



Wildlife at the Waterlily Pools

Mosquitofish



Mosquito fish are added to the pools to eat mosquito larvae. They eat a variety of insects and insect larvae. They should not be used where they can escape to natural areas where they are invasive and will outcompete native fish.

Rosy minnow



Rosy minnows, also known as fathead minnows, are native to North America. They are added to the pools to reduce the algae growth. They also eat insect larvae and are a good choice for homeowners with ponds.

Bullfrog



American bullfrogs are native to eastern North America.
They breed from May to June, and during this time, males call loudly to defend their territories.
Occasionally we add local frogs to the Pools but generally they find their own way here.

Green frog



Green frogs live in shallow freshwater ponds and are often found in water even as adults.

Dragonfly



- The female lays hundreds of eggs in just 30 seconds in plant stems or lily pads while the male usually hovers over her on guard.
- Dragonflies in their aquatic stage have no wings. They eat aquatic insects and even small fish or tadpoles.
- Once the nymph is fully grown it sheds its last exoskeleton and dries its wings before it can fly.
- Adult dragonflies eat just about any flying insects they can catch, especially mosquitoes and flies.



Dragonfly nymph

You can see the shed exoskeletons of nymphs around the pools during summer months.

Dragonfly nymphs live in the water and have no wings. Dragonfly nymphs go through many stages on their way to adulthood. As they grow, they molt (shed their whole skin at once) many times. Once they are big enough, they crawl out of the water and the adult emerges from the skin of the nymph.

Dragonfly



Male dragonflies fight aerial duels for territory, displaying their size and speed to each other.
Adult dragonflies communicate visually much more than most other insects.

Common Dragonflies



Common green darner
Anax junius

This insect has a green head and a blue body. Adults are about 3 inches long. There is usually just one in the area. If another appears, one will chase the other out.



Blue dasher
Pachydiplax longipennis

These medium size dragonflies are most commonly seen in the morning till mid-afternoon.



Eastern amberwing
Perithemis tenera

A tiny orange one inch skimmer which you might mistake for a wasp. This is an example of adaptive mimicry, perhaps to fool an insect-eating bird.

Damselfly



Damselflies are in the same family as dragonflies (Odonata), but they have some key differences.

Their eyes are located on either side of their head rather than on top.

Both sets of their wings have approximately the same shape.

Dragonflies have bigger hind wings.

Damselflies rest with their wings together, rather than outstretched.

Each year we have nesting cedar waxwings in the tall evergreens near the pools.

Cedar waxwings are found in Pennsylvania year round. They nest in trees and are often found in open woodland areas.

They usually have 1-2 broods per year with a clutch size of 2-6 eggs.



Cedar waxwing