

sora

Porzana carolina

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Gruiformes
Family: Rallidae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

FEATURES

An adult sora is eight to 10 inches long. Both sexes are similar in appearance. This bird has a chunky body with brown-gray feathers and a black-feathered patch on each its face and throat. It has a small, yellow bill and short wings.

BEHAVIORS

The sora is a common migrant and summer resident in northern and central Illinois. It winters from the southern United States to northern South America. The sora lives in marshes, ponds, lakes, flooded fields, hayfields and wet meadows. This bird eats large amounts of plants and will also eat beetles, crayfish, snails and spiders. Its call in spring is a whiny "ker-wee" and in the fall is "keek." When flushed, this bird will fly straight up, go only a short distance and land in vegetation. Spring migrants begin arriving in March. Eggs have been found in Illinois from May through August. Nests are constructed in cattails, sedges and grasses. Plants are pulled over the top of the nest to keep out the sun and hide the nest. Four to 14 tan eggs with dark spots are laid. Young can leave the nest within a day or two of hatching. The sora migrates in late summer and early fall and travels long distances at night.

ILLINOIS RANGE





Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; temporary water supplies; marshes; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none