

gray fox *Urocyon cinereoargenteus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Mammalia

Order: Carnivora

Family: Canidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The gray fox has a head-body length of about 21 to 29 inches and a tail about 11 to 16 inches in length. This mammal weighs between five and one-half and nine pounds. Its back fur is gray with a salt-and-pepper look. The fur on the back part of its ears, the belly, the top of all feet, the sides and the underside of the tail is a light red color. There is a white furred stripe underneath the body from the throat to the tail. The tail has a black line down the middle and a black tip. The chin, lips and nose are black. The ears stand straight up and are very noticeable.

BEHAVIORS

The gray fox may be found statewide in Illinois, living in wooded areas. This mammal is an omnivore that eats fruits, birds, corn, insects, nuts, mice, rabbits and roots. It is a very good tree climber and may use a tree for a resting place. Mating occurs from January through March. Young are born in April and May after a gestation period of about two months. Litter size averages about four. Young are on their own after about four months.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

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

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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