

banded garden spider *Argiope trifasciata*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Chelicerata

Order: Araneae

Family: Araneidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The male and female banded garden spider are different in coloration and size. The front portion (cephalothorax) of the female's body is yellow with gray scales. Large, dark blotches may be seen on the sides of the thorax. The abdomen is pointed at the end. The female's abdomen has narrow black lines on a yellow or white background. The female's legs are orange-yellow to brown with dark spots and rings. The male's upper abdomen is tan or white. His cephalothorax and legs are light yellow-brown. The female is about one-half to one inch in length, while the male is about one-fourth inch in length.

BEHAVIORS

The banded garden spider may be found throughout Illinois. It builds large, orb webs in grasses and other herbaceous plants in sunny areas. It may be found in the same places as the similar black and yellow garden spider but tends to place its web closer to the ground. Adults appear in late August or early September. During mating season, one or two males will be around the edge of the web while the female is in the center. In fall, the female deposits an egg sac near the top of a weed or grass stem.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie

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