

Rapids Clubtail

Gomphus quadricolor

Family - Gomphidae

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Rapid's Clubtail

State Status:

Endangered

Federal Status:

State Rank:

S1

New England Rank:

Global Rank:

G3G4

Reason for Rarity:

The rapids clubtail is listed as Endangered in Maine because of its highly limited distribution and marked population fragmentation, its narrow, riverine habitat specialization, northern range limits in Maine, and sensitivity to both aquatic (larvae) and riparian/upland (adult) perturbations.

Threats:

Dams and deteriorating water quality are the primary threats to riverine odonates. Clean, free-flowing forested streams and rivers, the preferred habitat for the rapids clubtail, is especially threatened by aquatic, riparian, and watershed degradation in

southern Maine where this species is likely restricted. Development in the upland areas along river systems, critical for feeding, resting and maturation, can also threaten habitat for adult rapid clubtails.

Habitat

dominated by short sedges.

Range:

to Ontario.

State Distribution:

In Maine, the rapids clubtail has been documented only in the Saco River Watershed.

Global Distribution:

G3G4

General Description:

Clubtails are characterized by their "club" tail- a swelling at the end of its abdomen- and by eyes that are separated from each other. Like all dragonflies they are semi-aquatic, with the nymph aquatic and the adult terrestrial. Rapids clubtail is a dully colored gray, green, brown and black dragonfly with blue-green eyes and black legs. The thorax (section behind the head) is marked with yellow to gray-green stripes. The abdomen (section behind the thorax), which is made up of ten sections, is black. Sections 1 through 7 have thin yellow stripes that grow shorter towards the tip of the abdomen. Adult rapids clubtails range from 1.6 to 1.8 inches in length.

Phenology:

Rapids clubtail dragonflies likely breed in June. Males perch on exposed rocks in swift sections of the river and make patrols over the water searching for mates. After mating, females deposit their eggs in the water by tapping their abdomen to the water's surface, usually in the faster sections of stream. Nymphs hatch and develop in quiet pools below the rapids. After an unknown period of time nymphs climb from the water to an exposed rock or the stream bank and emerge from their nymphal skin (exuvia). The new adult (teneral) flies into the nearby woods and openings to forage. Adult rapids clubtails consume small aerial insects.

