



## fox sparrow

*Passerella iliaca*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Passeriformes  
Family: Emberizidae

### FEATURES

The fox sparrow averages about six and three-fourths to seven and one-half inches in length. It has a reddish back and wings, and the reddish tail is distinctive. Gray patches can be seen on the neck. The breast is white with reddish streaks.

### BEHAVIORS

The fox sparrow is a common migrant in Illinois and winters in the southern two-thirds of the state and as far south as the Gulf of Mexico. It breeds in Alaska and northern Canada. This bird hunts for seeds, insects and small berries by kicking among dead leaves in the undergrowth and the edges of forests, in thickets and in hedgerows. It may be found singly or in small flocks. Its song is a series of short notes and whistles. Fall migration into Illinois begins in September. Migration out of the state in spring is completed by June.

### HABITATS

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

### ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

### ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident:

Summer resident:

Migrant: statewide

Winter resident: southern 2/3

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.

Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.