



ILLINOIS STATUS

common endangered threatened
 native exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: southern 1/2

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.

Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.

zebra butterfly

Heliconius charitonius

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Lepidoptera
Family: Nymphalidae

FEATURES

The zebra butterfly has a wingspan of about two and three-fourths to four inches. Its wings are black with yellow stripes, and the forewings are long and narrow. The hindwings have a row of yellow spots, too. The larva is white with bands of red and black and a yellow head.

BEHAVIORS

The zebra butterfly may be found in the southern one-half of Illinois. Its larva eats passion-flower plants, which contain a distasteful poison. After the transformation in the pupa stage, the poison is retained in the body of the adult. The pupa stage wriggles when disturbed and makes a noise. The adult lives in densely wooded areas. Adults roost in groups, returning to the same roost each night.

HABITATS

bottomland forests
 coniferous forest
 southern Illinois lowlands
 upland deciduous forest