

OCTOBER 15 – 31, 2017 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES FOR EASTVIEW
By Dick Harlow

WHITE-FACED MEADOWHAWK



(1) White-faced Meadowhawk Male,
Sympetrum obtrusum, perched with wings forward.
© Dick Harlow

The **White-faced Meadowhawk** is a common dragonfly of backyards from coast to coast and from British Columbia to Quebec, Canada, observed from late summer into fall.

A close-up of the female shows that the legs are only $\frac{3}{4}$'s black as compared with photograph (3) where the legs are all yellow.



(2) White-faced Meadowhawk Female,
Sympetrum obtrusum, © Dick Harlow

There are several fall Meadowhawk dragonflies that look very similar: White-faced, Yellow-legged, Saffron-winged, Band-winged and Ruby Meadowhawk.



(3) Yellow-legged Meadowhawk Male,
Sympetrum vicinum © Dick Harlow

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The White-faced Meadowhawk along with the Yellow-legged Meadowhawk are fairly easy to identify. Almost all dragonflies have dark legs, so one with yellow legs stands out. Also, a dragonfly with a white face also stands out. However, some dragonflies with reddish or brown abdomens will have light tan faces that could confuse you if you are not looking at all the other characteristics as well, such as leg color, face color, abdomen color, black triangles on the abdomen, etc.

As mentioned, both of these species can be seen in the backyard. However, their habitat also includes most any sluggish water environments such as marshes, streams, pools, ponds, and small lakes.

COMMON RINGLET



Common Ringlet, *Coenonympha tullia*, on a dandelion, © Dick Harlow

The Common Ringlet, *Coenonympha tullia*, is normally seen around meadows and grassy areas from June to August, but unusual to see it or to be able to take a picture of it in September. By looking at the picture you can see that it isn't colorful and the fact that it is on a dandelion means it is close to the ground. They especially like moist meadows and grassy areas. The fact that we had a week plus of rain/showers in September when this fellow was photographed, could be an explanation for its persistence to live beyond what the field guides project.

PLANT VOLUNTEERS-PUMPKIN



Pumpkin, *Cucurbita pepo*, volunteer in garden.
© Dick Harlow

My apology, primarily because this picture is unique for me. I have never grown pumpkins; but for a seed to last the winter on top of the ground from a decorative pumpkin I put out in the Fall and didn't remove until the end of winter, then sprout and produce this beautiful pumpkin is a source of freedom for the plant and pride for me.

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I enjoy plants that have the sustainability or simply the survivor ability to sprout and produce viable offspring. The only time I will try to control them is when they get out of hand, then I have to remove their offspring!

Pumpkins, member of the Squash family, are only annuals, so they can be controlled by not leaving the fruit/pumpkin on the ground long enough for the seeds to come out of the pumpkin and produce offspring.

Many plants will volunteer in your garden, and it is the source of the weeds we pull up and throw away. I just think it is kind of neat when one is allowed to self-seed and come to fruition!

AMERICAN BUGBANE



American Bugbane, *Cimicifuga americana*, garden perennial.
© Dick Harlow

Bugbane, American Bugbane, scientifically known as *Cimicifuga americana*, is a member of the Buttercup family of plants. It is native to North America in zones 3-7.

Butterflies, bees and other pollinators are attracted to Bugbane. However, it is also known to be deer and rabbit resistant. It is a tall, 5-7 feet tall, initially producing tall flower spikes that are curved like a snake; but as they mature, they straighten out and unfurl their flower buds. Probably the curl and unfurling gave it the common name of 'snakeroot'.

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American Bugbane, *Cimicifuga americana*, close-up of individual flowers. © Dick Harlow

Although this plant prefers a moist area, it is growing in a Northwesterly facing garden that has humus and compost. This plant is not in the shade as recommended for ideal conditions for growth. However, it is doing quite well in our garden here at EastView for three years.

Not only has this plant been used in folk medicine for female issues, but also is fragrant if brought into the house. What is interesting about this plant is that it produces very small petals. Notice in the above picture of the flowers there are just stamens, because the petals and sepals tend to fall off quickly.

The way to tell the difference between Black Snakeroot and American Bugbane is whether the flower is foul smelling (Black Snakeroot) or fragrant (American Bugbane).

OBSERVATIONS

For October 15-30

MAMMALS

White-tailed Deer - meadow
Coyote Family – howling at night

BUTTERFLIES

Cabbage White
Clouded Sulphur
Orange Sulphur

Weather Tidbits

Month of OCTOBER 1-31, 2017

[All Measurements taken at solar noon \(1230 EST\).](#)

High Wind Gust as of 10/30 – 67 MPH

PRECIPITATION

Total Precipitation: 69.6 mm or 2.7 inches

Overcast Days: 10