



spicebush swallowtail

Papilio troilus

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

FEATURES

The spicebush swallowtail has a wingspan of three and five-eighths to four and seven-eighths inches. Its body is mostly black. The upperside of the hindwing is blue-green (male) or iridescent blue (female) in appearance. The underside of the hindwing has orange spots and a rounded extension from the back edge. The spicebush swallowtail caterpillar is dark green on the back becoming whitish on the sides. This smooth larva has two, large, round black spots with orange or yellow edges near the head followed by four lines of blue spots with black edges. When disturbed, the caterpillar can extend a scent gland that gives off a bad smelling substance.

BEHAVIORS

The spicebush swallowtail may be found statewide in Illinois. It flies low to the ground and flutters slowly when feeding on flower nectar. The caterpillar feeds on spicebush and sassafras. This insect overwinters in the pupa stage, which is usually attached to vegetation.

HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: statewide

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
- Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.