



## gray bat

*Myotis grisescens*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Mammalia  
Order: Chiroptera  
Family: Vespertilionidae

## FEATURES

The gray bat is large with long forearms. Its back has gray hair while the belly is gray-brown. Each wing is attached to the ankle.

## BEHAVIORS

The gray bat may be found in Illinois near the Ohio River in the summer and along the southern one-half of the Mississippi River and in west central Illinois in winter. It lives in a cave or mine in the summer while in winter, it hibernates in a cave. The gray bat eats insects. It looks for insects among trees and over water bodies. Females form maternity colonies in summer in caves or mines. It is possible that there is only one maternity colony in Illinois. Males and females hibernate together in the winter. Although there is little information available, it is believed that the southern Illinois gray bats move to Kentucky for the winter. Other gray bats winter in caves in Adams, Madison and Pike counties. Adult females leave the wintering site before any of the other gray bats and begin to establish the maternity colony. Young are born in late May and June. One young is born per female. The young bat can fly about four weeks

after birth. The maternity colony begins to break up in July. Movement back to the winter colony begins in August. Mating occurs in the fall. Females do not bear young until their second year.

## HABITATS

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

## ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

## ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident:

Summer resident: Ohio River border counties

Migrant: southern 1/2 Mississippi River + west central Illinois

Winter resident:

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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