# Beneficial Species Profile



**Photo credit:** Josh Shoemaker

**Common Name:** Flame skimmer

**Scientific Name:** *Libellula saturata*

**Order and Family:** Odonata: Libellulidae

**Size and Appearance:**
These medium to large dragonflies are reddish orange in color with wings that are amber and clear.

|  | Length (mm) | Appearance |
|---|---|---|
| **Egg** |  | **Eggs are laid in bodies of standing water. In cooler areas, they will lay their eggs in hot springs.** |
| **Larva/Nymph** | **Up to 28 mm** | **They are short and stocky with a rounded abdomen and covered with hairs. They live in the silty area at the bottom of bodies of water and crawl out when time to become an adult.** |
| **Adult** | **Body: 52 – 61 mm Wingspan: 85 – 95 mm** | **Males' bodies are bright reddish orange. Their wings are amber colored from the base and get clear toward the tips. Females are paler and have less amber in the wings, usually just on the leading edge.** |
| **Pupa (if applicable)** |  | **N/A** |

**Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.):**
The nymphs and adults have chewing mouthparts. The nymphs of skimmers have a lower lip (labium) that shoots out and grabs prey.

**Host/s:**
Most dragonflies in this family live around ponds and swamps. The flame skimmer prefers warmer ponds and bodies of water. Males are territorial.

**Description of Benefits:**
Larvae feed on small aquatic insects, freshwater shrimp and even occasionally some small fish and tadpoles. The small insects they feed on include mosquito larvae and other small fly larvae. Adults feed on soft-bodied flying insects, such as mosquitoes, flies, moths, and mayflies.

**References:**

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Lung, M., & Sommer, S. (2001). *Libellula saturata (Flame Skimmer)*. Flame Skimmer. https://digitalatlas.cose.isu.edu/bio/insects/drgnfly/libefam/lisa/lisafr.htm.

Triplehorn, C. A., & Johnson, N. F. (2005). *Borror and DeLong's introduction to the study of insects* (7th ed.). Brooks/Cole.