

ID Pages – Introductions to the 7 Families



Family Classification

Dragonflies of North America are currently divided into 7 families, although the scientific community is working on adding 4 additional families in light of recent DNA and anatomical research. For now, on this website I'll stick with the 7 families currently used in all North American field guides as of 2013. To see the most recent attempts to add additional families visit Odonata Central, <http://www.odonatacentral.org/index.php/GalleryAction.bySpecies> - check out this link, and scroll down to Anisoptera (dragonflies). The 11 names listed under Anisoptera include the 4 new families.

“I don't want to look through all 65 species pages just to ID my ONE photo!!”

If you're just venturing into the exciting world of dragonflies and have a new photo you're trying to ID, **try looking through the 7 family links below – it's much quicker than hunting through all 65 species.**

I've tried to include a photo of most common Northern VA dragonflies in the following family slides – I bet you'll find your dragonfly in the [Skimmer](#) or [Darner](#) family slides. If not, try [Clubtails](#) or [Emeralds](#) next. Once you think you've found the right species, you can go to its individual page to learn more, by clicking on [65 Species](#). Good luck and have fun!

(click on a family name to see photos)

[Petaltails](#)

[Darners](#)

[Clubtails](#)

[Spiketails](#)

[Cruisers](#)

[Emeralds](#)

[Skimmers](#)

