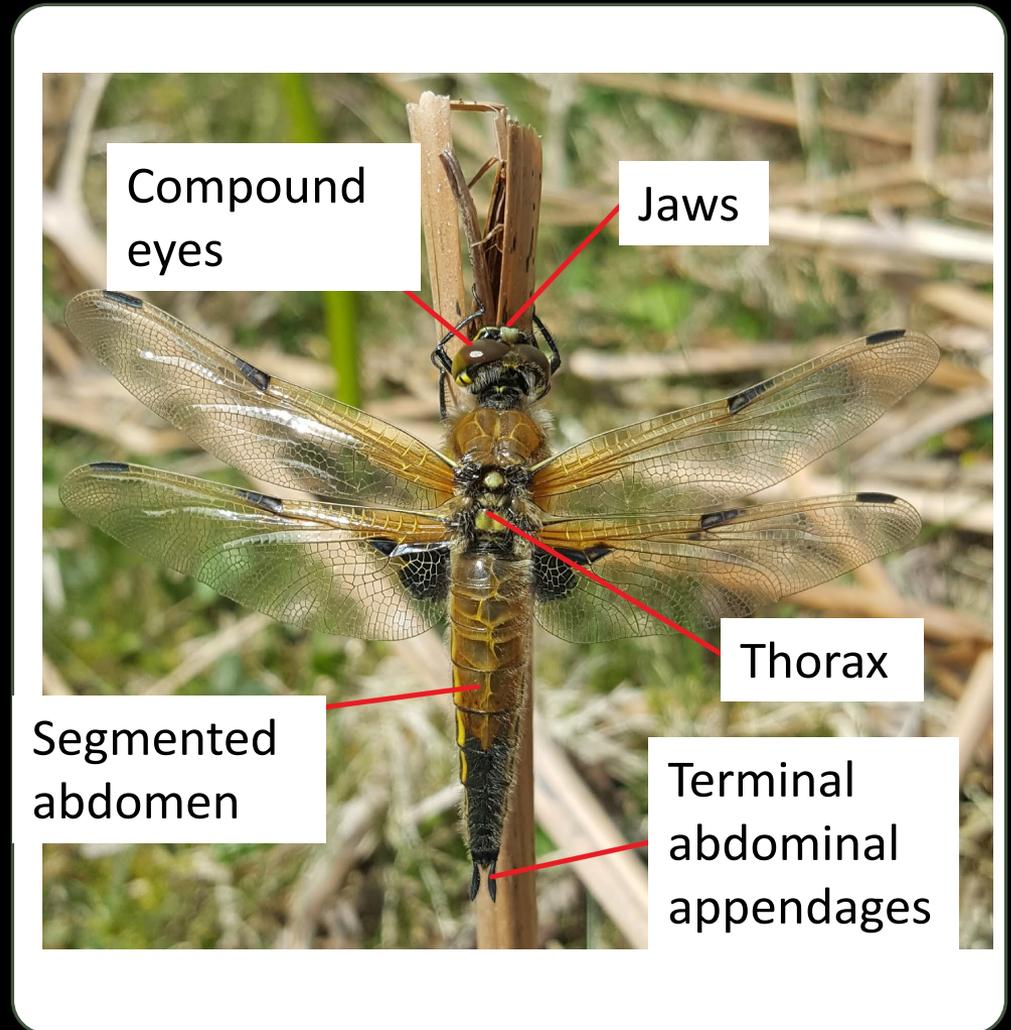
Dragonflies have sucking mouth parts like the true bug order. Most other insects don't.



Diagram

Dragonflies have three main body parts; abdomen, thorax, and head. (see diagram.)

They also have six legs, making them an insect.



UK species

There are over 5,000 known species of dragonflies in the world, there are 36 species of dragonflies in the UK. Some examples are:

- Southern hawker (top)
- Broad-bodied chaser. (bottom)





Habitat

Dragonflies normally hunt near or beside ponds as their main food source is midges.
(handy)



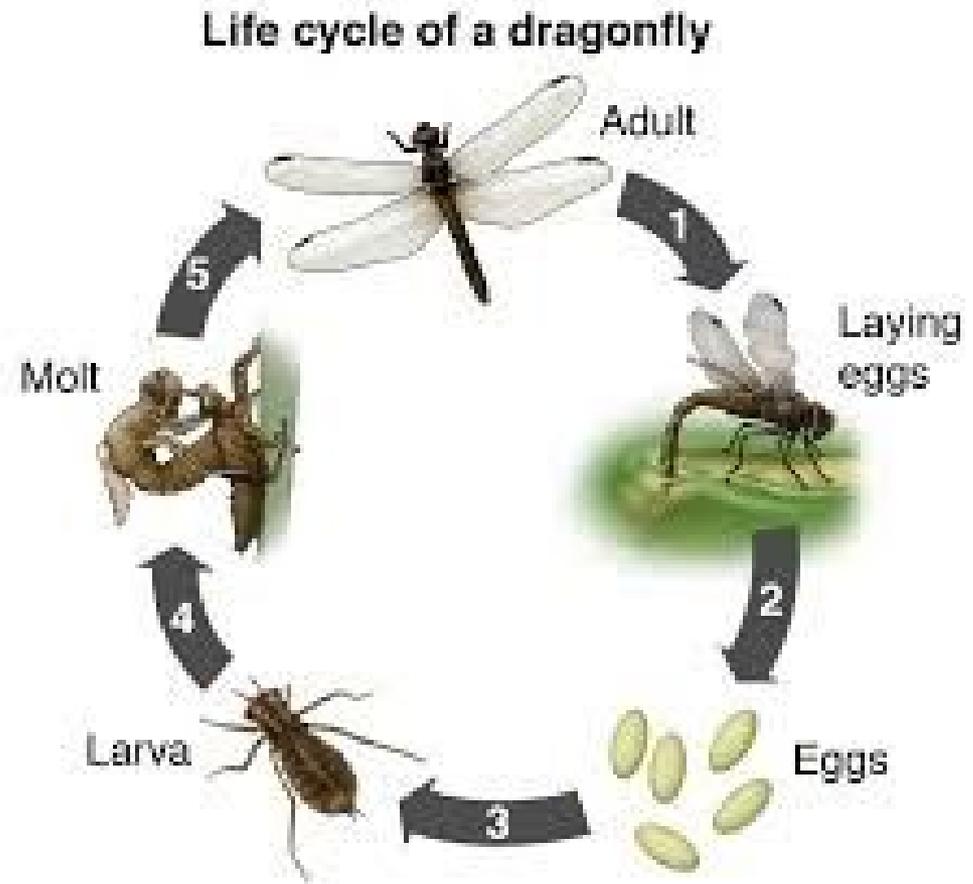
How they hunt

On the previous slide, we learnt that dragonflies hunt near ponds. Dragonflies fly over the water and snatch other unsuspecting insects then tear them to pieces with their mandibles. Dragonflies have two pairs of wings, meaning increased agility when flying. They can go forwards, sideways, and even backwards!

Dragonfly life cycle

A female dragonfly carries her fertilized eggs to a reed sitting in a pond, she deposits her eggs on the chosen reed (oviposition), after a few weeks the eggs hatch as nymphs. The nymphs feed on tadpoles and other small pond life. They are the apex predator in the pond except newts and frogs. The nymphs go through multiple stages of shedding the skin. They then climb up onto a reed and shed their skin for one final time, wings sprout and they fly off as a dragonfly. Here is a link to a scratch project I did (copy and paste it in safari) :

<https://scratch.mit.edu/projects/378393908/fullscreen/>





Fun facts!

- Dragonflies stretch back to around 300,000,000 (300 million) years ago!
- Dragonflies now only have a wingspan (one wing tip to the other) of about three to five inches, but the first dragonflies had one of around two feet!
- The fastest recorded dragonfly flies over 30MPH!
- Dragonfly adults don't just live a day, they live up to a month! The shortest life span medal goes to the adult mayfly with one day!