



antlion

representative specimen

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Order: Neuroptera
Family: Myrmeleontidae

FEATURES

The adult antlion is brown or gray. In appearance it is similar to a damselfly, with long, thin, clear wings and a long, thin abdomen. However it is soft-bodied, has long, clubbed antennae and has a different pattern of veins in the wings than those of damselflies. The wings of some antlion species have spots while those of other species do not. Each antenna is about as long as the length of the head and thorax combined. The body length is about one and one-half inches. The wings can be folded on the back. The larva, or doodlebug, has long, grasping jaws.

BEHAVIORS

Found statewide in Illinois, antlions are poor fliers. They are often attracted to light at night. The larva of some species hides in the bottom of a small, cone-shaped pit dug in dirt or sand, waiting to eat ants and other small insects that fall in. Pupation occurs in the soil in a cocoon of sand and silk. Antlions feed on other insects.

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.
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