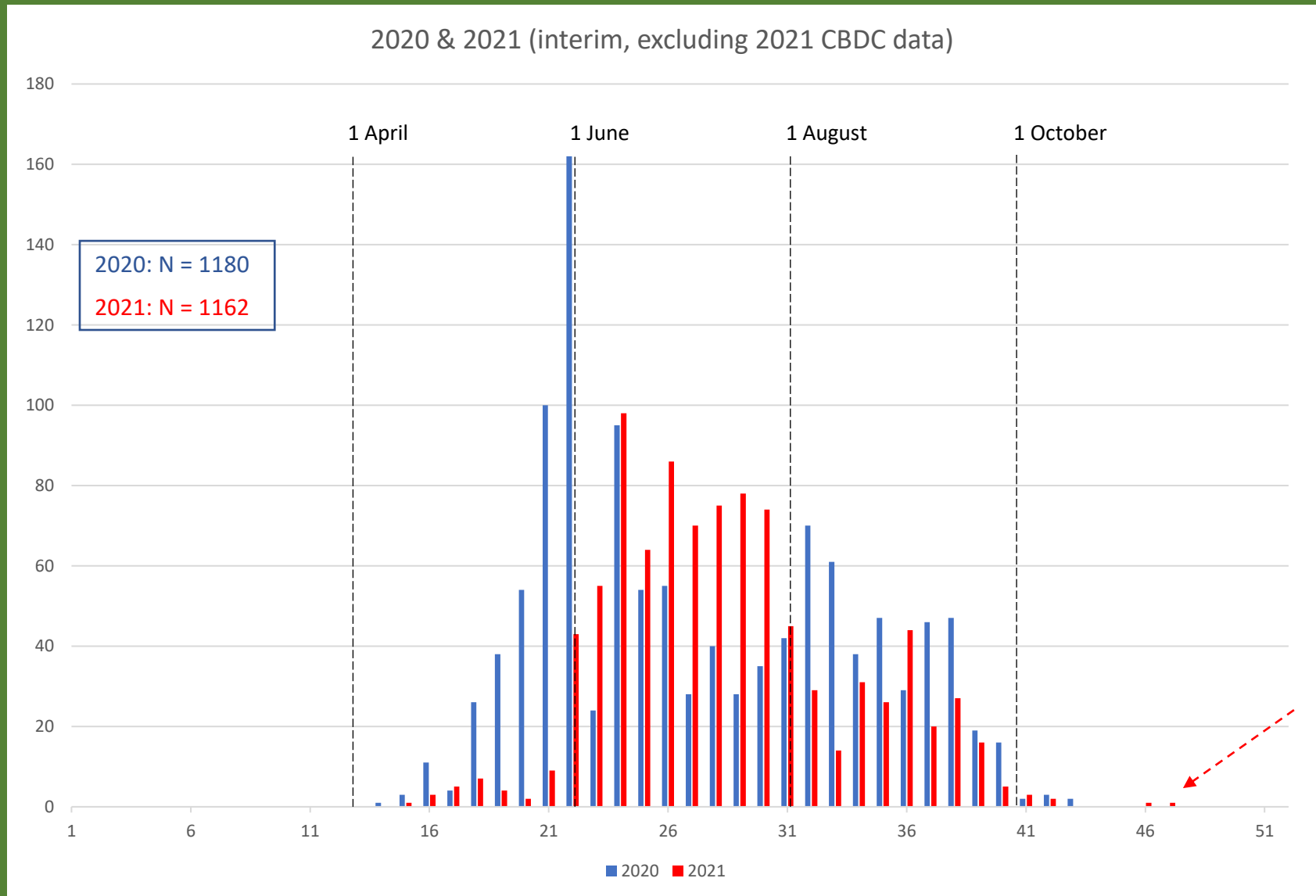


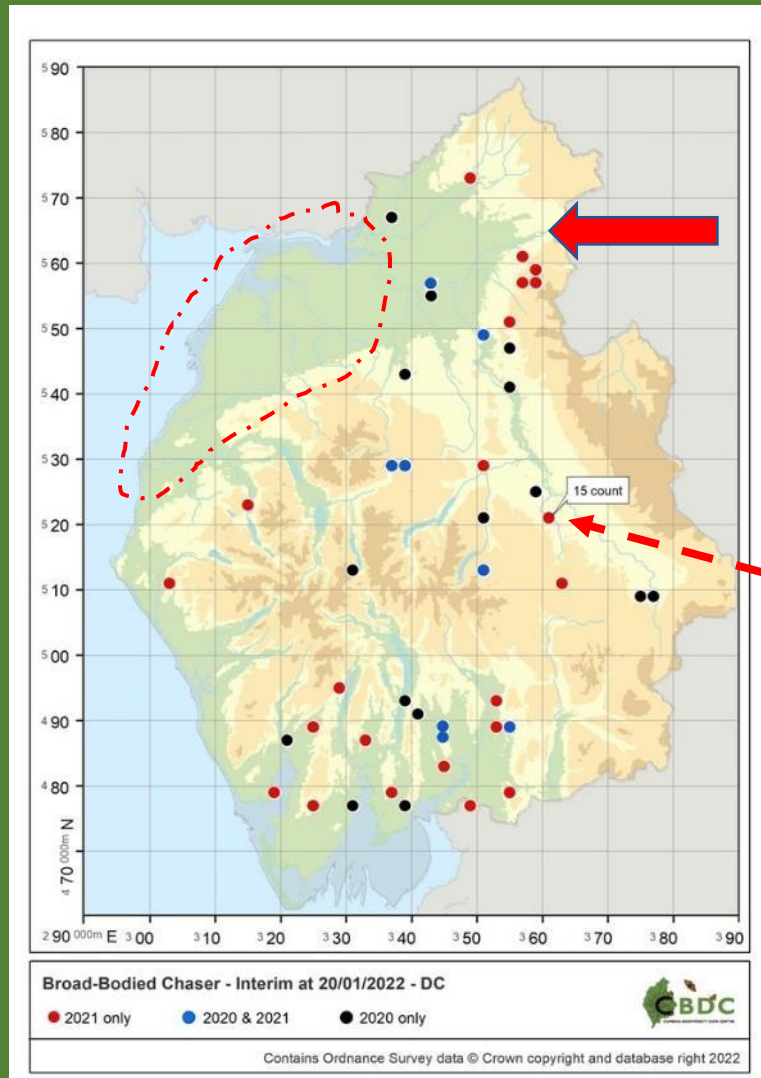
Dragonflies 2021



Records by week number, 2020 & 2021



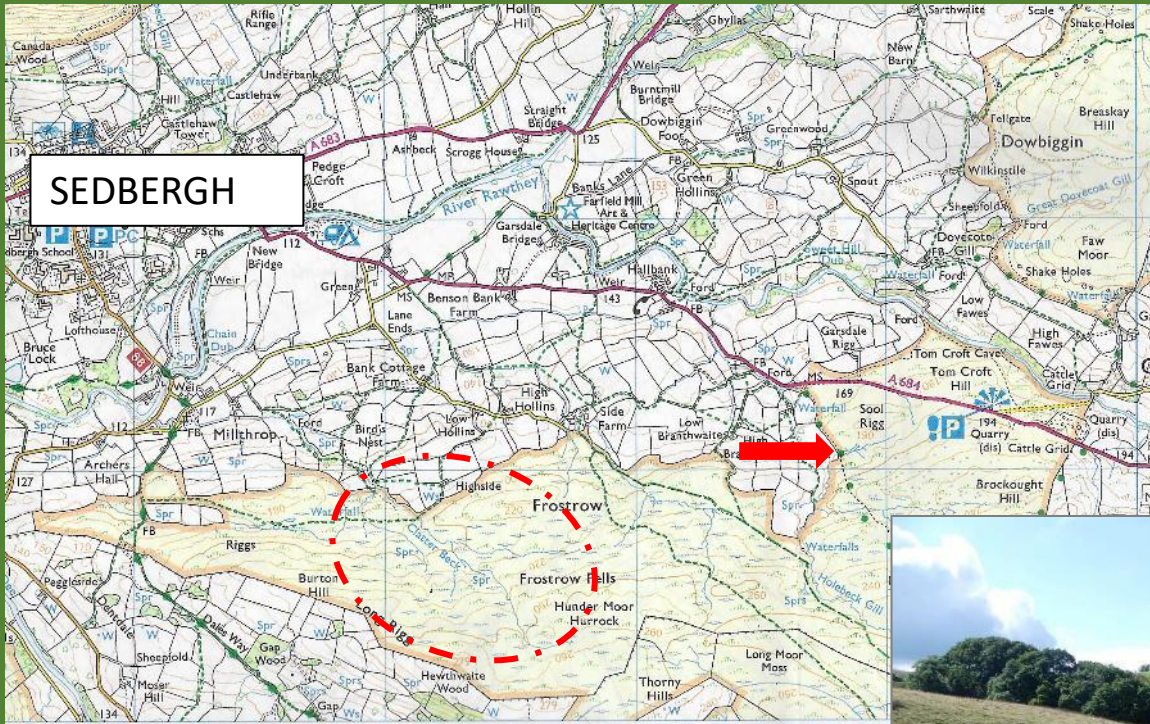
Broad-bodied Chasers advance



Scrape by R. Lyvennet, Whitber

Keeled Skimmers in Garsdale

Dragonflies 2021



White-faced Darters at Drumburgh Moss



White-faced Darters in Cumbria: a 2021 Perspective
David Clarke

It seems hard to believe that it is already eleven years since we actually started the reintroduction at Foulshaw Moss, and even longer since we began planning it. (The initial 'spark' had been a millennial Biodiversity Action Plan.) The movement of larvae into the site ceased after 2014 and we are now in the long-term monitoring and management phase. Meanwhile, the current introduction project at Drumburgh Moss on the Solway has still a couple of years to run, and it will be several years before we can really declare it a success.

With such a large site and variety of pools, monitoring at Foulshaw is a real challenge. At many pools it is simply not possible to use the technique of collecting coveiaie - which proved key to monitoring the initial phase. We will be forever grateful to BGS members Heather and Tony Marshall, who live near the site and worked hard for several seasons to reveal the crucial evidence. By the time of the Covid episode, this form of monitoring was already coming to an end. As I found on a visit on 2nd June this year, the species has continued, almost literally, to move on. The kilometre or so of boardwalk is the only effective means of getting around the site. In circuits of this, encounters with the species proved frequent. It could be seen at various pools, in one instance ovipositing. But there are many such pools and their margins are mainly not accessible. A fine mole was beside my car in the car park! The original reintroduction pools, and others, have extensive Sphagnum reeds, which will always contain larvae. I have recommended creating smaller 'satellite' pools around some of them to receive any excess that has to be removed to keep some open water. As noted in other years, the species has even turned up at the adjacent Meathop Moss Reserve,

having had to cross up to a kilometre of unsuitable habitat.

At Drumburgh Moss, we were pleased to find some mature larvae on 11 May, just before emergence. The fact that these had developed to this stage in the pool was even better news - we did not introduce any mature larvae this year. Emergence had started by 22 May and visits thereafter revealed that at least 40 adults had emerged. Matures of both sexes were seen at the pools. Although mating or oviposition were not recorded, these could have easily occurred during the period of good weather through most of June. Given the current stage of the project, this more than meets expectations.

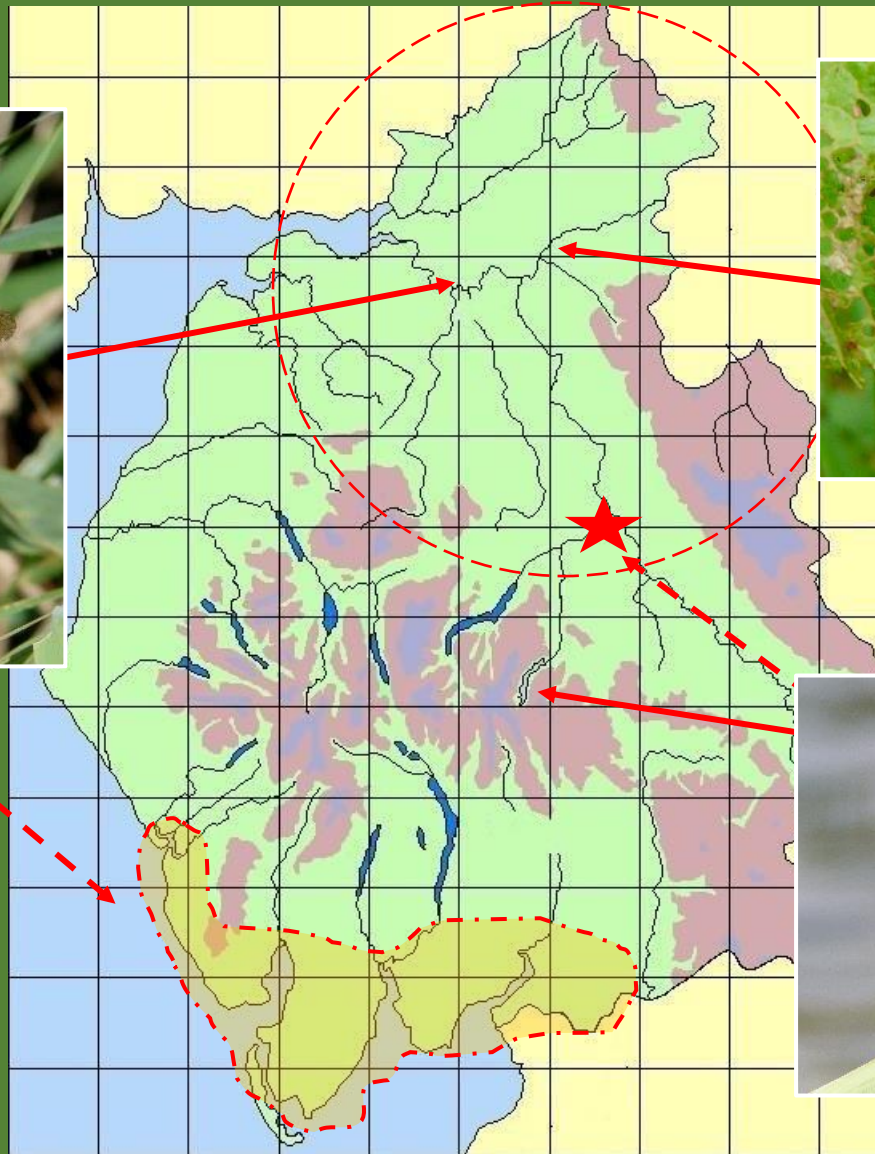
Interestingly, emergence at the Carlisle donor site is always later (by at least a week) than at Foulshaw. This year, there was no sign of it on 26 May; it only really got going when the weather finally improved at the very end of the month. Fortunately, the pools there have firm edges. On each visit, Cumbria Wildlife Trust volunteers and I spend two or three hours on hands and knees on wet pool margins - regardless of the weather! We carefully search the heather and other vegetation, also checking the stems of cotton-sedge growing in the water. Often, skins fall into the water amongst the floating Sphagnum and can be hard to spot. Whilst doing this, we have to be careful not to disturb emerging dragonflies which are very vulnerable at this stage. We know that at least 2500 individuals will have emerged this year. This is good confirmation of the strength of this donor population (which is already effectively 'replicated' at Foulshaw Moss) and a reassurance that the Drumburgh project can still safely proceed.



Anne Abbs, 27 May



Out-of-range records 2021



[Images not associated
with records]

Dragonflies 2021



Rickerby Park, Carlisle 2020 & 2021, *Martin Keiller*

davidclarke6970@gmail.com

Cumbria Recorder for the British Dragonfly Society