

horse fly

representative species

FEATURES

Horse flies undergo complete metamorphosis (egg, larva, pupa, adult). They have one pair of membranous wings, the forewings. The hindwings are in the form of small, knobbed remnants. Sucking mouthparts allow for the ingestion of liquid foods. Their stout, large body may be gray or black.

BEHAVIORS

Horse fly larvae, called maggots, are aquatic or semi-aquatic, pupating in moist soil. Adults are often found close to where the larvae develop but may fly several miles away. Horse fly eggs are laid on vegetation above the water. Newly hatched larvae drop into the water and feed on invertebrates. Larvae overwinter and pupate during the following summer. The female horse fly sucks blood while the male drinks plant juices.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Diptera
Family: Tabanidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE









Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; lakes, ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none