



red-bellied woodpecker

Melanerpes carolinus

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Piciformes
Family: Picidae

FEATURES

The red-bellied woodpecker averages nine to 10 and one-half inches in length. Its back and wings have a series of black and white stripes. There is a white, rump patch. The belly is buff. A red patch covers the area from the bill to the base of the neck in the male but only is present on the back of the head in the female. The immature has a brown head, but its other coloring is similar to that of the adult.

BEHAVIORS

The red-bellied woodpecker is a common, permanent resident statewide in Illinois. Nesting takes place from April through June. The nest may be placed in a cavity in a dead tree, usually in a hollow limb, a live tree, a wooden building, a nest box or a wooden pole. The male does most of the nest excavation, placing the cavity anywhere from five to 70 feet above the ground. Three to five white eggs are laid by the female. Both sexes incubate over a 14-day period. One brood is raised per year. This bird may be found in upland and bottomland deciduous forests, coniferous forests, residential areas and parks. It makes "kwirr," "churr," "chaw," and "chiv" sounds. The red-bellied woodpecker eats acorns, fruits and insects.

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.