

Common Hawker

Aeshna juncea

Insects · On the wing Jul–Oct



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A large dragonfly, dark brown with paired blue spots along the abdomen in males and yellow-green ones in females, and — a useful mark — narrow yellow stripes along the front of the thorax and yellow leading edges to the wings. Common hawkers are dragonflies of acid, peaty moorland pools and bog lochans rather than lowland ponds, so the hills of the region suit them.

BEHAVIOUR

Hawkers hunt on the wing rather than from a perch, patrolling a beat back and forth over water and along woodland edge for long periods, and they will range well away from water over moorland and rides. They are strong enough fliers to hunt in breezy conditions that ground smaller species. Larvae take two to four years to develop in cold, acidic upland water.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Hawkers (Aeshnidae)
SIZE	Body 65–80 mm
STATUS	Native; commonest in the north and west, on acid water

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