

Field marks for identification of *S. rogersi*

July 18, 2018

The following annotated images illustrate field marks that can be used for identification of [Sable Clubtail dragonfly \(*Stenogomphurus rogersi*\)](#).

Although there is some redundancy among the images, repetition is a good strategy for learning.

Male

Male Sable Clubtails have eyes that are green to turquoise in color, with a black [occiput](#) located between the eyes. They have a thin, black abdomen that flares to a small club featuring thin yellow flanges on abdominal segments seven through nine (S7-9).

The abdomen is marked with small pale dorsal triangles (S3-7) and tiny pale lateral spots. The number of dorsal triangles can vary individually and/or geographically, ranging from S3-5 to S3-7.



Dennis Paulson, originator of the classification system for thoracic stripes in the [Family Gomphidae \(Clubtails\)](#), describes T1-4 as follows.

T1–2 broad and complete, touching at ends and often with stripe between them restricted and topped with spot; T3–4 fine, T3 incomplete. *Source Credit: Paulson, Dennis (2011-12-19). [Dragonflies and Damselflies of the East](#) (Princeton Field Guides) (Kindle Locations 6089-6093). Princeton University Press. Kindle Edition.*

Note: T1-4 refers to the dark areas located on the sides of the thorax, not the lighter colored lines and spots. Due to space limitations, thoracic stripes are labeled using a numeral only (e.g., “1”) rather than a letter and numeral (e.g., “T1”).



Their face is pale, marked with variable black crosslines (as shown in the inset photo, below).



08 JUN 2018 | Fairfax County, VA | [Sable Clubtail \(male\)](#)

Male Sable Clubtails, like all male dragonflies, have three terminal [appendages](#), collectively called “[claspers](#).” All male clubtail dragonflies have indented hind wings.

Female

Female Sable Clubtails have a noticeably thicker abdomen than males. The [occiput](#) is a pale color, rather than black. Dorsal triangles, located on abdominal segments three through seven (S3-7), are much larger than those found on males. The lateral spots are somewhat larger as well.



05 JUL 2018 | Fairfax County, VA | [Sable Clubtail \(female\)](#)

Female Sable Clubtails, like all female dragonflies, have a pair of [cerci](#) (superior appendages) that have little or no function. All female clubtail dragonflies have rounded hind wings.

Related Resource: [Stenogomphurus rogersi exuvia](#).

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Tags: [claspers](#), [Family Gomphidae \(Clubtails\)](#), [female](#), [male](#), [occiput](#), [Sable Clubtail dragonfly](#), [Stenogomphurus rogersi](#), [terminal appendages](#)

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