

## lark sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Passerellidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

The lark sparrow is about six and one-half inches in length (tail tip to bill tip in preserved specimen). There is a dark spot at the center of the breast, a chestnut patch on the side of the head below the eye and chestnut and white stripes on the crown. The immature bird has a similar pattern, although the feathers are duller in color and have a few light streaks on the underside.

### BEHAVIORS

The lark sparrow is an uncommon migrant and locally common summer resident in sand areas. It is a rare summer resident in the rest of the state. Spring migrants begin passing through the state in late March. Fall migration commences in August. The species winters in the southern United States and Central America. The lark sparrow lives in open habitats such as grasslands, pastures, farm fields and roadsides. This bird feeds on seeds and insects.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

**none**

Woodland Habitats

**none**

Prairie and Edge Habitats

**black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie**

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