

purple finch *Haemorhous purpureus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Fringillidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The purple finch averages five and one-half to six inches in length. The male has raspberry-colored feathers on most of the body with brown feathers on its wings and tail. The female and immature have large, dark stripes on their white-feathered breast. They have brown feathers in other areas and have a dark stripe on the lower cheek. Purple finches have a sturdy beak.

BEHAVIORS

The purple finch is a common migrant through Illinois. It winters throughout the state but not in large numbers. Fall migrants begin arriving in early September. Most purple finches have migrated out of Illinois by early June. This bird may be seen in woods, groves and, in winter, urban areas. It lives in coniferous forests in summer. The purple finch has a warbling song. It breeds in southern Canada, the northeastern United States and the upper Midwest, nesting in conifer trees with the nest placed from five to 60 feet above the ground. The female builds the nest of grasses, twigs and bark and lines it with fine grasses and hair. Three to five eggs, pale green-blue with dark spots and markings, are deposited by the female. She alone incubates for the 13-day incubation period. The purple finch eats seeds and insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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