

# white-breasted nuthatch

*Sitta carolinensis*

## FEATURES

The white-breasted nuthatch averages five to six inches in length. It has blue-gray back feathers and white belly feathers. The male has a cap of black feathers while the female has a blue-gray-feathered cap.

## BEHAVIORS

The white-breasted nuthatch is a common, permanent resident statewide in Illinois. Nesting takes place from April through May. This bird nests in deciduous woodlands in a knothole in a large tree, an old woodpecker hole or a nest box. The nest is placed 15 to 50 feet above the ground. The nest cavity is lined with grasses, hair, rootlets, sticks and other materials. The female builds the nest. She deposits six to nine white eggs with red-brown spots and incubates them for the 12-day incubation period. One brood is raised per year. The white-breasted nuthatch lives in woodlands, parks and orchards. It searches for food by walking down tree trunks head-first. It eats insects, nuts and acorns.

## TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Sittidae

## ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

## ILLINOIS RANGE











adult

### **Aquatic Habitats**

bottomland forests

### **Woodland Habitats**

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

### **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

edge