

Four-spotted Pennant



Dragonflies of N. Va. – Kevin Munroe, 2012

Andy Rabin

Four-spotted Pennant (*Brachymesia gravida*) – 2.1", 50-54 mm

Flight

Record:

(8/06)

Seen most
late
summer.

Stray

Habitat:

Sunny,
shallow,
sluggish
waters, e.g.
small
ponds,
marshes,
ditches, etc.

First

Glance:

Medium.
Distinct
profile. Blue
males,
orange
females, w/
unique four
wing spots.
Perches
often on
tips of
stems &
branches.

Compare:

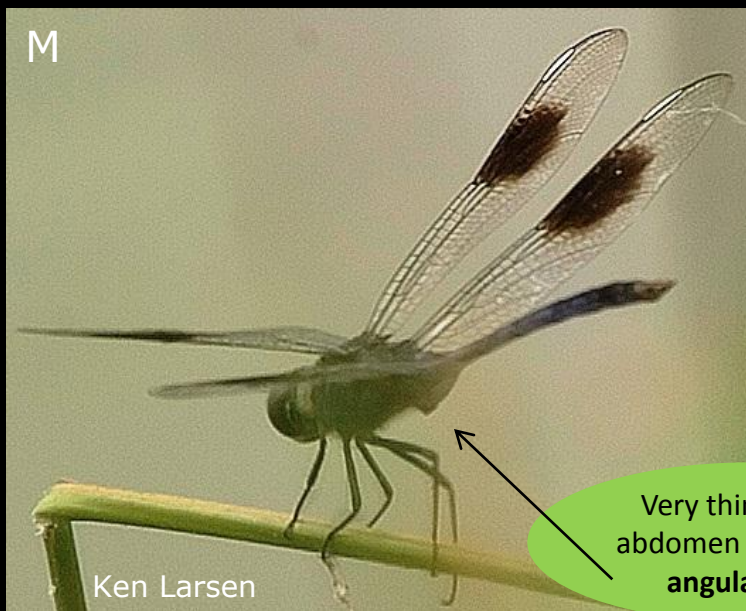
None



M

Unique **white** stigmas
and four large, brown
wing spots on long
slender wings

Tony Robison



M

Very thin, arched
abdomen w/ square,
angular base

Ken Larsen



F

The
female's
orange
turns to
brown
w/ age.

Giff Beaton

Notes from the field – Four-spotted Pennant:

Part of a genus often referred to as Tropical Pennants, this is the only *Brachymesia* that ventures this far north. Although it can stray as far north as New Jersey, it's only been sighted in this area a few times and probably doesn't breed here. A summer storm, or desire to wander, occasionally drops an individual or two into one of the shallow ponds along our coastal plain. Look for them July-September, perched on the edge of sunny, shallow, still water in our coastal plain parks. These include Dyke Marsh, Accotink Bay Wildlife Refuge, Jackson Abbott, Mason Neck, and Occoquon Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

The blue male in these photos was seen in 2005 during an Audubon Society of Northern Virginia field trip to Occoquon Bay National Wildlife Refuge. It was perched on the edge of a marshy pond, pictured on the right. We were shocked and excited to see it, and thrilled that it stayed in the sun for several minutes. It allowed the whole group to get great looks, and several photos. It's the first and last time (as of 2012) that species has been seen in the refuge – it was also seen in the 90's at Accotink Bay.

The photo of the orange female was taken in Florida and donated by Giff Beaton, author of [Dragonflies of Georgia and the Southeast](#).

