

Insects



Blue-eyed Darner
Rhionaeschna multicolor
Size: L: 2.42 - 2.73 in.
Description: Male: Blue and black abdomen and blue eyes, Female: yellow-green where male is blue.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Ponds and lakes near open fields
Viewing: Summer, statewide, more common west



Halloween Pennant
Celithemis eponina
Size: L: 1.4 - 1.7 in.
Description: Dragonfly with orange wings with brown bands and red spots on front edge of wing.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Marshes, ponds, lakes
Viewing: Summer, statewide

Spiders

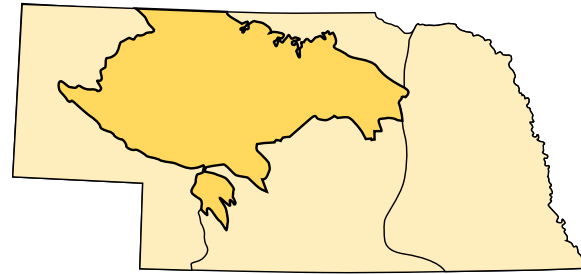


Goldenrod Crab Spider
Misumena vatia
Size: L: 0.11 - 0.35 in.
Description: Male: darker yellow with red and white bands on abdomen, Female: white to yellow with no markings.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Rural to urban
Viewing: Summer, statewide



Bold Jumping Spider
Phidippus audax
Size: L: 0.5 - 0.79 in.
Description: Hairy jumping spider, black with white spots, iridescent mouthparts.
Diet: Insects
Habitat: Rural to urban
Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide

Sandhills Region



The Sandhills region in Nebraska contains the largest area of stabilized grass covered dunes in the western hemisphere. Of the 13 million acres, over a million of these are wetlands. There are 1,600 Sandhill lakes, comprising around 80,000 surface acres of water. These wetland areas are important for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl, providing much-needed habitat. This area also sits directly atop the Ogallala aquifer, for which the wetlands play an important role in retaining and filtering the water.

This area receives 17 - 23 inches of water annually. The sandy soil of the area makes farming difficult, so this area contains one of the largest tracts of unplowed prairie in North America. People primarily use the Sandhills region for cattle grazing. With few lights from buildings and infrastructure across the Sandhills, there is low light pollution, making the area ideal for stargazing.

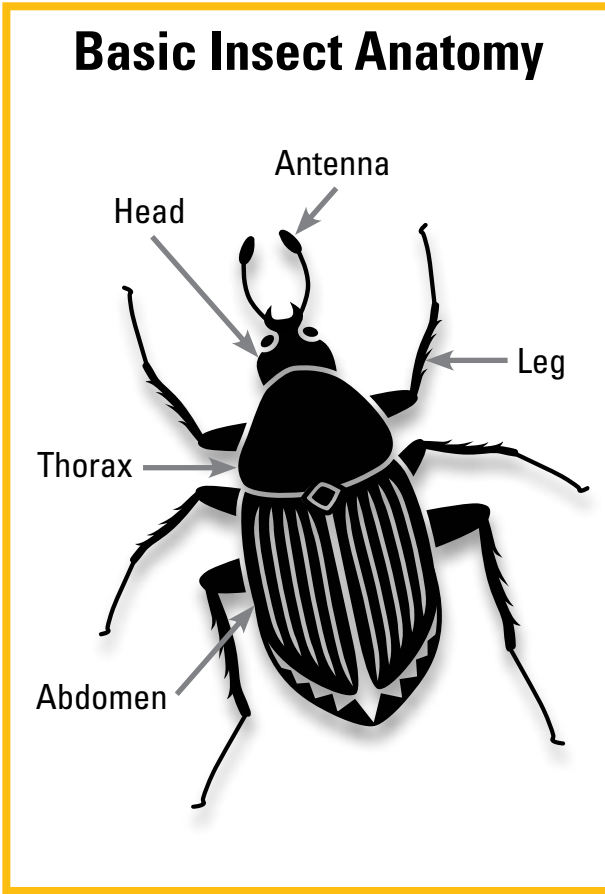


Insect Viewing Tips

1. **Go to where the habitat is** — visit state parks and other public spaces.
2. **Do your homework** — learn what species live in the area.
3. **Think about timing** — check what is active in the area this time of year.
4. **Consult an expert** — join in on a guided insect hike to learn more.
5. **Leave no trace** — leave wildlife in nature and nature the way you found it.



Insects of the Nebraska Sandhills



Identification Guide

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Yucca Moth

Tegeticulla yuccasella

Size: WS: 0.70 - 1.08 in.

Description: Nondescript white moth with dark eyes.

Diet: Yucca seeds (larva)

Habitat: Dry grasslands with yucca

Viewing: Summer, west



Gray Hairstreak

Strymon melinus

Size: WS: 1.0 - 1.25 in.

Description: Upperside of wings dark, underside gray with white edging, orange patch with black spot above wing-tails.

Diet: Fruit (larva), nectar (adult)

Habitat: Open fields

Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide



Goldenrod Soldier Beetle

Chauliognathus pensylvanicus

Size: L: 0.35 - 0.47 in.

Description: Golden-orange with variable black markings and black head and legs.

Diet: Insects (larva), pollen and nectar (adult)

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Summer, statewide



Painted Grasshopper

Dactylotum bicolor

Size: L: 0.78 - 1.37 in.

Description: Small, colorful grasshopper with small wings and patterns of orange, yellow and blue.

Diet: Grasses and forbes

Habitat: Sandy blowouts, dunes

Viewing: Summer, west



Orange Sulphur

Colias eurytheme

Size: WS: 1.4 - 2.45 in.

Description: Male: upperside yellow, dark border and cell spot, Female: yellow-white, dark border, underside hind wing has gray spot with 2 rings and a spot above.

Diet: Nectar

Habitat: Open fields

Viewing: Summer-fall, statewide



Sandy Tiger Beetle

Cicindela limbata

Size: L: 0.43 - 0.5 in.

Description: White with green, blue, or bronze markings and spindly legs.

Diet: Insects

Habitat: Sandy blowouts, dunes

Viewing: Spring-fall, northwest, north-central



Rainbow Scarab Beetle

Phanaeus vindex

Size: L: 0.29 - 0.5 in.

Description: Bulky oval beetle, metallic in appearance, copper, gold and green; male has horn.

Diet: Dung

Habitat: Grasslands

Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide



*Brown-belted Bumblebee

Bombus griseocollis

Size: L: 0.37 - 0.75 in.

Description: Bumblebee with black head and wings and brown belt band on thorax.

Diet: Nectar and pollen

Habitat: Rural to urban

Viewing: Spring-summer, statewide



Monarch

Danaus plexippus

Size: WS: 3.3 - 4.8 in.

Description: Orange butterfly with black body, veins and borders with white spots, Male: has black spot at center of each lower wing.

Diet: Milkweed (larva), nectar (adult)

Habitat: Open fields, rural to urban

Viewing: Spring-fall, statewide



Big Sand Tiger Beetle

Cicindela formosa

Size: L: 0.59 - 0.8 in.

Description: Red-purple with white markings and spindly legs.

Diet: Insects

Habitat: Sand blowouts, dunes and stream banks

Viewing: Summer, mostly statewide, excluding southern Panhandle and southeast corner



Dogbane Leaf Beetle

Chrysochus auratus

Size: L: 0.31 - 0.43 in.

Description: Small, oblong beetle with metallic green to brown coloration.

Diet: Dogbane and milkweed plants

Habitat: Dogbane and milkweed

Viewing: Summer, statewide



Ten-lined June Beetle

Polyphylla decemlineata

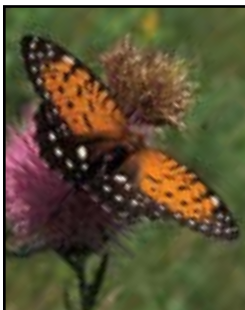
Size: L: 0.75 - 1.5 in.

Description: Brown body with vertical white stripes and clubbed antenna, larva can be agricultural pest.

Diet: Roots (larva), foliage (adult)

Habitat: Associated with sandy soil and trees, especially apple

Viewing: Mid-late summer, west



Regal Fritillary

Speyeria idalia

Size: WS: 2.6 - 4.0 in.

Description: Upper forewing red-orange with black, hind wing black with row of white spots. Males have row of orange spots.

Diet: Violets (larva), nectar (adult)

Habitat: Open fields with violets

Viewing: Summer, statewide, more common east



Festive Tiger Beetle

Cicindela scutellaris

Size: L: 0.43 - 0.51 in.

Description: Metallic beetle with blue-green head and thorax, red abdomen and spindly legs.

Diet: Insects

Habitat: Sand blowouts, dunes and stream banks

Viewing: Spring-fall, west and common in Sandhills



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Plains Lubber Grasshopper

Brachystola magna

Size: L: 1.7 - 2.2 in.

Description: Colorful and flightless, primarily green with short wings, Nebraska's largest grasshopper.

Diet: Forbes

Habitat: Grasslands

Viewing: Summer, west



River Jewelwing

Calopteryx aequabilis

Size: L: 1.75 - 2.25 in.

Description: Metallic to dark green damselfly with black on outer third of wing.

Diet: Insects

Habitat: Clear, sand-bottom creeks

Viewing: Summer, northwest

* = stings