

# powderd dancer

## *Argia moesta*

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

### ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

### FEATURES

The powdered dancer is a medium (1.5 inches) sized damselfly whose appearance varies between the sexes and with age. Immature males have brown eyes, a light and dark brown thorax, and a dark brown abdomen with clear wings and black veins. Mature males look like no other damselfly, are powdery grey-blue all over, have blue eyes that are darker on top, and small opaque wings with black veins. Females have two appearances (polymorphic). The first morph has brown eyes on a yellow face, a yellow thorax with thin brown stripes, and an abdomen that is yellow underneath and metallic brown on top. The second morph has dark grey eyes on a light blue-green face, a thorax that is mostly blue green with thin black lines, and a black abdomen with light rings separating segments. Both morphs have clear wings with black veins. They are distinct from other species and aren't easily confused. Immature males are distinguished from other species by the width of the black stripe on the thorax.

### BEHAVIORS

While many damselflies are lentic (lake-dwelling), this species is typical of streams and large rivers with rocky, wooded shorelines. While they hover over the water for longer than other *Argia*, they are often seen perching on rocks and on streamside plants in the late morning with their wings folded like hands atop the abdomen. They live up to four weeks and become sexually mature at two weeks. Mating pairs tend to aggregate in a given area, and individual pairs will spend up to an hour and a half exploring for a place to mate, and then spend between 30 to 60 minutes mating. Females deposit their eggs on the surface of the water or will descend up to several feet below the surface of the water for up to 30 minutes to deposit their eggs in on plants or in the benthos. They can be seen statewide from May to September.

### ILLINOIS RANGE



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female



male



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## **Aquatic Habitats**

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; rivers and streams; swamps; temporary water supplies; wet prairies and fens

## **Woodland Habitats**

none

## **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

edge