

Eastern Least Clubtail



**Flight
Record:**

(5/25-7/27)
Peaks
mid-June
thru July

Uncommon

Habitat:

Clean,
rocky,
shallow,
sunny
streams

**First
Glance:**

Small, thin -

easily
mistaken
for a
damselfly.

Dark body with light
rings &
white tip
(cerci).

Perches
often on
rocks in the
middle of
streams.

Compare:

Sable
Clubtail

Eastern Least Clubtail (*Stylogomphus albistylus*) – 1.5", 31-36 mm

Habitat Conservation Alert!



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Notes from the field – Eastern Least Clubtail:

This small, thin dragonfly is easily overlooked, or mistaken for a damselfly. The dark coloring, slight build and small, clear wings require sharp eyes to spot. When flying over a stream they basically become invisible. You're best chance at finding this species is to look for them when they're perched, usually mid-stream on an exposed rock. They prefer shallow, sunny, rocky creeks and streams with plenty of riffles and a decent flow. It seems to be all about the rocks with these dragonflies; rocky substrate, rocky riffles and lots of exposed, sunny rocks for displaying males.

Those pale rings, and especially their pale cerci, really do stand out once you've got the search image down. Gutsy little dragonflies, displaying males can often be approached quite close, depending on how attached they are to their rock. The photo on the title page was taken from less than two feet away. The little guy turned to face me and my dragonfly buddy, Tony, and refused to leave what he clearly considered prime real-estate. For male dragonflies, it's all about staking out territory they think will attract the ladies, and he was sure he'd found pretty good chic bait.

There's a noticeable emergence of tenerals along stream banks in late May - look for them at Goose Creek, Bull Run, Popes Head and streams in Reston.

