

bald-faced hornet

Dolichovespula maculata

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Hymenoptera
Family: Vespidae

ILLINOIS STATUS
common, native



adults adding to nest layers

pits

ILLINOIS RANGE



FEATURES

The bald-faced hornet is black with yellow-white markings on the face, thorax and end of the abdomen.

BEHAVIORS

The bald-faced hornet may be found statewide in Illinois. Its nest is composed of several layers of hexagonal, paper cells that are enclosed in a papery covering. It is built on a branch or beneath an overhang and may be a foot or more wide by the end of the summer. Larvae are raised in the cells and are fed chewed-up insects. These social insects have three castes -- queens, workers and males. Queens and workers are females. Females have the ability to sting. The colony exists for one season only. Queens overwinter and start new colonies in the spring, with the first brood of the year consisting entirely of workers.



inside of nest with larvae



adults at nest

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands;
upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none