

long-billed dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Charadriiformes

Family: Scolopacidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The long-billed dowitcher has a long bill and a rounded appearance when feeding. It is very similar to the short-billed dowitcher including showing a white wedge on the back when flying. In the breeding plumage, the rust-red color of the breast and belly feathers is darker than that of the short-billed dowitcher and is uniformly dark well past the legs. There are dark spots on the neck and bars along the sides. The non-breeding bird is dark gray on the back with gray on the breast and lower sides.

BEHAVIORS

The long-billed dowitcher migrates through the state and is more likely to be seen in fall than in spring. Late March is arrival time for spring migrants of this species. They breed on the tundra in northern Canada and Alaska. Southward migrants begin appearing in late July and peak in early October. Overwintering occurs from the southern United States to Guatemala. These birds visit mudflats, shallow ponds and marshes to feed on small invertebrates.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; temporary water supplies

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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