

Peoria Academy of Science Entomology Section

To learn more about our field trips, scan the QR code
(or visit <https://centralillinoisinsects.org/>)
You can also find us at <https://ourbugclub.net>



Insect Passport 2025

This passport invites you to explore the intriguing world of insects in central Illinois, appreciating their beauty, diversity, and vital roles in our ecosystems.

Each month, we feature a specific central Illinois insect. Your mission is to take a photo of that insect and send it to the email address below during that month. You must send it during the month the insect is featured.

Those who complete this task for each of the months will be eligible for a prize at our January, 2026 planning meeting. All photos used in this passport are copied from Wikipedia pages.

To be eligible, you must be a member in good standing and must mail your photo of the insect (with location information during the month that insect is featured). Don't forget to include the location where you observed the insect along with your photo.

centralillinoisinsects@gmail.com



February: Winter Stonefly

Allocapnia vivipara, the short-wing snowfly (PLECOPTERA: Capniidae). This is the most commonly encountered winter stonefly in central Illinois. Look for adults moving on snow near streams on sunny days this month. [Any species of an adult stonefly observed in central Illinois will suffice for your photo this month.]



March: Asian Lady Beetle

Harmonia axyridis, commonly known as the Asian lady beetle. This species was introduced into North America and is now widely established in central Illinois. Adults will be emerging from hibernation this month. [Any species of an adult lady beetle observed in central Illinois will suffice for your photo this month.]



April: American Bumblebee

The American Bumblebee, *Bombus pensylvanicus*, is a crucial pollinator in the region, noted for its robust, fuzzy body and black and yellow coloration. It plays a vital role in the pollination of various crops and wildflowers. Queens will be emerging from hibernation this month. [Any species of bumblebee observed in central Illinois will suffice for your photo this month.]



May: Carolina Mantis

The Carolina Mantis, *Stagmomantis carolina*, is a fascinating predator known for its camouflaging abilities and distinct posture. It is commonly found in gardens and fields where it hunts for insects. Look for nymphs which have recently emerged from their egg case.



June: Photinus pyralis

Photinus pyralis, commonly known as the Big Dipper Firefly, this species is famous for its bioluminescent displays during the summer evenings. It is widely observed in backyards and open fields.



July: Green Darner Dragonfly

The Green Darner, *Anax junius*, is a large, striking dragonfly with a vibrant green thorax and blue abdomen. It is often seen near ponds and wetlands, preying on smaller insects.



August: Dog-day Cicada

Neotibicen canicularis, the Dog-day Cicada is known for its distinctive, loud mating calls during the hot summer months. It is typically found in trees and shrubs throughout central Illinois.



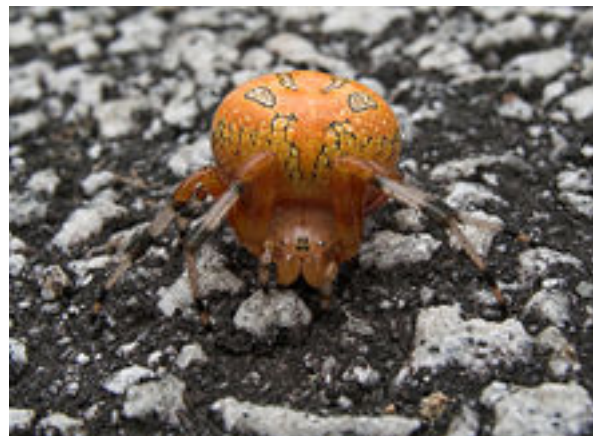
September: Differential Grasshopper

The Differential Grasshopper, ***Melanoplus differentialis***, is a common species in central Illinois, recognized by its large size and yellow hind legs. It is often found in agricultural fields and grassy areas.



October: Marbled Orb-Weaver

Yes, we know this is not an insect. However, this spider is commonly encountered in October and may be the subject of discussion among gardeners. The Marbled Orb-Weaver, ***Araneus marmoreus***, is a striking spider known for its intricate web patterns and marbled coloration. It is also commonly called the pumpkin spider (which is why we feature it this month). It inhabits woodlands and gardens, where it helps control insect populations.



November: Mound Building *Formica*

The Allegheny mound ant, *Formica exsectoides* is found sporadically in central Illinois. Ants are industrious insects known for their complex colony structures and cooperative behavior. They play an essential role in soil aeration and organic matter decomposition. [Any photo of an ant mound for this month will suffice.]



December: Snow Flea

Snow fleas, *Hypogastrura nivicola*, are tiny, wingless springtails (related to insects) that appear on the surface of snow during winter, using a special protein to withstand freezing temperatures. They are often seen jumping on the surface of snow on a warm December day.

