

## blue-winged wasp *Scolia dubia*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Hymenoptera

Family: Scoliidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

The blue-winged wasp, or digger wasp, is 0.80 to 1.0 inch in length. Its head, thorax and the first two abdominal segments are black. The rest of the abdomen is red with two yellow spots on the third abdominal segment.

### BEHAVIORS

The female of this species burrows into the ground searching for grubs, particularly those of the green June beetle, *Cotinis nitida*, and the Japanese beetle, *Popillia japonica*. The wasp stings the grub to paralyze it, constructs a cell around it and lays an egg on it. The wasp larva will feed on the paralyzed grub. It pupates and overwinters in the soil. Males and females have a courtship dance, flying low to the ground in a figure-8 or S-shaped pattern. Adults feed on flower nectar.

### 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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