



Baltimore oriole

Icterus galbula

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata
Class:
Order:
Family:

FEATURES

The Baltimore oriole averages about seven to eight inches in length. The male is orange underneath and has a black back, wings, tail and a solid black head. The female and young are orange-yellow underneath and olive-green on the upper side. Two, white wing bars may be seen on all Baltimore orioles.

BEHAVIORS

The Baltimore oriole is a common migrant and summer resident statewide. It winters along the coast of the southern United States through Central America. It tends to stay high in the treetops, where it may sometimes be located by its whistling song. These birds begin arriving in Illinois each year in April and May. Nesting takes place in May and June with one brood raised per year. This oriole nests in elm, willow, apple, cottonwood and maple trees. The nest is a woven, hanging pouch of plant fibers, hair, yarn, string and bark placed six to 60 feet above the ground. The nest is lined with hair, wool and grasses. The female builds the nest in four to eight days. Three to five white to pale blue eggs with dark markings are laid in the nest. The

incubation period lasts 12 to 14 days with the female alone incubating. Fall migration starts in July, with most of the migration taking place at night. The Baltimore oriole lives in woodlands, especially along lakeshores or streams, and shade trees. It eats insects, fruits and seeds.

HABITATS

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident:

Summer resident: statewide

Migrant: statewide

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.

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