

tiger spiketail

Cordulegaster erronea

FEATURES

The tiger spiketail is a large, black and brown dragonfly with large, electric green eyes on a yellow face. The distinct black and yellow rings around the abdomen differentiate the tiger spiketail from other species in the genus, like the brown spiketail (*Cordulegaster bilineata*) and arrowhead spiketail (*Cordulegaster obliqua*). River cruisers (Macromiidae) are also very similar to the tiger spiketail, but have larger eyes, a single stripe on either side of the thorax (as opposed to several on spiketails) and tend to be found near larger streams and rivers. All the look-alikes mentioned here are more widespread in Illinois than the tiger spiketail.

BEHAVIORS

The tiger spiketail is only found in Eastern Illinois around Vermillion River. It flies from June to September near small streams abundant in interrupted fern and skunk cabbage. It's often seen hanging from the stems of shrubs or flying laps up and down stream. Males are territorial and will often fight over area. Mating pairs are rarely seen, and mating takes place away from water in trees during midday. Females deposit eggs by flying above the surface of the water and jabbing their sewing needle like tails into the mud or water, depositing up to 350 eggs at a time.

TAXONOMY

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

rare, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



© Doug Mills



Aquatic Habitats

rivers and streams

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none