river jewelwing

Calopteryx aequabilis

Kingdom: Animalia Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta Order: Odonata

Family: Calopterygidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



FEATURES

The river jewelwing is two inches long, making it among the largest of the damselflies. This species is sexually dimorphic (males and females look different) but both have black tipped wings. Males have dark, brown eyes and a metallic, emerald-green body. Females are bronze in color and duller than males. There are no look-a-like species in our region.

BEHAVIORS

The river jewelwing is rarely seen far from the large, well-vegetated streams and rivers it haunts. Males fly for long periods over large rivers and defend small territories. The courtship ritual is long and elaborate. Males will fly in front of a female; will quickly flutter their front wings and then freeze them, falling for brief pauses. Next, he will fly in front of her with their abdomen raised, land, raise it further, and then dip to the surface of the water. Females and males will then clap wings before mating, which lasts a few minutes. Females deposit eggs on floating and emergent aquatic plants and sometimes deposit eggs below the surface of the water, spending up to 50 minutes submerged. They live for about a month and can be seen in the northern 5th of the state from June to September.

female



male



Aquatic Habitats rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none