



semipalmated sandpiper

Calidris pusilla

Kingdom: Animalia
 Division/Phylum: Chordata - vertebrates
 Class: Aves
 Order: Charadriiformes
 Family: Scolopacidae

FEATURES

An adult semipalmated sandpiper is five and one-half to six and one-half inches long. Both sexes are similar in appearance. The body is gray with some white coloring. In the summer, this sandpiper has a dark body coloring and in the winter it has more white on its body. Its short, wide bill and its legs are black. The toes are partially webbed to help it move in its aquatic habitat.

BEHAVIORS

The semipalmated sandpiper is a common migrant in Illinois. It winters from Florida south to Argentina and Chile. The semipalmated sandpiper may be seen on beaches, mudflats and other open, wet areas. This bird eats mostly insects and mollusks (snails, clams). Its call is "cherk" or "cheh." The birds may be seen migrating through Illinois in April, May or June as they go to their breeding grounds in the Arctic. The return migration begins for adults in July and most immatures in August.

HABITATS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bottomland forests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rivers & streams |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> lakes, ponds & reservoirs | <input type="checkbox"/> swamps |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lake Michigan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> temp water supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> marshes | <input type="checkbox"/> wet prairies & fens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> peatlands | |

ILLINOIS STATUS

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> common | <input type="checkbox"/> endangered | <input type="checkbox"/> threatened |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> native | <input type="checkbox"/> exotic | |

ILLINOIS RANGE

Migrant: statewide.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume I: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.