

LAWS OF DELAWARE
VOLUME 85
CHAPTER 85
153rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORMERLY
SENATE BILL NO. 148

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE DESIGNATION OF A STATE DRAGONFLY.

WHEREAS, dragonflies play a vital role in maintaining the health and balance of the ecosystem as a top insect predator, even though they do not bite or sting humans; and

WHEREAS, dragonflies are nonselective and eat anything that flies in their visual field including insects up to their own size, capturing over 95% of the prey they pursue; and

WHEREAS, dragonflies are beneficial in balancing prey populations, like mosquitoes and agricultural pests, and they rely on healthy aquatic ecosystems for a large portion of their life cycle; and

WHEREAS, dragonflies lay their eggs in water and their larvae live in water, and the only dragonflies in the world that lay their eggs in salt water, Seaside Dragonlets, are abundant in Delaware saltmarshes; and

WHEREAS, major threats to dragonflies in Delaware include habitat destruction, introduced predatory fish, agricultural runoff, and use of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, dragonflies are Odonates, members of the insect order Odonata, an order of predatory flying insects which also includes damselflies; and

WHEREAS, approximately 136 Odonate species can be found in Delaware; and

WHEREAS, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources (DNREC) is in the process of finalizing the 2025 Delaware Wildlife Action Plan (DEWAP); and

WHEREAS, 76 species of dragonflies and damselflies have been included as candidates for the DEWAP list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need; and

WHEREAS, the Delaware Dragonfly Project aimed to further the environmental education of Delaware students in all grades throughout the State about the life and habitat of dragonflies in Delaware, specifically studying six species: the Blue Dasher, Blue-Faced Meadowhawk, Calico Pennant, Common Green Darner, Dragonhunter, and Tiger Spiketail; and

WHEREAS, nearly 900 students throughout Delaware participated in these activities and voted to designate the Blue Dasher as the official State dragonfly; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Dasher is one of the most common and widespread dragonflies, not just in Delaware but across North America, found at almost every body of water and growing 0.98–1.69 inches long; and

WHEREAS, Blue Dashers are members of the Skimmer family and live near still, calm bodies of water, such as ponds, marshes, slow-moving waterways, and ditches, in warm areas typically at low elevations, with adult Blue Dashers roosting in trees at night; and

WHEREAS, Blue Dashers are often found a long way from water when feeding, hunting small flying insects from perches, keeping still and darting to catch suitable prey when it comes within range; and

WHEREAS, as wetlands and other various habitats for dragonflies decrease due to habitat destruction, so do the populations of dragonflies; and

WHEREAS, as temperature has a large effect on the evolution of the Blue Dasher's wing coloration, with darker wing coloration helping with thermoregulation, flight performance, and territory securement, and populations in hotter regions tending to lack this darker coloration compared to those present in cooler regions, Blue Dashers are vulnerable to warming climate; and

WHEREAS, dragonflies are indicators of a healthy ecosystem and at the forefront of conservation movements; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of our waterways is critical to their survival.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Chapter 33, Title 29 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 334. State dragonfly.

The Blue Dasher (*Pachydiplax longipennis*) is the official dragonfly of the State.

Approved July 16, 2025