

## black-necked stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Charadriiformes

Family: Recurvirostridae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

The black-necked stilt has black feathers on the upper side, and white feathers on the lower side of the body. The pink-red legs are very long. The tail and rump are white. This slim bird is 14 inches long.

### BEHAVIORS

Spring migrants arrive in Illinois in April. Breeding birds remain all summer, and an influx of southward migrants appears in late July and August. A few birds linger in the state until October. The species overwinters in Central and South America. The black-necked stilt has been expanding its range in Illinois, and a black-necked stilt nest was first documented in 1994 in Jackson County. Black-necked stilts are most often seen along the Mississippi, Illinois and other large rivers and lakes in the state. They can also be seen in wetland areas in the northeastern portion of the state. This species eats insects, crustaceans and other small invertebrates.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; rivers and streams; swamps; temporary water supplies; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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