

## Nelson's sparrow *Ammodramus nelsoni*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Passerellidae

ILLINOIS STATUS: common, native

### FEATURES

Nelson's sparrow is about five inches in length (tail tip to bill tip in preserved specimen). A spot of gray below and behind the eye on each side of the face is surrounded by orange coloration that extends above the eyes and onto the throat and sides. There are faint dark streaks in the chest and side coloration. White stripes are present on the back. The top of the head is gray.

### BEHAVIORS

Nelson's sparrow is a migrant statewide. This species does not nest in Illinois. Spring migrants move through the state in May. The return migration south starts in August each fall. These birds winter along the Gulf Coast. This species is found in marshes and wet meadows. It feeds on seeds and small invertebrates.

Aquatic Habitats: marshes; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats: none

Prairie and Edge Habitats: none

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