

Global protection of Odonata and their habitats: a tribute to Norman W. Moore

This Special Issue of the International Journal of Odonatology constitutes a milestone in the attempts by odonatologists to highlight and document the need to conserve dragonflies and their habitats worldwide. Its first ideas were set on a meeting of the IUCN/Odonata Specialist Group at the Worldwide Dragonfly Association Symposium at Gällivare, Sweden in 2001 under the chairmanship of Jan van Tol, although the publishing venture can be said to be derived from, and reflect, the inspiration and leadership in this field generated by Norman Moore.

By precept and example, Norman Moore has been a leader and enabler in the field of nature conservation all his professional life. The science and philosophy of this discipline have benefited immeasurably from his work, mainly with the (former) Nature Conservancy in UK. He it was who led the team in the Toxic Chemicals and Wildlife Division that revealed the insidious role of organochlorine pesticides in suppressing the fecundity of raptors; and, later (1997), in his widely acclaimed book "The bird of time – the science and politics of nature conservation", he emphasised his commitment to reconciling theory and practice and his dedication to formulating realistic goals for habitat protection.

Odonatologists are fortunate that Norman has maintained an abiding affection for dragonflies. His PhD thesis (1954) focused on agonistic behaviour, exploiting the fact that dragonflies are large enough that the behaviour of adults can be observed and interpreted in the field; and his research produced insights that have underpinned subsequent work on territorial behaviour. His recognition that dragonflies are "the birdwatcher's insect" (his term) facilitated his aim to gain them recognition as flagships for insect conservation and thus to raise public awareness of the role of insects in ecosystems.

In the light of Norman's background, it was to be expected that, on invitation from the chairman of the Species Survival Commission of the IUCN, Norman accepted the chairmanship of a constituent Odonata Specialist Group, whose remit was:

- to be an authoritative source on conservation priorities for Odonata and on conservation research;
- to be an international organisation that can represent Odonata at forums dealing with conservation matters; and
- to give international backing to national initiatives on dragonfly conservation.

The inaugural meeting of this Group was held in Kyoto, Japan in 1980. Under Norman's chairmanship it has provided a needed focus for co-ordinating projects at the international level. The Action Plan produced by the Group in 1995 (and published 1997) identified priorities that are being well served by the publication of this Special Issue.

The contributions in this document testify to the industry, care and expertise of the authors, all of whom have drawn inspiration from the momentum generated by Norman's dedication and leadership. It is with pleasure, admiration and gratitude that the Editors and contributors offer this Special Issue as a tribute to Norman Moore, recognising that, in the field of global dragonfly conservation, there is no more worthy recipient.

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Past President WDA