

Spot-winged Glider  
(female)





# Spot-winged Glider (*Pantala hymenaea*) – 1.9", 45-50 mm

**Flight Record:**  
(5/12-10/08)  
Peaks  
Aug-Sept

Fairly  
Common

**Habitat:**  
Shallow,  
temporary  
pools and  
puddles –  
hunts over  
fields and  
parking lots

**First Glance:**  
Medium.  
Blunt,  
"bullet-shaped".  
Light tan to  
reddish brown.  
Often  
flying high  
above. Wing  
spots barely  
visible.

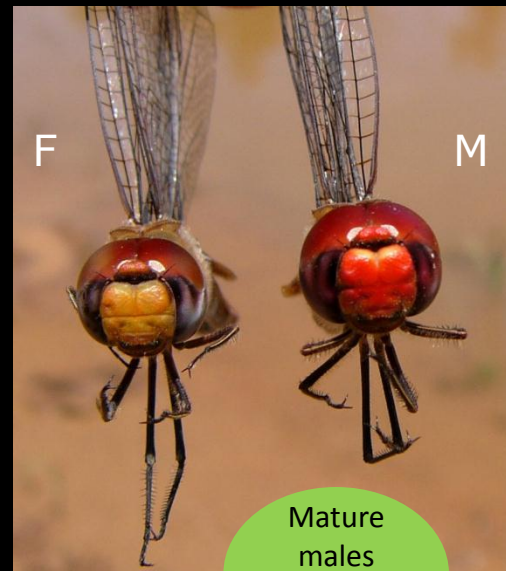
**Compare:**  
Wandering  
Glider

Juv F



Small spot  
on edge of  
rear wing

Long,  
broad  
wings



Mature  
males  
have a  
red face



Male is  
darker, &  
has red  
eyes



Stout, blunt,  
"bullet-shaped"  
body



## Notes from the field – Spot-winged Glider:

Along with the Wandering Glider, this is the albatross of the dragonfly world. Both species are highly-evolved for sustained, efficient flight, drifting over summer fields for hours, like sea birds over a green ocean. Gliders don't really have defined territories like other dragonflies. They wander and search for temporary pools, created by summer storms, to lay their eggs. After egg-laying, parents move on in a matter of days, off to find the next wide-open space for high-flying gnat hunting. The young have just a few weeks to complete a larval stage before their summer nursery puddles dry. In their search for rain pools and gnat swarms, adults may travel several hundred miles by fall.


To find this species you have to look up. Search high above fields, parking lots, shallow marshlands, flooded meadows and even highways. August afternoons and early evenings appear to be the best time. Glider activity seems to peek between 3PM-7PM, and they're especially drawn to large athletic fields. The small spots on the edge of their rear wings are *very* hard to see in the field, unless you're directly underneath, looking straight up. Even then, you have to *want* to see those spots. Better ID marks are the otherwise clear wings, short, blunt bodies and constant high flight. Their color separates them from Wandering Gliders: Spot-wings appear tan to reddish, while Wandering Gliders are bright yellow-gold. The two female gliders to your right were caught after much running and leaping; set down to photograph, they soon caught their breath and flew.



Ken Larsen







One of the very few sites I've seen  
Gliders (both Wandering and Spot-winged) ovipositing –  
several tandem pairs of each species laid eggs in this  
shallow, temporary, grassy pool.