

snowberry clearwing moth *Hemaris diffinis*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Lepidoptera

Family: Sphingidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Sometimes called a bumble bee moth, this species is about 0.9 to about 1.2 inches total length. Its wingspan is 1.3 to 2.0 inches. The forewing is mostly transparent and has a thin black border. Its inner edge and a spot at the tip are orange while the outer edge is dark brown to dark orange. The hindwing is also mainly transparent and bordered by dark brown. The dorsal side of the thorax is cream-colored with a darker stripe along the midline. The lower side of the thorax is light yellow with a black stripe on each side. The abdomen is mostly black-to-brown with a yellow band at the tip. The antennae and legs are black.

BEHAVIORS

This insect is a bumble bee mimic, but it does not land on flowers while feeding as bumble bees often do. The adults are active during daylight hours from early spring through fall. They take nectar from a variety of plants. The larvae eat dogbanes (*Apocynum* spp.), honeysuckles (*Lonicera* spp.), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos* spp.) and dwarf honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*) plants. There are two broods per year.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie

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