

## *Gomphurus septima* Septima's Clubtail

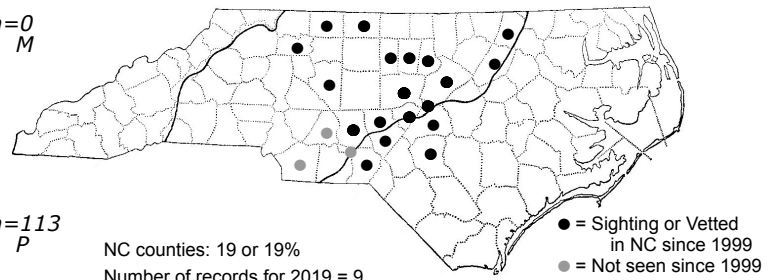
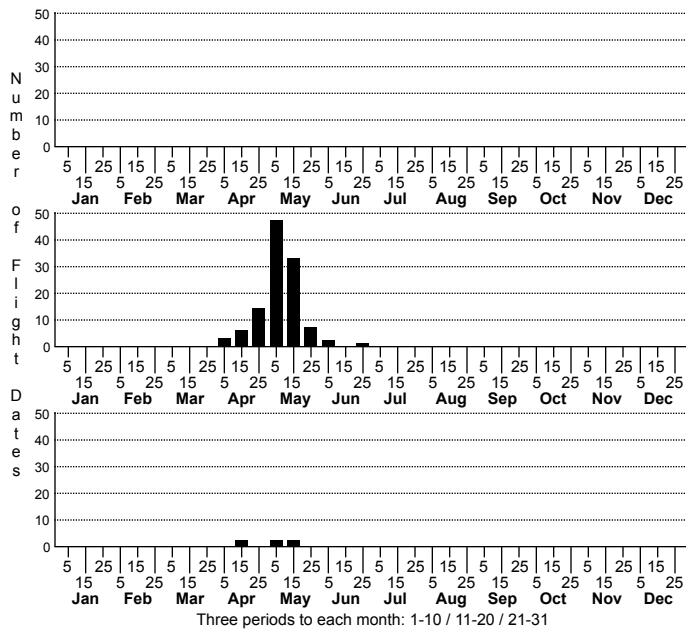


Photo (vetted) in 2019: Davidson, Yadkin

High counts of:  
10 - Chatham - 2018-05-05  
8 - Chatham - 1993-05-11  
8 - Chatham - 2018-05-12

Earliest date: Harnett; P 2016-04-02  
Latest date: Wake 2010-06-21

Status		Rank	
NC	US	NC	Global
SR	-	S3	G2 [G3]

Synonym: *Gomphus septima*

**DISTRIBUTION:** A somewhat narrow northeast-southwest band in the eastern Piedmont and the Sandhills. Ranges west to Stokes, Stanly, and Union counties, and east to Halifax, Nash, Harnett, and Cumberland counties. The species has a peculiar, disjunct, or relict range, and so far has been found only in NY, PA, NJ, VA, NC, SC, and AL (according to the OdonataCentral map). Thus, DE, MD, and GA lack records; and it has been found in just two counties each in VA, SC, and AL (OdonataCentral map).

**ABUNDANCE:** Uncommon but widespread within its rather limited range; noticeably increasing in the past few years. Mainly in the Cape Fear River system -- Haw, Rocky, Deep, and the Cape Fear itself. Rare to uncommon in the lower Yadkin/Pee Dee River system. Rare in the Neuse, Tar, and Roanoke, where so far found only along these rivers (includes the Eno River as the upper end of the Neuse) and not their tributaries; only recently reported from the latter two rivers. Discovered in the Dan River system in spring 2017, but likely rare to very uncommon there.

**FLIGHT:** Early April to the end of May, and sparingly to mid-June. The peak is during the first half of May. The flight period has moved forward (earlier) by a week to 10 days over the past decade. Formerly quite rare before very late April, but now with a number of records prior to 20 April.

**HABITAT:** Breeds in clean, fast rivers and very large streams.

**BEHAVIOR:** Males perch on the ground near rivers, but they also perch on rocks in the rivers. For a clubtail, this species is rather easily observed and photographed, as individuals often perch on dirt roads, trails, and other spots away from the rivers.

**COMMENTS:** Until about 10 years ago, the species was known (apparently) only from NC and AL, and presumed to exist only in NC at that time. It has since been found far to the north in NY and NJ. This is, or at least was until about 10 years ago, one of the rarest dragonflies in the eastern United States. It has been found in 17 counties in NC, with photographic documentation for many of them. As mentioned above, the species is clearly on the increase in the state, and is now one of the more readily found clubtails along the larger rivers in the eastern third of the Piedmont. It should be re-ranked by NatureServe as G2G3 or G3, and in late 2018 the NC Natural Heritage Program changed the State Rank from S2 to S3. (It is hardly in danger of extirpation from NC or extinction over its range now.)