

COMMON BLUE DAMSELFLY

The Latin name for this damselfly is *Enallagma cyathigerum*.

Damselflies are slender, often brilliantly coloured insects and are fluttery in flight. They rest with their four wings held together above the back. The thorax of adults is rectangular and tilted 70 degrees to 80 degrees out of the bodyline. Adults feed on insects captured in flight. The nymphs are aquatic and have three leaf-like gills at the end of the abdomen.

The Common Blue damselfly is found throughout the British Isles, often far from water.

This is a medium sized damselfly with a body length of about 3cm. The male is pale blue with black markings along the abdomen, including a distinctive *stalked ball* on the second segment from the thorax. The female tends to be duller and more greenish in colour.

Adults can be seen in flight from mid May through the summer.

Mating usually takes place near a bank, then the pair separate and the female lays her eggs. They often insert their eggs into plant stems below the surface of the water.

The nymphs are slim and hide among aquatic plants. They vary in colour, which adapts to match their surroundings. They take about a year to reach maturity.