

hummingbird clearwing moth *Hemaris thysbe*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Lepidoptera

Family: Sphingidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The hummingbird clearwing moth resembles a hummingbird in both size and shape. Its body is thick in the center and tapers to both ends. The antennae are thickened toward the tip. This moth has a wingspan of about one and one-half to two and one-fourth inches. There are large areas in the wings that do not have scales. These areas are surrounded by a red-brown border. The front wings are long and narrow.

BEHAVIORS

The hummingbird clearwing moth may be found statewide in Illinois. It is active during the day from April through August. It may be seen in open areas where it feeds like a hummingbird, extending its proboscis into a flower while hovering in front of it. This moth is a very strong flier. The adult feeds on honeysuckle, bee balm, red clover and many other plants. The caterpillar eats the leaves of honeysuckle, hawthorns, cherry and plum trees and other plants. The caterpillar pupates in a cocoon at the surface of the soil.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

marshes; peatlands; swamps; 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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