

# mourning cloak

## *Nymphalis antiopa*

### FEATURES

The mourning cloak butterfly has a wingspan of two and one-half to three and three-fourths inches. It has a dark brown-to-black body. The upperside of the wings is dark brown edged with a yellow band that has a row of blue spots on its inner border. The caterpillar is black with tiny white flecks, a row of dull red spots on the back and black spines.

### BEHAVIORS

The mourning cloak butterfly lives in woodlands, swamps and parks although it can be seen wandering in many other areas. This insect may be found statewide in Illinois. The adult probably lives longer than any other butterfly, being active for 10 to 11 months. The adult overwinters and may be seen on any day warm enough for flying. The larva eats the leaves of willow, cottonwood, birch, elm and hackberry.

### TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Arthropoda  
Class: Insecta  
Order: Lepidoptera  
Family: Nymphalida

### ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

### ILLINOIS RANGE





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### **Aquatic Habitats**

bottomland forests

### **Woodland Habitats**

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

### **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none