



## red-shouldered hawk

*Buteo lineatus*

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Aves
Order:	Falconiformes
Family:	Accipitridae

### FEATURES

The red-shouldered hawk averages 17 to 24 inches in length. It has a large tail, broad wings and dark bands on the tail. The back is dark brown. There is a rusty-red patch on each shoulder. The underside of the body is rusty-red as well. The immature bird has dark streaks on the chest.

### BEHAVIORS

The red-shouldered hawk is an uncommon migrant, summer resident and winter resident statewide. Some of these hawks are also permanent residents of Illinois. Spring migrants begin arriving in Illinois by mid-March. Nesting occurs from March through May. The nest is built 20 to 60 feet above the ground. It is made of sticks and lined with bark, sticks, leaves and feathers. The nest may be reused in later years. Three to five white eggs with brown marks are laid by the female. The male and female take turns incubating over the 28-day incubation period. One brood is raised per year, unless the eggs are destroyed, in which case the birds may reneest. Fall migration begins in August. The red-shouldered hawk lives in moist woodlands, woodlands along streams and swamps. Its call is "kee yar." This bird hunts by flying out to catch or pounce on prey items. It eats reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and birds.

### 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: statewide  
Migrant: statewide  
Winter resident: statewide

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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