

scissor-tailed flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus*

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Tyrannidae

ILLINOIS STATUS uncommon, nonnative

FEATURES

The scissor-tailed flycatcher is 13-15 inches long (bill tip to tail tip in preserved specimen). It has pale gray feathers on most of the body, but the wing and tail feathers are dark gray to black. The side feathers near the wing base are orange-brown. The wing linings when seen from below are dark pink. The tail feathers are very long. The immature scissor-tailed flycatcher has a shorter tail and duller side feathers than the adult.

BEHAVIORS

This species frequents farms, roadsides, wires and fences. It eats flying insects. The scissor-tailed flycatcher is not a resident of Illinois, but it nests as close as Missouri, Tennessee and Iowa. Individuals seen in the state are believed to be spring migrants that migrated further than their normal breeding range. The species winters from the Gulf Coast states to Central America.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge

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