

baldface hornet representative specimen

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Hymenoptera

Family: Vespidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

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

BEHAVIORS

The baldface 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.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

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

Prairie Habitats

none

© Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2017. Biodiversity of Illinois.