

Elfin Skimmer (*Nannothemis bella*)

Pennsylvania Species of Concern

State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled) Global Rank: G4 (apparently secure)

Identification:

This is the smallest dragonfly in North America and its small size can be diagnostic. The male has a powdery blue thorax and a slightly clubbed abdomen. Thorax and abdomen of the female is dark brown with yellow stripes, giving it a bee or wasp-like appearance. The face has white on sides and top (Dunkle 2000).



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Habitat:

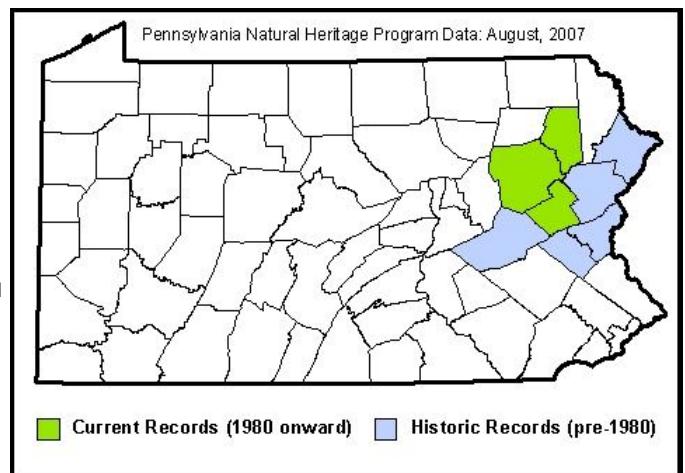
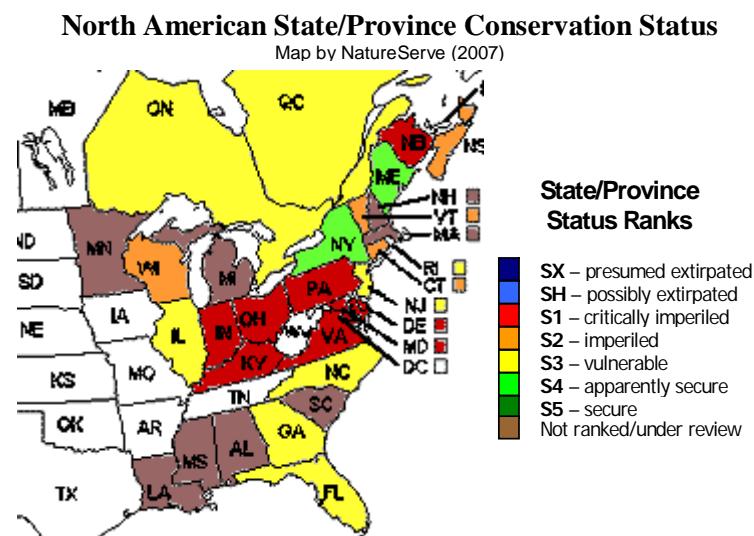
Bogs and occasionally in calcareous fens with sedge meadows and marl deposits (Dunkle 2000).

Life History:

Adults forage inconspicuously a few inches above bog mats, flying in and out of vegetation and perching horizontally or obliquely on vegetation, often with wings drooping downward. In flight, females resemble bees. Females deposit eggs in open pools within bogs, often with males hovering nearby (Nikula 2003).

Status

Prior to a Luzerne County discovery in 2003 and a Carbon County discovery in 2004, no contemporary records of this species had been documented in the state. With these recent discoveries, the species state rank has set from SH (State Historical) to S1 (Critically Imperiled).



References

- Dunkle, S.W. 2000. Dragonflies Through Binoculars. Oxford University Press, New York, New York. 266 pp.
- NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: September 6, 2007).
- Nikula, B., J.L. Loose, and M.R. Burne. 2003. A Field Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies of Massachusetts. Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, Westborough, MA
- USGS Dragonflies and Damselflies of the United States web site: <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/insects/dfly/usa/398.htm> (Accessed: March 1, 2005)



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program