



black-capped chickadee

Poecile atricapillus

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

FEATURES

The black-capped chickadee averages four and three-fourths to five and three-fourths inches in length. It has a black cap and throat patch. The cheeks are white while the sides of the belly are buff. There are white edges on the wing feathers.

BEHAVIORS

The black-capped chickadee is a common, permanent resident in the northern one-half of Illinois. It lives in woodlands, shrubs, residential areas, parks and thickets. Nesting occurs from April through June. The nest is placed in a cavity in a tree or fence post (excavated by both sexes), a natural cavity, an abandoned woodpecker hole or in a bird box from four to 10 feet above the ground. The nest is composed of wool, hair, fur, moss, feathers and plant fibers and is constructed by the female over three to four days. The female lays six to eight white eggs with brown markings which she alone incubates for the 12 to 13 day incubation period. The male brings food to the female while she is at the nest. Black-capped chickadees feed with other bird species in groups. The call is "chick-a-dee-dee," and it also whistles "fee-bee." This bird eats insects, seeds, acorns and berries.

HABITATS

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: northern 1/2

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.