

lesser yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Charadriiformes

Family: Scolopacidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The lesser yellowlegs is about 10 and one-half inches long. This species looks much like the greater yellowlegs but is smaller. Its bill is dark, thin and straight, in length about the same as that of its head. The legs are bright yellow. The back feathers are patterned in gray, black, white and brown. The breast feathers have some dark marks. There is a white rump patch. The wings appear dark in flight.

BEHAVIORS

The lesser yellowlegs is a common migrant through the state. It nests in Canada and Alaska. When feeding, it tends to wade in the water, but it may also hunt for its prey of insects, small crustaceans and other small invertebrates while walking in the mud along the water's edge. Spring migrants start returning to Illinois in February. Fall migrants may begin appearing as early as late June. This species winters from the Gulf Coast of the United States south to the tip of South America.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

temporary water supplies; rivers and streams; lakes, ponds and reservoirs; Lake Michigan

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge

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