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**OTTER *Lutra lutra* PREDATING ADULT DRAGONFLIES**

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**Abstract:** In June 2000, the author found spraints and other signs indicating that at least one otter had been eating quantities of adult Four-Spotted Chasers (*Libellula quadrimaculata*) common at the location, on the coastal raised bog of Cors Fochno in west Wales.

One day in June 2000, whilst walking beside a shallow drainage channel on the coastal raised bog of Cors Fochno (Borth bog) in west Wales, I noticed a collection of dragonfly wings clustered on wet sphagnum moss at the ditch margin. On close inspection the wings, 16 in all, were identified from their distinctive markings as belonging to adult Four-spotted Chaser, *Libellula quadrimaculata*, a common breeder at the location.

The cluster of wings also lay on a route regularly used by Otter *Lutra lutra*, and clearly marked by a trail through the floating carpet of sphagnum moss which covers much of this ditch. Following the otter run beyond the ditch into an area of tall vegetation, dominated by Purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, I found a second, smaller cluster of wings and close by, an otter spraint. The latter confirmed my suspicion that one or more otter were responsible for the predation since it contained fragments of glossy brown and black carapace matching the thoracic markings of *L. quadrimaculata*. It would seem likely that the otter had been reaping a seasonal harvest of dragonflies plucked from roosting sites beside a regular foraging route.

A few weeks later I observed a further collection of *L. quadrimaculata* wings in a similar situation but 2.5km away at the western-most edge of the Cors Fochno peatland. Whilst it is possible that the same individual otter could be responsible, this occurrence suggests that the observed feeding habit may be more widespread amongst the local otter population.

The diet of Eurasian Otter has been investigated in some detail but this appears to be the first recorded instance of adult odonata being predated.

**RESUMEN**

**Predación sobre libélulas adultas por parte de nutrias *Lutra lutra***

En junio 2000 se observó una colección de alas de libélulas (*Libellula quadrimaculata*) junto a un canal de drenaje en Cors Fochno en el oeste de Gales. Esta colección se encontraba junto a una ruta regularmente utilizada por nutrias *Lutra lutra*. Siguiendo dicho el trillo se encontró un segundo grupo de alas junto a una feca de nutria, lo que confirmó la sospecha de que una o más nutrias eran las responsables de la predación ya que la feca contenía fragmentos torácicos de *L. quadrimaculata*. Aparentemente la nutria había estado colectando libélulas aprovechando la presencia estacional de estas junto a una ruta regular de forrajeo. Pocas semanas después una colección similar de alas fue observada a 2.5 km del sitio anterior. Si bien es posible que el mismo animal haya sido el responsable, la observación sugiere que este hábito alimenticio puede estar más ampliamente extendido entre la población local de nutrias. La dieta de la nutria europea ha sido investigada con bastante detalle pero esta parece ser la primera vez que se registra predación sobre odonatas adultos. acechando otras aves. Cazó y comió otro faisán, un tordo (*Turdus philomelos*), gaviotas (*Larus argentatus* y *L. ridibundus*), y un ganso. En un encierro vecino 2 hermanos también cazaron y comieron una garza, posiblemente tras haber aprendido el comportamiento de su vecina.