



## Butterflies and Moths of North America

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### Snowberry clearwing

*Hemaris diffinis* (Boisduval, 1836)



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#### Attributes of *Hemaris diffinis*

Family: **Sphinx Moths, Hawkmoths** (*Sphingidae*)

Subfamily: **Macroglossinae** (*Macroglossinae*)

**Identification:** Adults are quite variable in appearance: Bumblebee mimic. The thorax is golden or olive-golden in color, abdomen is black dorsally with 1-2 segments just prior to terminal end being yellow to various extent, while black ventrally. *H. diffinis* is the only eastern species to exhibit blue abdominal tufts on the first black segment in some freshly emerged specimens. Wings mostly clear with reddish brown terminal borders and dark scaling along **veins**. While wing maculation is too variable to be 100% diagnostic, *diffinis* typically has very thin terminal borders and the discal cell is elongate and without scales. However, *diffinis* can always be distinguished from *gracilis* and *thysbe* by two diagnostic characteristics: 1) the black band that crosses the eye and travels down the lateral side of the thorax; 2) *diffinis* always has black legs.

**Life history:** Adults fly swiftly during the day. Caterpillars pupate in cocoons spun in leaf litter on the ground.

**Flight:** . Two broods from March-August.

**Wing span:** 1 1/4 - 2 inches (3.2 - 5 cm).

**Caterpillar hosts:** Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera*), dogbane (*Apocynum*), and dwarf bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*).

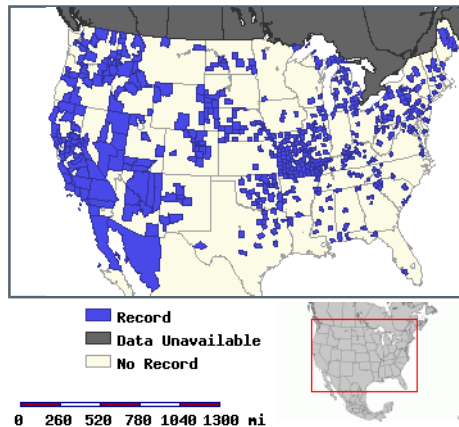
**Adult food:** Nectar from flowers including lantana, dwarf bush honeysuckle, snowberry, orange hawkweed, thistles, lilac, and Canada violet.

**Habitat:** A wide variety of open habitats, streamsidess, fields, gardens, and suburbs.

**Range:** Northwest Territories and British Columbia south to southern California and Baja California Norte: east through most of the United States to Maine and Florida.

**Conservation:** Not usually required.

#### Documented Records for *Hemaris diffinis*



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**NatureServe Global Status:** G5 - Demonstrably secure globally, though it may be quite rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.

**Management needs:** None reported.

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