

prince baskettail

Epitheca princeps

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

ILLINOIS STATUS
common, native

FEATURES

The prince baskettail is huge (about three inches long); is almost entirely dark brown with large eyes on a brown face; and large, irregular spots at the base, center, and tip of the wing. Their abdomen is black along the top with light brown spots along each side, and each segment is divided by a white ring. Males have a bright, emerald, green eyes; and females eyes are red over grey. Both sexes of the prince baskettail are very similar to the female and immature male common whitetail (*Plathemis lydia*) and the female 12-spotted skimmer (*Libellula pulchella*), but the price basket tail is much larger and behaves differently than these other species.

BEHAVIORS

These territorial dragonflies spend most of their time in the air, flying almost continuously between three and nine feet in the air. They can be found over slow-flowing, medium streams and smaller rivers, and large ponds and lakes. Both sexes hold their abdomen strongly curved upwards when perched. They feed on small prey during the early morning and night. Pairs spend a considerable amount of time together before mating, which takes place in flight. Females deposit their eggs by cruising over the water and dipping their abdomen into the water.

ILLINOIS RANGE





Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none