

Gomphurus fraternus Midland Clubtail

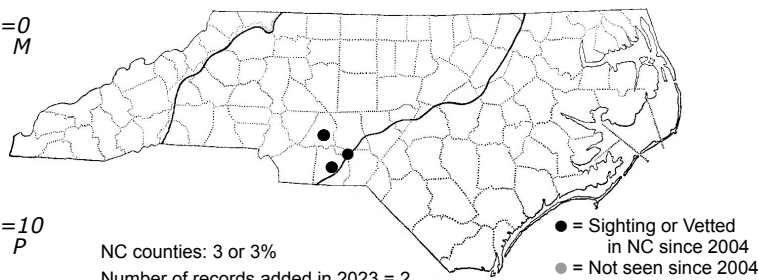
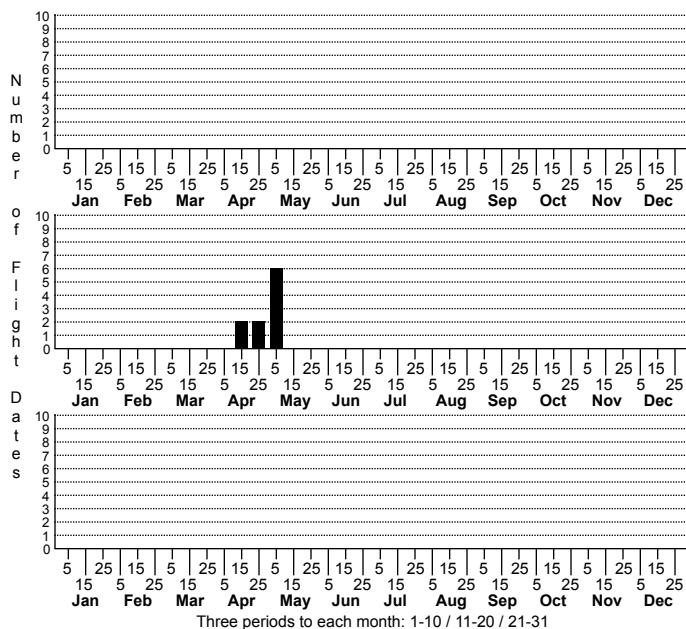


Photo (vetted) in 2024: Richmond; P

High counts of:
6 - Anson - 2017-04-20
6 - Stanly - 2017-04-20
3 - Stanly - 1987-05-05

Earliest date: Anson 2017-04-20
Latest date: Stanly 1989-05-08

Status		Rank	
NC	US	NC	Global
SR	-	S1	G5

Synonym: *Gomphus fraternus*

DISTRIBUTION: Known only from two sites in the lower Piedmont, the Rocky River and the adjacent Pee Dee River, both in the Yadkin--Pee Dee drainage. The Pee Dee site was discovered in 2024. The distribution in the state would suggest that this is a Southern species, but in fact it is a North-central/Northeastern species, ranging south mainly to MD, WV, and western TN.

ABUNDANCE: Undoubtedly very rare in NC, as it is known from just a single drainage.

FLIGHT: All of the records fall between 20 April and 8 May. It is assumed that adults are present for only a few weeks -- probably mid-April to mid-May.

HABITAT: Breeds at fast flowing rivers and large streams.

BEHAVIOR: Perch on rocks or banks near rivers. References indicate that this is a very fast and strong flier, able to overtake and feed on other dragonflies.

COMMENTS: This is a very poorly known clubtail in NC. Its known state range -- three counties (Anson, Stanly, and Richmond) that border the Rocky and Pee Dee rivers in the lower Piedmont -- is most unusual, as this is a Northeastern species. Does it not occur along the Flat, Eno, Haw, Cape Fear, and other rivers in the eastern Piedmont, where there has been more odonate field work? On the other hand, this is a difficult-to-identify species, unless a specimen or multiple photos are taken. In fact, photos of a clubtail from the Eno River in Orange County have been re-examined, and it was felt not to be a Midland Clubtail. (They were carried on this website as a "Midland" for several years.) Thankfully, John Petranka decided to travel to the Rocky River in spring 2017 to look for this species and, sure enough, re-found it along the river, but about 5.5 miles upriver from Duncan Cuyler's previous site. He saw and photographed several males on 20 April, which also extended the earliest state date by eight days. A few others have also seen and photographed it at this site. In late April 2024, Lucas Wilson photographed three males at the Pee Dee River along the western side of Richmond County, for a gratifying second site known in the state.