

# question mark

## *Polygonia interrogationis*

### FEATURES

The question mark butterfly has a wingspan of two and one-fourth to three inches. Each hindwing is black and has a short projection from the back edge. The underside of the hindwing has a silver question mark shape on it. The forewing is orange-red with dark markings. There are two seasonal forms, with the one for winter lighter in color than the summer form. The caterpillar is black to yellow with eight silver spots on the back.

### BEHAVIORS

The question mark butterfly may be found statewide in Illinois. Its caterpillar eats nettle, false nettle, hackberry, elms and Japanese hops. Two broods are raised each year. This butterfly overwinters as an adult.

### TAXONOMY

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

### ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

### ILLINOIS RANGE



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forming pupa stage



pupa



### **Aquatic Habitats**

bottomland forests

### **Woodland Habitats**

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

### **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none