

American golden-plover *Pluvialis dominica*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Charadriiformes

Family: Charadriidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The American golden-plover is 10.5 inches long. The breeding adult has black feathers on the ventral side and dark feathers with black and yellow markings on the upper side. A white stripe in a question-mark shape extends from above the eye to the neck. The nonbreeding bird is gray-brown, with the back and upper side darker than the underside of the bird.

BEHAVIORS

This bird is a common migrant in Illinois. It is found in wet fields, pastures and grassy mudflats eating insects and other aquatic invertebrates. It is most numerous in central Illinois during spring migration and less common during fall migration when most sightings are along Lake Michigan. Spring migrants begin arriving in late March. Fall migration starts in late August. The species winters in South America. The loss of wetland and grassland habitats affects this species as it migrates through Illinois. At times, more than half of the world's population of this bird is present in a few eastern Illinois counties.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

temporary water supplies; wet prairies and fens; marshes; Lake Michigan

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge

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