Interesting facts about amazing Dragonflies

- Dragonflies spend a large part of their lives underwater, first as eggs and then as nymphs. They are predatory and prey on other invertebrates. As they grow they shed their skin several times. Their development can take one or two years or more. Once ready, the nymphs climb out of the water and emerge from their larval skin as young adults.

- Dragonflies and damselflies belong to the Odonata order of insects.

- The eyes of a Dragonfly are joined together, not like the eyes of a Damselfly which are separate.

- Dragonflies are carnivores and eat insects whilst flying.

- Dragonflies usually keep their wings outstretched when resting.

- A Dragonfly can fly up to speeds of 36 kilometres per hour.

- In prehistoric times when oxygen levels were much higher, giant dragonflies roamed the land. They were around the size of a large eagle and were the largest flying insect that has ever lived. Today's dragonflies are much smaller but still amazing insects.

Hatfield Forest Dragonfly Spotter

National Trust

The large Emperor Dragonfly can be spotted flying over the lake catching its insect prey - this can even be damselflies or butterflies.

Broad Bodied Chaser is a very broad, 'fat' dragonfly. The males have a blue abdomen with yellow spots on the side. The females are golden brown with yellow spots on the side.

Ruddy Darter is bright red dragonfly with black legs and likes well vegetated ponds.

Black Tailed Skimmer has a blue abdomen darkening to the rear. They often land and sunbathe. This is a medium sized dragonfly.

Common Darter is the most common darter species and can be identified by its black wing spots which tell it apart from a Ruddy Darter.

The Four-Spotted Chaser has 4 spots on its wings and is brown with a darkening abdomen and yellow spots to the sides.

The Southern Hawker is a large inquisitive dragonfly and will often come and look at you! Look for its yellow headlights behind the head to help you identify it.

Turn over to find out lots about amazing Dragonflies and get spotting.