



## eastern screech-owl

*Megascops asio*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Strigiformes  
Family: Strigidae

### FEATURES

The eastern screech-owl averages seven to 10 inches in length. It has ear tufts. This small owl has two color phases: red and gray.

### BEHAVIORS

The eastern screech-owl is a common, permanent resident statewide in Illinois. Nesting takes place from April through May. No nest is built, but the eggs are deposited in a cavity in a hollow tree, an old woodpecker hole, an abandoned building or a nest box, if one is available. The female lays from three to seven white eggs and incubates them herself for the 21- to 30-day incubation period. The eastern screech-owl lives in woodlands, residential areas, city parks and orchards. It may roost in conifers, tree cavities and buildings. Its call is a wavering series of notes that descend in pitch. This owl eats insects, small birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

### HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

### ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

### ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: statewide

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.

Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.