



mourning cloak

Nymphalis antiopa

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

FEATURES

The mourning cloak butterfly has a wingspan of three and one-fourth to four inches. It has a dark brown to blackish body. This butterfly is easily identified by its wing color pattern. The dark brown wings are edged with a yellow band that has a row of blue spots on its inner border. The caterpillar is black with tiny white flecks, a row of dull red spots on the back and black spines.

BEHAVIORS

The mourning cloak butterfly lives in woodlands, swamps and parks although it can be seen wandering in many other areas. This insect may be found statewide in Illinois. The adult probably lives longer than any other butterfly, being active for 10 to 11 months. The adult overwinters and may be seen on any day warm enough for flying. The larva eats the leaves of willow, cottonwood, birch, elm and hackberry.

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.