

blue dasher

Pachydiplax longipennis

FEATURES

A small, but variably sized skimmer (large in Spring and smaller in Autumn) with a striped thorax and blue abdomen. Males have white and metallic blue faces with green eyes. The male and female thorax are dark brown with yellow and brown diagonal stripes at the bottom half. Mature males have a dusty blue abdomen. Wings are tinted brown around dark streaks at the base. Females have red over grey eyes, sometimes turning green with age. Female faces are white with metallic blue at the top. Females have two rows of stripes and lower triangular markings in yellow to green or brown to black on their notably short abdomen. Older females have dusty blue wings. Immature and female individuals might lack wing markings.

BEHAVIORS

Blue dashers favor low, vegetated wetlands of the coastal plain. They perch at all heights, primarily in trees with wings drooping forward. Territorial feeding areas are guarded by both males and females. Mating occurs briefly for less than a minute in flight, though occasionally at rest. The female lays 300-700 eggs in vegetation over the span of 30 seconds, tapping multiple times before moving to another location, usually while the male guards nearby. Females most often appear at breeding sites late in the afternoon, after males taper off. Migratory movements during midsummer were observed on the Atlantic Coast. They like standing bodies of water with aquatic vegetation, including lakes, ponds, ditches, or wooded wetlands penetrated by some sunlight. They also like slow streams with loads of vegetation. They are found all over Illinois. They extend as far north as southern Canada, just beyond the border with North Dakota, northeast into New England, south into Florida, and west to western Nebraska.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



© Mary Kay Rubey

male



Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none