

black-bellied plover

Pluvialis squatarola

FEATURES

The black-bellied plover is 11 and one-half inches long (bill tip to tail tip in preserved specimen). Breeding individuals of this species have black feathers on their face and breast and dark-gray feathers speckled with white on their back. Nonbreeding adults and immatures have gray-brown feathers. All black-bellied plovers, no matter what stage the plumage, show black at the base of the wings when seen from the underside. White rump feathers and white tail feathers are also present.

BEHAVIORS

This shorebird moves in short dashes and stops. It eats small invertebrates and some plant materials. It can be seen on mudflats, marshes, beaches and areas of short grasses when migrating. It nests in the Arctic tundra. The black-bellied plover is common in Illinois only along Lake Michigan. It may be seen in fields if large pools of water are present. It winters on both coasts of the United States south to South America.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Charadriiformes

Family: Charadriidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



© David W. Brewer





Aquatic Habitats

Lake Michigan

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none