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## **Larger Populations of Dragonflies in 2009?**

Have you been noticing more dragonflies in your landscape lately? According to Dr. Forrest Mitchell, Professor and Entomologist with Texas AgriLife Research in Stephenville, “of the 231 species of dragonflies and damselflies in Texas, 26 species may be migratory, including the brown-and-yellow wandering glider (*Pantala flavescens*) and the spot-winged glider (*Pantala hymenaea*). Both are known as rainpool gliders since they are adapted to breeding in temporary water. Rainpool gliders will lay eggs in nearly anything that can hold water including buckets, flower pots, water troughs, puddles, ditches and swimming pools. They will even attempt to lay eggs on shiny car hoods, wet asphalt and wet concrete.

We have had several cool fronts along with heavy localized rain to make rainpools and either or both may be what accounts for the presence of so many dragonflies in our region. I am noticing them mostly over stretches of roads and parking lots or wide open fields where the hunting is good. They may be in other places as well, but harder to see.

However, just as fronts can bring dragonflies, fronts can also take them away. Work in the last decade on the eastern seaboard of the U.S. shows that moving dragonflies are swept together and collected by weather fronts. These concentrations may then be deposited elsewhere and a long way off, so enjoy watching them while you have a chance.”

For more information regarding dragonflies, please visit Dr. Mitchell’s Digital Dragonflies website: <http://dragonflies.org> or check out *A Dazzle of Dragonflies* by Forest Mitchell and James L. Lasswell (Texas A&M University Press, 2005). Also Odonata Central posts a checklist of species for Texas:

[http://www.odonatacentral.org/index.php/ChecklistAction.showChecklist/location\\_id/64](http://www.odonatacentral.org/index.php/ChecklistAction.showChecklist/location_id/64)).



Photo of female wandering glider, *Pantala flavescens*. Photo by Dr. Forrest Mitchell, Professor and Entomologist with Texas AgriLife Research ([http://www.dragonflies.org/l\\_cat2.htm](http://www.dragonflies.org/l_cat2.htm)).

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