

greater yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Charadriiformes

Family: Scolopacidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

An adult greater yellowlegs is 13 to 15 inches in length. The male and female are similar in appearance. The gray body feathers have black, gray and white markings on the back. The rump and tail are white. The legs are bright yellow. The long, black bill is slightly curved up at the tip.

BEHAVIORS

The greater yellowlegs is a common migrant through Illinois. It winters in the southern and southeastern United States south to the tip of South America. Breeding occurs in Canada and Alaska. The greater yellowlegs may be found in marshes, in flooded fields, on mudflats and around streams or ponds. This bird eats minnows, aquatic insects and snails. Its call is "whew-whew" or "Dear! Dear! Dear!" This bird migrates primarily during the day. Spring migrants may be seen beginning in March. Fall migrants begin returning to Illinois in late June.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams; temporary water supplies; marshes

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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