

# **bald-faced hornet**

## *Dolichovespula maculata*

### **FEATURES**

The bald-faced hornet is black with yellow-white markings on the face, thorax and end of the abdomen.

### **BEHAVIORS**

The bald-faced hornet may be found statewide in Illinois. Its nest is composed of several layers of hexagonal, paper cells that are enclosed in a papery covering. It is built on a branch or beneath an overhang and may be a foot or more wide by the end of the summer. Larvae are raised in the cells and are fed chewed-up insects. These social insects have three castes -- queens, workers and males. Queens and workers are females. Females have the ability to sting. The colony exists for one season only. Queens overwinter and start new colonies in the spring, with the first brood of the year consisting entirely of workers.

### **TAXONOMY**

Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Arthropoda  
Class: Insecta  
Order: Hymenoptera  
Family: Vespidae

### **ILLINOIS STATUS**

common, native

### **ILLINOIS RANGE**





adults at nest

**Aquatic Habitats**

bottomland forests

**Woodland Habitats**

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands;  
upland deciduous forests

**Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none