

Indiana bat *Myotis sodalists*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Mammalia

Order: Chiroptera

Family: Vespertilionidae

ILLINOIS STATUS endangered, native

FEATURES

The Indiana bat has a short forearm. Each hair is black on the lower two-thirds, gray on the outer one-third and cinnamon at the tip. The hair on the foot does not extend past the toes. The fur on the back appears dull.

BEHAVIORS

In summer, the Indiana bat may be found in the southern one-third of Illinois. Females seek dead trees with loose bark or live trees with shaggy bark in which to rest and raise their young. They tend to forage around water, over floodplain trees and in and around wooded areas. Males forage among trees. About 90 percent of the entire population of these bats hibernate in a few caves in Missouri, Kentucky and southern Indiana. Very small numbers hibernate in Illinois in a mine in La Salle County and in caves and mines along the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. The Indiana bat is an insectivore, eating mostly moths, caddisflies, leafhoppers, planthoppers and beetle larvae. Mating occurs in fall, winter or spring. Females mating in fall and winter store sperm in the uterus until spring, when it is used to fertilize the eggs. Females leave the wintering site in April. Young are born in June or July. This bat may live for more than 10 years. The Indiana bat is endangered in Illinois and is on the federal endangered species list for the United States. The destruction of cave habitats due to their collapse, commercialization, flooding and vandalism have decreased available wintering sites. The loss of aquatic habitats to agricultural uses, channelization of streams and urbanization is also a problem. Some Indiana bat deaths have been related to toxic insecticides that are ingested when the bats eat insects that were exposed to the chemicals.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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