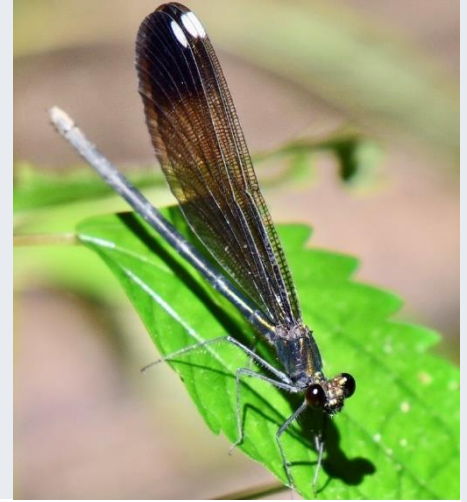


SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Look for it now in Southwest Ohio!

7/12/2021



Left to right: female eating a moth; male perched; female perched. Photos by Matt Metzger.

Ebony Jewelwing (*Calopteryx maculata*)

By Matt Metzger, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist

The Ebony Jewelwing is a beautiful, shimmery little damselfly that is common and conspicuous this time of year along shaded creeks in our area. Damselflies inhabit the order Odonata and share the huge eyes, highly maneuverable wings, and predatory appetites of their larger dragonfly relatives.

These jewelwings are easy to spot along local creeks; just watch for the metallic, turquoise-colored bodies of the males, shimmering as they fly around warming themselves in the late morning sun. The female is a bit drab, but has small, bright white wing spots that help greatly with identification. I saw one munching on a juicy moth a couple of years ago at French Park (photo above).

To learn more about this species, visit [page 11 of the Ohio Division of Wildlife's *Dragonflies and Damselflies of Ohio Field Guide*](#).

FUN FACTS

- Cylindrical eggs are laid in slow-moving fresh water.
- Juveniles are called naiads; they are fierce predators, feeding on other aquatic insects, small fish, and worms.
- Adults can catch their prey mid-flight, using their spiny legs to trap insects like mosquitoes, gnats, and crane flies.
- Main predators of naiads include other aquatic invertebrates, fish, and amphibians.
- Main predators of adults of this species include birds, spiders, fish, frogs, and dragonflies.
- Because the eggs and naiads of damselflies require clean water in order to survive, finding ebony jewelwings at any stage of their lifecycle is an indicator of healthy water quality.