

RED DAMSELFLY

Xanthocnemis zealandica

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The red damselfly is the most common damselfly found in New Zealand and is commonly seen at Pekapeka. It is a native found throughout New Zealand and is associated with slow flowing water. They can be found in wetlands or along the edges of streams.



IMG 509

Description

Adult damselflies are similar to small dragonflies, You can tell a damselfly from a dragonfly thanks to the way they hold their wings - damselflies fold them up over their body when they land while dragonflies hold them open. Damselflies are also usually smaller than dragonflies and weaker fliers in comparison, and their eyes are separated.

Food

They are expert hunters - adults take small insects on the wing and their nymphs are pretty impressive aquatic, carnivorous predators and consume aquatic insects as their main food source.

Breeding

Females lay eggs amongst vegetation where the larvae hatch into the water. The larvae cannot fly and live in the water. The larvae will undergo around 20 changes to their body shape before they turn into adults.



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Damselfly are not indicators of water quality as they are common in polluted and unpolluted waters.