



white-breasted nuthatch

Sitta carolinensis

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Passeriformes
Family: Sittidae

FEATURES

The white-breasted nuthatch averages five to six inches in length. It has a blue-gray back and a white belly. The male has a black cap, while the female has a blue-gray cap.

BEHAVIORS

The white-breasted nuthatch is a common, permanent resident statewide in Illinois. Nesting takes place from April through May. This bird nests in deciduous woodlands in a knothole in a large tree, an old woodpecker hole or a nest box. The nest is placed 15 to 50 feet above the ground. The nest cavity is lined with grasses, hair, rootlets, sticks and other materials. The female builds the nest. She deposits six to nine white eggs with red-brown spots and incubates them for the 12-day incubation period. One brood is raised per year. The white-breasted nuthatch lives in woodlands, parks and orchards. It searches for food by walking down tree trunks head-first. It eats insects, nuts and acorns.

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.