

# springwater dancer

## *Argia plana*

### FEATURES

The springwater dancer is a variable species; males and females look different from one another (sexual dimorphism) and females have more than one form (polymorphic). Males have bright blue eyes, on a blue face; an electric blue thorax with black stripes; and a blue abdomen with black markings dividing abdominal segments. The first segment of the abdomen has a bowtie-shaped black mark along the side. Females appear in two different colors – light blue/green, or rusty light brown with the same black patterns as males. They are distinguished from the bluets (*Enallagma*) by differences in wing venation and their bouncy, jerky flight patterns. Close inspection of the thoracic stripes can help in distinguishing the springwater dancer from kiowa (*Argia immunda*), aztec (*Argia nahuana*), and variable (*Argia fumipennis*) dancers.

### BEHAVIORS

This species inhabits small, shallow streams, near and far from woodlands, and indicate freshwater springs in some parts of their range. They are found in the northwestern corner of the state, along the Mississippi River to the southern border of Iowa from June to September. Cued by longer days and warmer temperatures, larval damselflies crawl out from the water and onto vegetation for their final metamorphosis. It takes about three hours for the damselfly to emerge and this species lives for one to two weeks as a winged adult. Individuals mate one or two times in their life, which takes 10 to 40 minutes. The pair cruises around for about 30 minutes after mating looking for a place to deposit eggs. Males guard while females spend up to an hour depositing eggs in floating aquatic vegetation. The pair separates quickly afterwards.

### TAXONOMY

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

### ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

### ILLINOIS RANGE



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female



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male



## **Aquatic Habitats**

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams

## **Woodland Habitats**

none

## **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none