

familiar bluet

Enallagma civile

FEATURES

Small to medium-sized damselflies. Bright blue with black stripes on the thorax, widest at the center, and narrower on the sides. Familiar bluets are mostly bright blue, especially in the middle segments, with torpedo-shaped black spots on the upper abdomen pointing towards the tail end. Other types of bluets tend to have more black. Males have blue eyes with a black cap whereas females typically have greenish to tan colored eyes with a brown cap. Behind-the-eye spots can be disconnected, very small, or entirely absent in northern familiar bluet populations. Females can be either blue or brown, with similar thorax stripes. The upper abdomen is entirely black with a typical torpedo pattern and contrasting color on the lower abdomen.

BEHAVIORS

Males spend most of the day, from late morning to midafternoon, at water. Reproductively mature males visit the water less frequently. Mating occurs once per lifetime on average and most often during the midday. Tandem pairs lay eggs during exploratory flights that can last around 30 minutes and span great distances. During these flights, the female will lay a few eggs at multiple sites (in soft plant tissues at or below the water's surface) pairing up again with the male between sites. They are found in lakes, ponds, open marshes, newly created wetlands, brackish coastal waters, slow streams, and some margins of rivers where vegetation is present. Their toleration of broad habitats might explain their abundance. They are found in all of Illinois and the Eastern United States.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



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female



male



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Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none