



NCBP Spring 2022 Newsletter

NEW! [AMPHIBIANS OF NORTH CAROLINA](#) WEBSITE

By Jim Petranka

North Carolina's extraordinary amphibian diversity continues to grow with the addition of new species such as the recently described Carolina Sandhills Salamander (*Eurycea arenicola*), the Hickory Nut Gorge Green Salamander (*Aneides caryaensis*), and Collinse's Mountain Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris collinsorum*). The Amphibians of North Carolina website was recently launched to showcase this diversity.

The site provides a detailed account of the distribution, habitat requirements, life history, ecology, and conservation biology of each species of frog and salamander that occurs in our state. Information on identification, recent systematic studies, taxonomy, and conservation status is also presented. Each account is based on a general review of the published literature from studies conducted throughout the range of the species. As in all our websites we have a particular focus on information and published studies that are most relevant to populations in North Carolina and nearby states. There are over 1,200 scientific articles that are cited, and sound recording and sonograms are provided for many of the frogs. We have also compiled over 24,000 occurrence records for the state.

As with all of the NC Biodiversity Project websites, this is a work in progress. We still need high-quality images for many of the species and high-quality sound recordings for some of the frogs. So, please submit any material that will help with this aspect of the project using the 'Submit a Public Record' tab.



Marbled Salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*) by Jim Petranka



Red-legged Salamander (*Plethodon shermani*) by Jim Petranka

NEW DRAGONFLY FOR NC IN 2021

By Harry LeGrand



Twilight Darner (*Gynacantha nervosa*) by Randy Newman.

On October 31, 2021, Fort Macon State Park Superintendent Randy Newman noticed three individuals of an unfamiliar dragonfly that were perched on the outside of the park's visitor center. He photographed one of them, suggesting to experts that it might be the not-yet-recorded-in-NC Twilight Darner (*Gynacantha nervosa*), but still incredulous that THREE individuals of such a dragonfly had turned

up in his park. After all, the species is a resident only north to Florida and coastal Georgia, with a few stray records farther north. It is well known that this species flies essentially at "twilight", near dusk, and roosts at times on man-made structures. A low pressure system had moved north off the state's coast a few days earlier, and it is likely that the dragonflies moved north with these winds.

Within a few hours of receiving Randy's e-mail message with photos, all of the editors of the NCBP's ODONATES OF NORTH CAROLINA website -- Mark Shields, John Petranka, Tom Howard, and Harry LeGrand -- agreed with Randy on his identification. On the following day (November 1), he again found one on the side of the building, and over the next two days Dr. Shields and Hunter Phillips visited the park, and each saw one on the building's exterior! The numerous photos are now on the website, as is a more detailed accounting of the records. A few days later, Newman found a dead individual, perhaps not surprising given that the nights were getting "too cold" for such a more southerly species. It is hoped that the specimen can be donated to the N.C. State University's extensive insect collection.

YIMBY (Yes! In My Back Yard!)

By Donald Zepp

I first became aware of the North Carolina Biodiversity Project when I posted photos of a spitting spider (Scytodidae) I had found on my front door in Johnston County, NC to the American Arachnological Society's Facebook page.

After it was suggested that I visit the NCBP site, I was surprised to see that only *one* spider species had been reported from this county(!), and immediately volunteered to help in any way I could, as I had strong suspicions that there just *might* be a few more!

My interest was especially piqued by the fact that the spitting spider species I had found had never been reported in NC or this far north. And so, I began photographing and collecting spiders (always my true love), focusing on my small property in downtown Smithfield, right in the heart of Johnston County.

At this writing, I have photographed, captured, and/or collected 80 spider species in my house, on my house, and/or in my yard, including several species never before reported to be in NC.

So I encourage you to look closely at what's right under your nose. You might be surprised to see what's there in your own backyard!



Metacyrba floridana by Donald Zepp. The only NC record is from Donald's yard.

[MAMMALS OF NORTH CAROLINA](#) WEBSITE UPDATES

By Harry LeGrand

Over the winter, the website author (Harry LeGrand) has gone through several museum collection databases and a few additional website databases (such as iNaturalist) to update the county maps for our state's mammal species. As a result of these additional county records, some of the species accounts have been revised. In addition, in preparation for the Third Approximation PDF for the website, LeGrand has edited the introductory text. The two website record review editors -- Lisa Gatens and Ed Corey -- have been very helpful in reviewing the public record submissions, especially for taxa that are difficult to identify from photos (much less sight reports) -- mice, voles, shrews, bats, and a few other groups. Tom Howard (the website administrator) is preparing the Third Approximation, which contains all species accounts and their county maps (in black and white), as of March 2022; it will be available for downloading this spring. The current Second Approximation was done in 2017, and it certainly needed an update.

Please note that these complete Approximations are in PDF format and thus the text and county maps are static. However, the website county range maps (in color) are automatically updated upon acceptance of a record, the text on the website accounts are also constantly updated, and the individual PDF of a species (downloadable from the species account page) changes whenever a new county record is added.



River Otter in Hyde County by Tom Snow

nc-biodiversity.com