

prothonotary warbler *Protonotaria citrea*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Parulidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

An adult prothonotary warbler is five to five and one-half inches in length. There are no bars on the blue-gray wing feathers. The black bill is extremely small and thin. The tail feathers are gray. There is a white circle around each black eye. The male has bright, golden-yellow head and chest feathers while the female is a duller version of the male.

BEHAVIORS

The prothonotary warbler is a common migrant and summer resident in southern Illinois. It is found in northern Illinois but not as often as in the south. This bird winters from Mexico south to northern South America. The prothonotary warbler lives in swamps and bottomland forests. This bird eats mainly insects. It forages low, usually in trees that overhang water or on logs in the water. The song is "zweet zweet zweet zweet zweet zweet" while the call is "chink." Spring migrants begin to appear in Illinois in April. Nesting occurs from May through June. This bird nests in holes in trees, nest boxes or under bridges. The three to eight cream-colored eggs have red-brown markings. Fall migration begins in August.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; rivers and streams; swamps

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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