

Gulf fritillary *Agraulis vanillae*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Arthropoda

Class: Insecta

Order: Lepidoptera

Family: Nymphalidae

ILLINOIS STATUS: common, native

FEATURES

The Gulf fritillary has a wingspan of two and one-half to three and three-fourths inches. Its color patterns are similar in the male and female although the male's coloration is brighter. The upperside of the wings is orange with dark marks. There are usually three black-encircled white spots near the front edge of the forewings, but the number of them may vary. The underside of the wings is brown-orange with silver spots that are more or less oval in shape and black spots that have a silver center.

BEHAVIORS

The Gulf fritillary lives in woodland edges where passion-flower (*Passiflora* spp.), its larval host plant, grows. A few individuals are seen annually in the state, and it may breed here, but Illinois is on the northern edge of its range.

Aquatic Habitats: none

Woodland Habitats: none

Prairie and Edge Habitats: edge

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