



water scorpion

representative species

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Hemiptera
Family: Nepidae

FEATURES

Water scorpions undergo incomplete metamorphosis (egg, nymph, adult). Their body shape is slender, resembling a stick. They grow to about one and one-half inches in length as an adult. They hang upside down at the water's surface and use a tube from the tip of the abdomen to obtain oxygen. The mouthparts are for piercing and sucking. The front legs are adapted for grabbing prey items. The front wings are hard at the base and membranous at the tip. The hind wings are membranous and shorter than the front wings.

BEHAVIORS

Water scorpions live in ponds and streams. Water scorpion eggs are deposited in the tissues of aquatic plants. These insects can inflict a painful bite if handled. They are predators of other insects.

HABITATS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bottomland forests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rivers & streams |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> lakes, ponds & reservoirs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> swamps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> temp water supplies |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> marshes | <input type="checkbox"/> wet prairies & fens |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> peatlands | |

ILLINOIS STATUS

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> common | <input type="checkbox"/> endangered | <input type="checkbox"/> threatened |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> native | <input type="checkbox"/> exotic | |

ILLINOIS RANGE

statewide

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume I: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.