

winter wren *Troglodytes hiemalis*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Aves

Order: Passeriformes

Family: Troglodytidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The winter wren is the smallest wren in North America. Its maximum length is about four inches. It has dark, red-brown feathers and a short, stubby tail. A light line over the eye helps to distinguish it from the house wren. Black bars can be seen on the belly feathers and under the tail.

BEHAVIORS

The winter wren is a common migrant statewide and an uncommon winter resident statewide in Illinois. It does not nest in Illinois but does nest in Wisconsin and Michigan in the Midwest. The nest is placed in the roots of a fallen tree, in or under a stump, in an old woodpecker hole or in any other available cavity. It is built of mosses, grasses, weeds and twigs and lined with hair and feathers. Four to seven white eggs with red-brown marks are laid by the female. This bird may be found in conifer forests and near water in woodlands where there are many downed trees. It may also be seen at logjams in streams, brushy areas and open fields. The song is a series of trills and warbles. Like all wrens, it eats insects and spiders.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

© Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2017. Biodiversity of Illinois.