

spotted spreadwing

Lestes congener

FEATURES

The spotted spreadwing is 1.2 to 1.7 inches long, is mostly black, metallic, and with long tibial spurs. The thorax is ashy grey below and has small yellow/brown stripes above. Males have large blue eyes and have a blue-tipped abdomen. Females have thicker abdomens, with more yellow and brown color on the sides. Can only be differentiated from look-alike species (northern-, sweetflag-, and lyre tipped- spreadwings) in hand by observing reproductive appendages. Color pattern changes with maturity.

BEHAVIORS

The spotted spreadwing is among the latest in the season to fly, from July to September. They occupy ponds and lakes of all sizes in the northern quarter of Illinois. Those in the genus *Lestes* hold their wings open when perched, unlike all other damselflies, unless at night, while being hunted, or during bad weather. Abdomen is usually pointed down when perched. They hang out in trees and plants when no mating or feeding. Females deposit eggs singly, while male patrols.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



female

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male

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Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; rivers and streams; swamps; temporary water supplies; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge