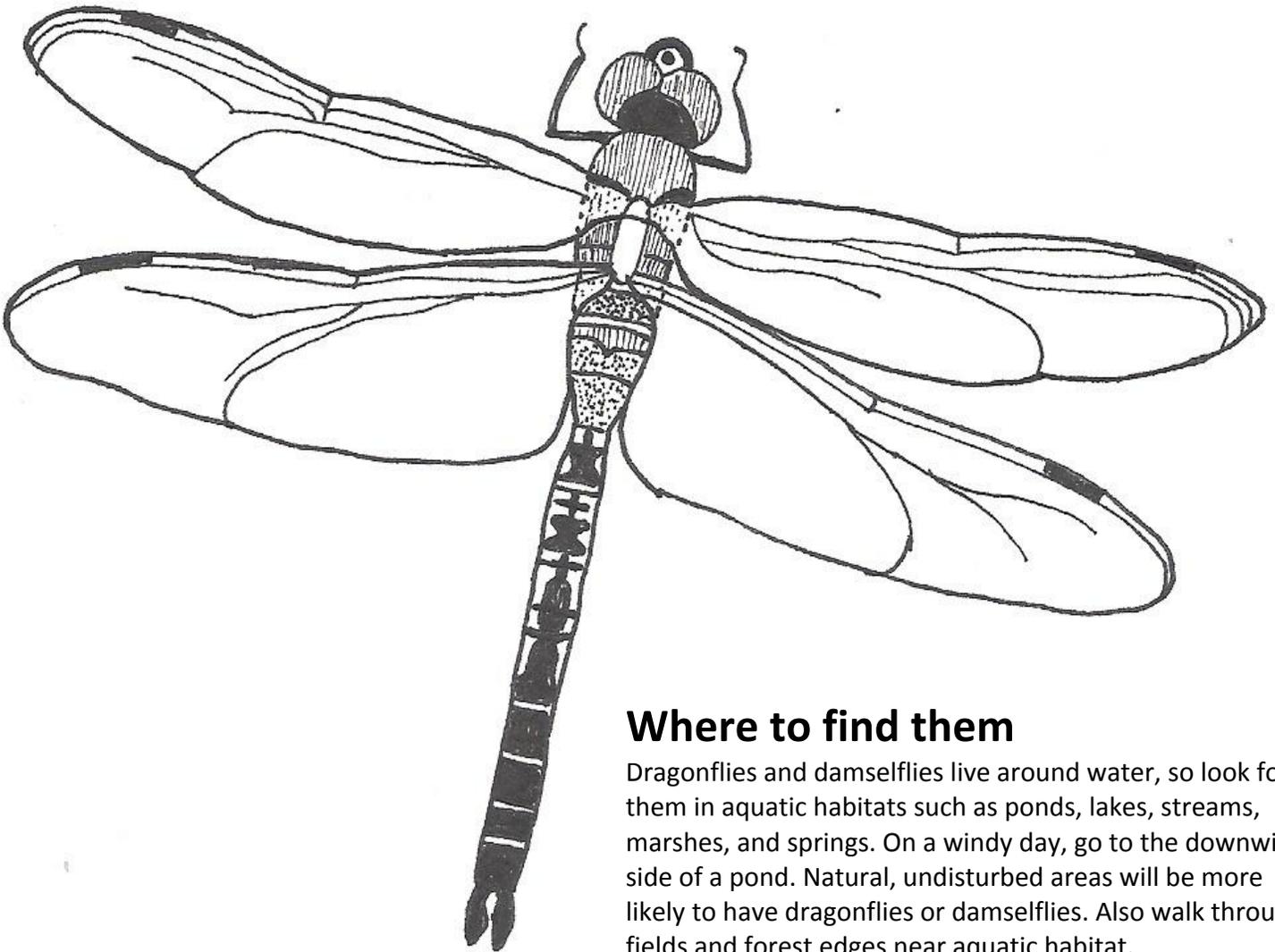


Dragonflies and Damselflies



Where to find them

Dragonflies and damselflies live around water, so look for them in aquatic habitats such as ponds, lakes, streams, marshes, and springs. On a windy day, go to the downwind side of a pond. Natural, undisturbed areas will be more likely to have dragonflies or damselflies. Also walk through fields and forest edges near aquatic habitat.

When to look

These insects are most active when temperatures are above 65 degrees Fahrenheit. The same dragonfly may perch in the open on the river bank in the early morning, perch on sticks in partial shade during the late morning, and perch in the shade during the heat of the afternoon. This allows them to use energy from the sun or the shade of the plants to warm or cool them. Basking and seeking shade are the two common methods of thermoregulation.

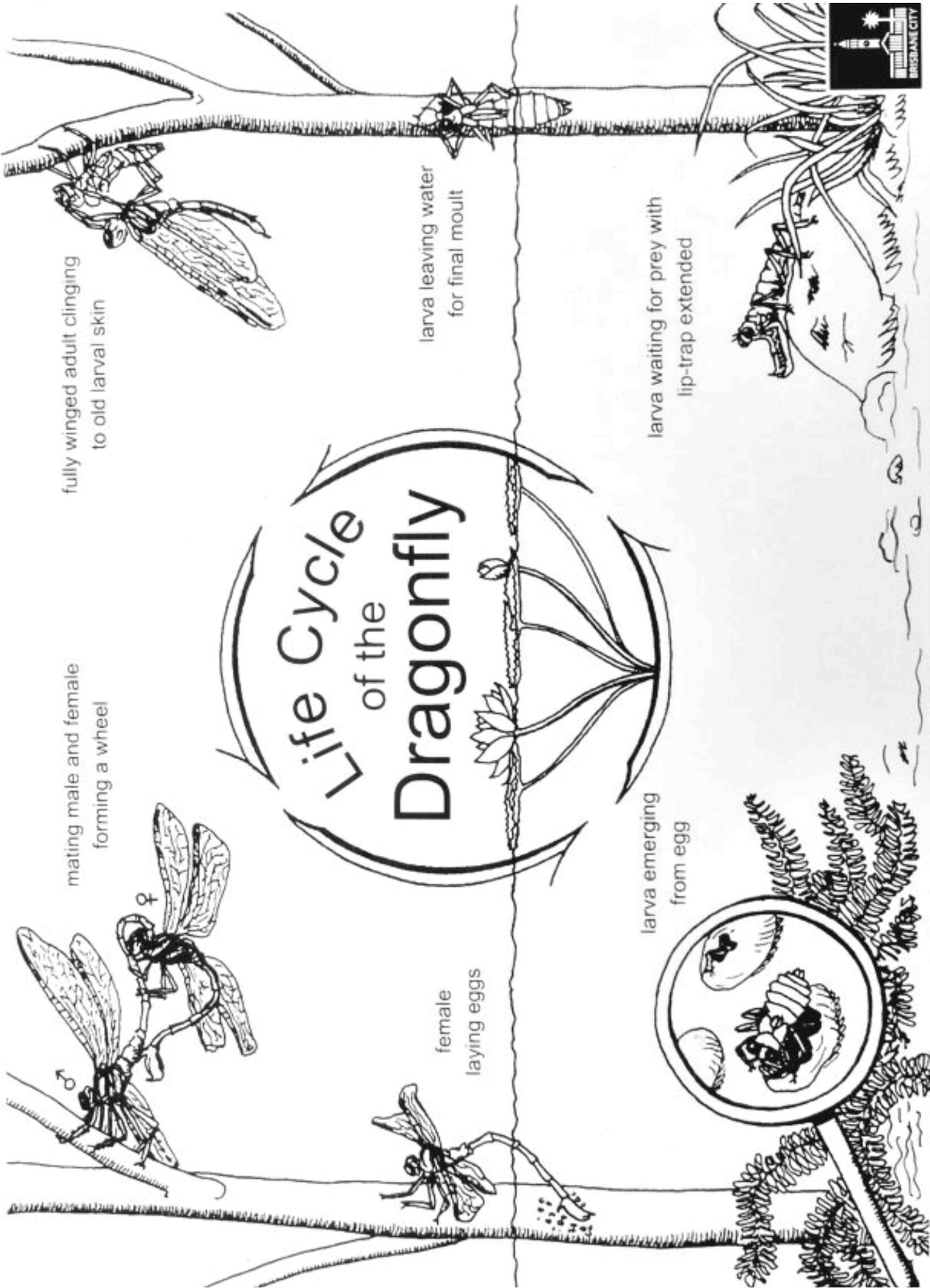
Natural flycatchers

Dragonflies and damselflies mostly eat other insects, including gnats, mosquitoes, black flies, house flies, and deer flies. This makes them quite popular with humans, especially hikers who welcome the presence of a dragonfly when swarmed by mosquitoes.



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fully winged adult clinging to old larval skin

larva leaving water for final moult

larva waiting for prey with lip-trap extended

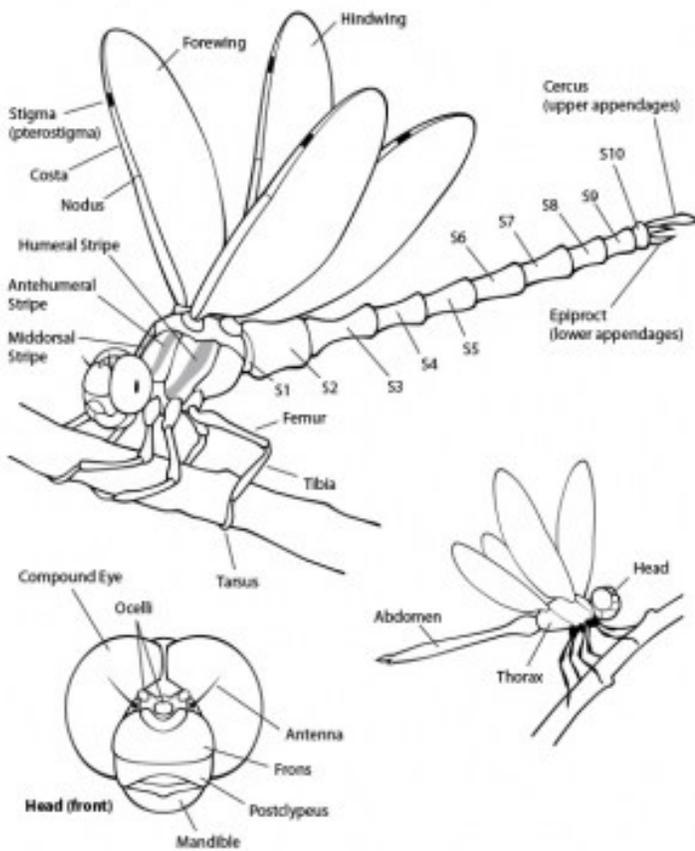
mating male and female forming a wheel

female laying eggs

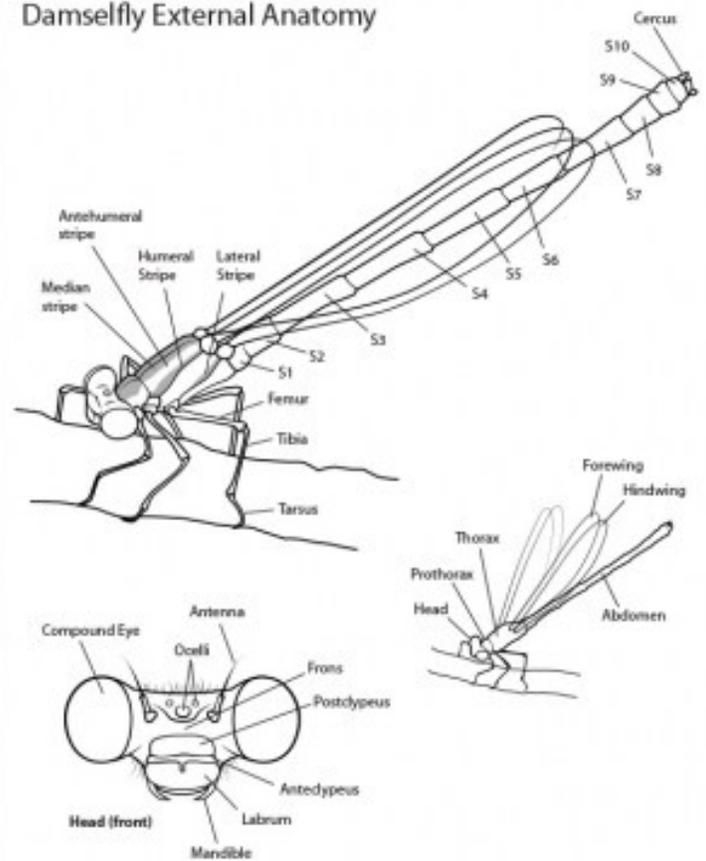
larva emerging from egg

Life Cycle of the Dragonfly

Dragonfly External Anatomy



Damselfly External Anatomy



Make a dragonfly or damselfly

Look at the anatomy of the dragonfly and damselfly above.

How many wings do they have? What shape are the wings?

What is the shape of the body? What is the shape of the head?

Where do the wings and legs attach to the body?

Now find things around the house to make a dragonfly or damselfly.

Perhaps you could make the body using a stick, plastic spoon, or clothespin?

Maybe pipecleaners or paperclips would make good legs.

You could cut the wings out of paper, tissue-paper, plastic bags, or even find leaves the same shape.

Be creative. You can even make an edible dragonfly like this one:

It's made from tomatoes, cucumbers, cheese and carrots!

