

hairy woodpecker

Dryobates villosus

FEATURES

The hairy woodpecker averages nine and one-half inches in length. The feathers on its back, outer tail feathers, belly, stripes on its head and spots on its wings are white. The head, wing and tail feathers are black. The male has a small, red patch on the back of the head. Unlike the similar downy woodpecker, the hairy woodpecker has a large bill.

BEHAVIORS

The hairy woodpecker is a common, permanent resident statewide. Nesting takes place from March through June. The nest cavity is dug five to 30 feet above the ground in a dead or live tree. Both sexes excavate the hole over a one- to three-week period. The female deposits three to six white eggs on a nest of wood chips. The male and female take turns incubating the eggs during the day, with only the male incubating at night for the duration of the 11- to 12-day incubation period. One brood is raised per year. The hairy woodpecker lives in woodlands, wooded areas in towns, swamps, orchards and city parks. Its call is a loud “peek.” This woodpecker eats insects, seeds and berries.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Piciformes

Family: Picidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE





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Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

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

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none