

savannah sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Passerellidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The savannah sparrow is five and one-half to five and three-quarters inches in length (bill tip to tail tip in preserved specimen). There is a white stripe on the crown and may be a yellow spot on the front of the eyebrow. The tail is short with a notch in the center. The underside of the bird has dark streaks.

BEHAVIORS

The savannah sparrow is a common migrant and fairly common summer resident in the northern half of Illinois. It is an uncommon winter resident in southern Illinois, decreasing northward. Spring migrants begin appearing in the state in late February. Fall migrants are seen beginning in August. The species winters as far south as Central America. Farm fields, roadsides, marshes, grasslands and other open habitats are preferred by this species. It feeds on small invertebrates and seeds.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie

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