

They are distinguished from all other flies by the length of their bodies, by the largeness of their eyes, and the beautiful transparency of their wings, which are four in number. They are seen in summer flying with great rapidity near every hedge, and by every running brook; they sometimes settle on the leaves of plants, and sometimes keep for hours together on the wing.

Dragon-flies, though there are three or four different kinds, yet agree in the most striking parts of their natural history, and one account may serve for all. The largest sort are generally found from two to three inches long; their tail is forked; their body divided into eleven rings; their eyes are large horny, and transparent, divided by a number of intersections and their wings, that always lie flat when they are at rest, are of a beautiful glossy transparency; sometimes shinning like silver, sometimes glistening like gold. Within the mouth are two teeth, covered with a beautiful lip: with these the creatures bite fiercely when they are taken; but their bite is perfectly harmless.

These insects, beautiful as they are, are produced from eggs, which are deposited in the water,