

POLICY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ODONATOLOGICAL SOCIETY CONCERNING FAUNISTIC SURVEYS AND PUBLICATION OF DISTRIBUTIONAL RECORDS

The increasing reluctance of some dragonfly students to take care of a reasonable specimen documentation of their records is bound to cause the introduction of taxonomic errors into the literature. The number of papers based solely on sight or otherwise unqualified records is increasing alarmingly, while taxonomy and systematics are losing ground in many university teaching schemes throughout the world, and many young recorders, "ecologists" and conservancy activists lack adequate training in the methods of systematics. In addition, in some countries nature conservancy legislation makes a sound faunistic recording a difficult, if not almost impossible task, involving time-consuming administrative procedures and in this way causing much of the odonate survey work to remain de facto undocumented, hence potentially unreliable.

The Odonata Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission of the I.U.C.N. (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources), in their Chur meeting of August 16, 1981, has expressed the conviction that generalised legislation, preventing collection of all or most dragonfly species, will rather counteract their protection. The membership of the International Odonatological Society is likewise concerned about the increasing difficulties in making reliable inventories of local faunas, mainly caused by erroneous evaluation of the threats to which dragonflies and their habitats in the man-influenced world are exposed.

In an attempt to check the further deterioration of the reliability of faunistic literature and

mapping schemes, the membership of the Society, at the Plenary Business Meeting held in the framework of the Sixth International Symposium of Odonatology, Chur, Switzerland, August 18, 1981, has passed the following

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

The Membership of the Society, gathered at the VIth Plenary Business Meeting in Chur, Switzerland,

- *having noticed with concern the legal difficulties and/or the reluctance of an increasing number of dragonfly students to provide adequate specimen documentation of their records,*
- *being aware of the inevitability of identification errors in sight records of certain taxa, or by less experienced workers,*
- *worried about the possibility of introduction of erroneous records in the literature,*
- *having regard to the need for reliable distribution records as a basis for recommending sound measures for the conservation of Odonata,*
- *considering the undesirable practice of documentation as introduced by the British Odonata Recording Scheme, stated in the ODONATA RECORDING SCHEME NEWSLETTER No. 4 (Spring, 1980), p. 1,*
- *referring to the Editorial statement on the Author's responsibility for taxonomic identifications, as published in NOTULAE ODONATOLOGICAE, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 2, paragraph 3, lines 3-4,*

*is recommending to the Editorial Board
to henceforth*

- *request from the Authors, prior to the acceptance of a faunistic manuscript for publication, in cases where there may be doubts as to the correctness of taxonomic identifications, or where the records may be of particular theoretical importance, that they give a written statement as to the deposition of specimens, and/or the detailed data relating to other documentation,*
- *include such a statement, whenever possible, in the text of the paper, or, otherwise, file it in the Editorial Archives for a later reference, if necessary.*

The Membership

considers this measure

to be one of the few available means to avoid, or at least diminish, the possibility that erroneously identified records will find their way to the literature issued by the Society.

It is in the spirit of the above document that the International Odonatological Society should henceforth generally recognize only those records that are adequately documented by specimens or, in special cases, by taxonomically identifiable photographs.

[Editors]