

Yellow-tailed Ashy Skimmer

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Why in news?

At the Yamuna Biodiversity Park, Yellow-tailed Ashy Skimmer has been recorded during a recent dragonfly survey in Delhi.

- It is a **medium-sized dragonfly**, commonly known as Blue Percher, Yellow-tailed Ashy Skimmer, Blue Pursuer and Blue Chaser.
- **Scientific Name** - Potamarcha congener.
- **Appearance** - The 'yellow tail' refers to the predominantly yellow abdomen, which bears black markings.
- The 'ashy' refers to the thorax, which appears to be invariably pruinosed (frosted in appearance).



- **Characteristics**
- There is a distinct difference in the appearance of males and females, particularly as they mature.
 - **Male** - Adult males have a bluish, powder-like coating (pruinose) on their thorax and the first half of their abdomen.
 - The face is typically olivaceous yellow, and the eyes are reddish-

brown on top and bluish-gray below.

- **Female** - The female's thorax has yellow and black stripes on the sides, and the abdomen is black with dull orange markings.
- They also have prominent flaps on the sides of the eighth abdominal segment, which are used during egg-laying.
- **Habitat** - It is commonly found near bodies of **standing water**, such as small ponds, marshes, and rice fields.
- **Distribution** - Its distribution includes a wide range of countries in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Oceania, including India, China, Australia, and Indonesia.
 - **In India** - It is found across the northern and northwestern plains.
- **Behavior and diet**
 - **Predatory lifestyle** - As a top predator of smaller insects, it is an expert hunter, with acute vision to detect prey up to 15 meters away.
 - **Prey** - The naiads, or immature dragonflies, hunt small aquatic organisms underwater, while adults hunt small flying insects in the air.
- **Conservation status** - IUCN - Least Concern.
- **Significance** - Dragonflies and damselflies are bioindicators or species whose presence tracks wetland health.
- Their larval stages require clean, well-oxygenated water, and both larvae and adults are voracious mosquito predators.

Quick Facts

- **Kalindi and Kamla Nehru Ridge** together accounted for more than half the dragonfly species count in Delhi.
- Delhi is known to host about **51 species of odonates** (dragonflies and damselflies).

Reference

[The Indian Express | Yellow-tailed Ashy Skimmer](#)