

## eastern screech-owl *Megascops asio*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Strigiformes

Family: Strigidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### 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.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

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

Prairie Habitats

none

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