

slender bluet

Enallagma traviatum

FEATURES

The slender bluet is one of many in the genus *Enallagma* (the bluets). They are about one to one and one-quarter inches long, have bulbous blue eyes on a blue face, bright blue bodies, and relatively narrow wings. Males and females look very similar, but the black stripe on the top of the abdomen of the males covers more of the top and sides than the female. Species within *Enallagma* can look identical to the genus *Argia* (the dancers) but are differentiated by their flight pattern. Bluets fly in a straight line or hover, while dancers bounce and “dance” through the air. Dancers also have long setae on the front tibiae. Species level identification is only reliably done by capturing a specimen and observing it closely, but the best place to start looking is at the ratio of blue to black color on the abdomen. The slender bluet has several similar species. The attenuated bluet (*Enallagma daeckii*) only lives near the Ohio River, tends to inhabit more swampy areas, is longer, more slender, and has more blue color on the tip of the abdomen. The turquoise bluet (*Enallagma divagans*) is only known to occur in the southern 3rd of Illinois and has a darker head and eyes. The Azure bluet (*Enallagma aspersum*) has thinner black stripes on the thorax.

BEHAVIORS

The slender bluet inhabits lakes and ponds with abundant vegetation throughout Illinois. They can be seen flying from May to August. Little is known about their behavior. Males fly around streams looking for a mate and hold onto females while they deposit their eggs.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



male



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Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; rivers and streams; swamps

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none