

eastern screech-owl

Megascops asio

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Strigiformes
Family: Strigidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native



track replica

FEATURES

The eastern screech-owl averages seven to 10 inches in length. It has ear tufts. This small owl has two color phases: red and gray.

BEHAVIORS

The eastern screech-owl is a common, permanent resident statewide in Illinois. Nesting takes place from April through May. No nest is built, but the eggs are deposited in a cavity in a hollow tree, an old woodpecker hole, an abandoned building or a nest box, if one is available. The female lays from three to seven white eggs and incubates them herself for the 21- to 30-day incubation period. The eastern screech-owl lives in woodlands, residential areas, city parks and orchards. It may roost in conifers, tree cavities and buildings. Its call is a wavering series of notes that descend in pitch. This owl eats insects, small birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

ILLINOIS RANGE



© Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2020. *Biodiversity of Illinois*.

Unless otherwise noted, photos and images © Illinois Department of Natural Resources.





gray and red phases

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands;
upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none