

comet darter

Anax longipes

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Odonata
Family: Aeshnidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

FEATURES

Comet darters are large with a green thorax, red abdomen, and long legs. Males have green to blue-green eyes and green thorax. The abdominal segments one and two are faintly patterned. Bright red-orange abdominal segments are on segments three through ten. Females are thicker, shorter, and appear the same colors as males, though slightly duller abdomen with pale spots in a pattern.

BEHAVIORS

Males fly at waist to chest height along or offshore, cruising long distances in large bodies of water. One male individual might cruise and circle the entire shoreline of a midsized pond. Females lay eggs just below the surface of vegetation, such as standing and floating grass stems. They like shallow fish-free ponds or lakes with extensive grass beds. They are found in the southern third of Illinois, extending diagonally northeast into New England, south to Florida, and west beyond Texas or Oklahoma.

ILLINOIS RANGE



© Paul Dacko



female

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none