

# American white pelican

## *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

### FEATURES

An adult American white pelican stands 62 inches high. It has white feathers with black wing tips. Both sexes are similar in appearance. This bird has a long, flat, yellow-orange bill. The neck is long and has a throat pouch.

### BEHAVIORS

The American white pelican is a migrant throughout most of Illinois. It winters in the southern United States, along the Gulf of Mexico. It breeds in the northern plains states and Canada. The American white pelican may be seen on rivers, ponds, lakes or marshes. These birds fly in lines. Its call is a long groan. The American white pelican eats crustaceans and fishes. It does not plunge to get fish, but simply scoops up fish while it is paddling on the water. These birds often work in groups to feed.

### TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Aves  
Order: Pelecaniformes  
Family: Pelecanidae

### ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

### ILLINOIS RANGE





© David W. Brewer





overhead flight

**Aquatic Habitats**

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams; marshes

**Woodland Habitats**

none

**Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none