

bee fly representative specimen

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Diptera

Family: Bombyliidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The bee flies are fairly large, hairy flies. The body may be black, brown or gray. Many have a long snout, but they do not bite. The wings are held straight out when at rest. They may have spotted wings. These insects are about three-eighths inch in length.

BEHAVIORS

Bee flies may be found statewide in Illinois. They are often seen on flowers, where they feed on nectar, or on or near the ground in open areas. These insects fly very quickly. They can make a buzzing sound like that produced by a bee, and some of them resemble a bee, which is why they were given their common name. The life cycle includes egg, larva, pupa and adult stages. The larvae are parasites on other insect larvae and eggs.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

marshes; peatlands; wet prairies and fens

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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