

## ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Parulidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

The ovenbird is five and one-half to six and one-half inches long. The body feathers are olive-brown, and the belly feathers are white with brown stripes. The top of its head has a peach stripe. The legs are pale pink.

### BEHAVIORS

The ovenbird is a statewide migrant and uncommon summer resident in Illinois. It winters from the southern United States south to northern Venezuela. The ovenbird lives in woodlands or thickets. It is an insectivore. This bird is heard more often than it is seen. It stays on or near the ground and walks rather than hops. The song is a series of repeated "teacher." Spring migrants begin arriving in Illinois in April. Nesting occurs from May through July. The nest is built on the ground in a bottomland forest. The shape of the nest, like a Dutch oven, gives this bird its common name. Four to six white eggs with red-brown spots are laid. Nests are often parasitized by the brown-headed cowbird that deposits an egg for the ovenbirds to raise, taking food and care away from their own young. Fall migration begins in August.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

**bottomland forests**

Woodland Habitats

**bottomland forests; upland deciduous forests**

Prairie and Edge Habitats

**edge**

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