

grasshopper sparrow

Ammodramus savannarum

FEATURES

The grasshopper sparrow is about five inches in length (bill tip to tail tip in preserved specimen). The head is flat on top and relatively large compared to that of other sparrows. The tail is sharply pointed when at rest. A light stripe in the middle of the head and a white eye ring are present. Yellow feathers may be seen in front of and below the eye. The breast feathers are light tan with faint streaks.

BEHAVIORS

The grasshopper sparrow is a fairly common migrant and summer resident statewide. These birds begin migrating through the state in late March each spring. Fall migration may start as early as August. The birds winter in the southern United States and Central America. The grasshopper sparrow prefers large tracts of open grasslands or prairies. Seeds and small invertebrates make up the diet.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Passerellidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE





Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

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