

Fine-lined Emerald



Fine-lined Emerald (*Somatochlora filosa*) – 2.4", 55-66 mm

Habitat Conservation Alert!

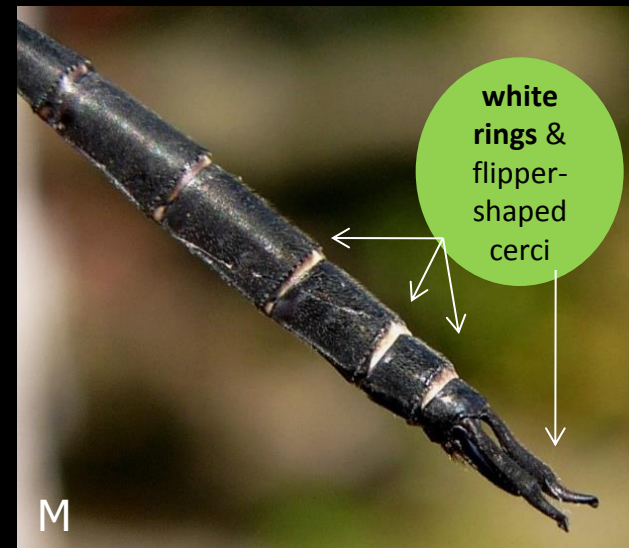
Flight Record:
(8/23-10/04)
Peaks
late Aug-early
Oct.

*Rare - locally
& nationwide*

Habitat:
Coastal plain:
marshy bays,
wide marshy
rivers, and
associated
seepage
swamps &
seep-fed
streams

First Glance:
Medium, dark,
fast. Flies low
over water,
and high over
sunny
clearings.
Female (next
pg) is similar,
but slightly
larger, w/
orange to
brownish
wing tips.

Compare:
Emeralds:
Clamp-tipped
and Mocha



Mating pair
of Fine-lined
Emeralds in
2012—
the only record
of this species
breeding
in N VA.



Gary Myers

Notes from the field - Fine-lined Emerald:

One of Northern Virginia's most rare dragonflies, possibly our rarest, this species is seldom seen and little known throughout its range, from New Jersey to Florida, and west to Kentucky and Texas. Most field guides describe its breeding habitat as "unknown".

My single sighting was in Oct., on the edge of a wide, marshy expanse of creek in southern Prince William County. Several males were circling back and forth between a sunny clearing on the edge of an oak forest (lower photo), and the adjoining marshy creek bay (upper photo and next page.) I watched three males from 1PM-3PM. I'd been searching all fall, and was thrilled to find them.

Their habitat is described as well-vegetated lakes, swamps and marsh edges, and they appear to be most common, at least in the mid-Atlantic, along the coastal plain. No one knows exactly where they breed, possibly small forest streams and shallow swamps. A late-season species, they're most common from August to October, and can be seen into November. The only other sightings have been by Jim Waggener and his Audubon Society of Northern VA survey team at Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge (see Gary's photo, previous page). Their observations have all been in August along a sunny path that runs between meadows, marshlands and a river bay.



Although they probably breed and lay eggs in a nearby, shallow forest stream, my only sighting was here, on the edge of this marshy bay.

