

## tree swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Hirundinidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

An adult tree swallow is five to six inches long. This bird has a metallic green or dark, slate blue back feathers. The belly and chest feathers are white. It has long narrow wings. The tail is "forked."

### BEHAVIORS

The tree swallow is a common migrant in Illinois. It is a common summer resident in the northern one-half of the state. This swallow's winter range is from the southern coastal United States to Costa Rica. The tree swallow lives around marshes, meadows, streams and lakes. It eats insects and some plant materials. Its call is "cheet" or "chi-veet." This swallow flies and glides in small circles with three to four quick flaps and then goes upward. Spring migrants begin appearing in Illinois in March. Nesting occurs from May through July. Nesting in Illinois is generally in the northern one-half of the state and along the Mississippi and Illinois rivers. The nest is placed in the cavity of a tree standing in water or in wood duck or bluebird boxes. Nests may be in colonies or built singly. Four to seven white eggs are laid. Fall migration begins in July.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; rivers and streams; marshes; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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