

Dear Delaware Museum of Nature and Science,

The Tiger Spiketail (*Cordulegaster diastatops*) should be Delaware's official State Dragonfly due to how the Tiger Spiketail exhibits a striking appearance and ecological importance and is the ideal representative of our state's natural heritage. While the Tiger Spiketail is a strong contender, one could argue that the Common Green Darner (*Anax junius*) might be a more suitable choice. The Common Green Darner is larger and more frequently seen throughout Delaware. Its wide distribution and conspicuous nature might make it a more recognizable symbol for the average Delawarean.

However, the Tiger Spiketail's unique characteristics and ecological needs make it a more compelling choice. The Tiger Spiketail is considered a rare species in Delaware, with very specific habitat requirements, needing small, clean streams in forested areas. This rarity, combined with its limited domain—found in only six main regions in Delaware—makes it particularly vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation.

Designating the Tiger Spiketail as the official State Dragonfly could raise awareness about a particularly vulnerable species. It would also emphasize the vital nature of preserving Delaware's delicate stream ecosystems and encourage conservation efforts to protect the Tiger Spiketail and the other species that share its habitat. This recognition could also lead to the creation of more conservation agencies, programs, and initiatives focused on protecting this unique dragonfly and its habitat. Choosing the Tiger Spiketail sends a powerful message about Delaware's commitment to preserving its rarest and most fragile natural resources.

Best Regards, Damian M. Burns

Student Name: Damian M. Burns

Teacher Name: Mrs. Kisiel

Grade: 7th

School: Beacon Middle School

District: Cape Henlopen

References:

<https://delmns.org/delaware-dragonfly/>

<https://delawarenaturally.org/dragonflies/>

<https://youtu.be/3UxBYGo3nYM?si=2khNrpGLXeZwMBIa>