



## southern flying squirrel

*Glaucomys volans*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Mammalia  
Order: Rodentia  
Family: Sciuridae

### FEATURES

The small southern flying squirrel has an gray-olive back and a white belly. There is a flap of loose skin between the front and hind legs that makes a gliding surface when the legs are extended. The tail is broad, flat and furred. The nose is slightly upturned.

### BEHAVIORS

The southern flying squirrel may be found statewide in Illinois. It lives in hardwood forests near water. The southern flying squirrel eats hickory nuts, acorns, seeds of other trees, fungi, fruits, bark, bird eggs, insects and young birds. It is a nocturnal squirrel that is alert and active all year. This squirrel is arboreal and glides from higher to lower surfaces. The tail acts like a rudder to steer as it "flies." This mammal does make sounds and may use echolocation. The nest may be located in a tree cavity, building, old bird nest or old squirrel nest. These squirrels may be found in communal nests in winter and possibly year round. They do not hibernate but may sleep for several consecutive days in winter. Mating occurs twice in a year. Those females

mating in February and March give birth during the period late March through early May. The females that mate in July have their young in August and September. Litter size ranges from two to seven.

### 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.