

mocha emerald

Somatochlora linearis

FEATURES

The mocha emerald is a medium to large (two to two and one-half inches long) dragonfly with a brown face; a brown-iridescent green body; long legs; a long, slender abdomen; and broad wings with black veins. The small yellow spot on the underside of the thorax differentiates this species from other emeralds.

BEHAVIORS

These dragonflies are most active during the early morning and evening hours, flying during the coolest parts of the day. They spend the warmest parts of the day perched in trees or on aquatic vegetation. From late May to early September, they can be seen by near leafy-streams and ponds located near forests on the eastern half of the state. In addition to other methods of hunting, these predators have been observed to beat the leaves of plants like stinging nettle to disturb vulnerable prey from rest. Males search for female mates by cruising different habitats with the end of their abdomen turned slightly upwards, maybe as a display of reproductive fitness? Females deposit eggs in muddy or rocky substrates near the shore of small streams. Eggs laid in the summer develop into the fall, but when winter hits development substantially slows. Development rapidly increases in the spring according to environmental cues (temperature, sunlight, etc.) and the eggs hatch into larvae.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE





female

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male

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Aquatic Habitats

ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none