

western kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Tyrannidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The western kingbird is about eight and three-fourths inches long (tail tip to bill tip in preserved specimen). Most of the tail feathers are black, but those on the outside edges are white. Light-gray feathers are present on the head, breast and back. The throat feathers are white, and the belly feathers are pale yellow.

BEHAVIORS

Spring migrants begin arriving in Illinois in April. The western kingbird may nest in the northern one-half of the state and in areas along the Mississippi River but not in great numbers. Fall migrants begin moving through the state in August. This species overwinters from southern Mexico to Costa Rica. It eats insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitat

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

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

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