Baltimore oriole
Icterus galbula

FEATURES

The Baltimore oriole averages about seven to eight inches in length. The male has orange feathers underneath and black back, wing, tail and head feathers. The female and young have orange-yellow feathers underneath and olive-green feathers on the upper side. Two, white wing bars may be seen on all Baltimore orioles.

BEHAVIORS

The Baltimore oriole is a common migrant and summer resident statewide. It winters along the coast of the southern United States through Central America. It tends to stay high in the treetops, where it may sometimes be located by its whistling song. These birds begin arriving in Illinois each year in April and May. Nesting takes place in May and June with one brood raised per year. This oriole nests in elm, willow, apple, cottonwood and maple trees. The nest is a woven, hanging pouch of plant fibers, hair, yarn, string and bark placed six to 60 feet above the ground. The nest is lined with hair, wool and grasses. The female builds the nest in four to eight days. Three to five white to pale blue eggs with dark markings are laid in the nest. The incubation period lasts 12 to 14 days with the female alone incubating. Fall migration starts in July, with most of the migration taking place at night. The Baltimore oriole lives in woodlands, especially along lakeshores or streams, and shade trees. It eats insects, fruits and seeds.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Passeriformes
Family: Icteridae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE

Migrating

Summer

female

male

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nest

Aquatic Habitats
bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats
bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats