

## Vivid Dancer *Argia vivida* Hagen in Selys, 1865

The Vivid Dancer, *Argia vivida*, was not listed in Volume 2 of the 2nd Edition of The Odonata of Doña Ana County and the Black Range - The Damselflies. This addendum, by Bob Barnes and James Von Loh, is a new species listing for that publication and is based, in part, on the research of Jonathan Batkin.

Dragonflies and Damselflies of the West (Dennis Paulson, 2009, Princeton University Press) describes this species at pp. 166-168. Paulson's description of the species indicates that we are within its range of distribution, but observations of the species in southern New Mexico since 1978 have been challenged and are under review. This species is typically found near streams and seeps.

### Species Description

The large, blue-colored Vivid Dancer occurs along spring runs and small to medium streams with flows/currents and much emergent vegetation; males perch on rocks or vegetation near streams but most mating occurs away from water (Paulson, 2009).

This North American species is **widely distributed** in the western United States, Baja California (B.C.) Norte and B. C. Sur, and Canada (British Columbia and Alberta).

There are several reports of *Argia vivida* from the southern part of New Mexico. Those which are documented on iNaturalist (as of 28 November 2025) have been challenged and may be (are probably) Springwater Dancers. There are two historical records (1978) from the Black Range which have been vetted.

Male eyes are blue; thorax is bright blue with a moderate median stripe and narrow, unforked (rarely forked) humeral stripe; abdomen S2 with the lateral stripe expanded at rear, S3-S6 have black apical rings and teardrop-shaped dorsolateral spot, the S7 is almost completely black, and S8- S10 are entirely blue; note that males in tandem or at low temperatures may have a duller, purplish thorax (Paulson, 2009).

Female Vivid Dancers are polymorphic (some blue females are as bright as any male and are probably the brightest female dancers, but they are also duller at low temperature); eyes are blue in an andromorph form, the typical form has brown eyes; thorax and abdomen may be all brown, all blue, or with a blue thorax

and abdomen tip with brown in-between (least common combination); thorax is marked as in the male; abdomen with subapical dorsal spots on S2-S6, becoming larger toward rear but not fused with smaller ventrolateral spots, similarly - basal teardrop-shaped spots on S3-S6 become stripes towards the rear and become fused with apical spots on more posterior segments, the S7 is mostly black and S8-S10 are pale with a small pair of basal spots on S9 (spots may be lacking); all immatures are tan- to cream-colored (Paulson, 2009).

Paulson (2009) described the Vivid/Springwater identification conundrum thusly: "[Vivid Dancer] much like eastern blue populations of Springwater Dancer, with which it overlaps in western Great Plains and Rockies, but more robust with relatively shorter abdomen (typically wings in Springwater extend to end of S6, in Vivid to middle or even end of S7). Female Vivid usually has a subapical spot on side of S2. Whereas "Springwater has stripe."

The photograph below was taken by Jonathan Batkin (19 October 2025 email communication), as follows: "This (photograph) is a male Vivid Dancer, taken at Riverside Park, Aztec, (New Mexico) on 07 July 2025."

