



fence lizard

Sceloporus undulatus

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata
Class: Reptilia
Order: Squamata
Family: Phrynosomatidae

FEATURES

The fence lizard averages four to seven and one-fourth inches in length. It has keeled (ridged), overlapping, pointed scales on the back. The male has a prominent blue patch at each side of the belly. The body is gray (usually females) or brown (usually males). Dark bands may be present along the back.

BEHAVIORS

The fence lizard may be found in the southern one-third of Illinois. This reptile lives in open, dry wooded areas with rock outcrops, boulders, rotting stumps or rotting logs. The fence lizard climbs trees. It is active in the morning and late evening of sunny days. Mating occurs between April and August, with each female producing two clutches of eggs. Courtship involves the male performing head-bobbing and pushup movements for the female. The female deposits between four and 17 eggs in soil, rotten logs or stumps. Eggs hatch in July or August. The fence lizard eats mainly insects and other arthropods but may take smaller lizards and baby mice, too.

HABITATS

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: southern 1/3

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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