eastern screech-owl
*Megascops asio*

**Kingdom:** Animalia  
**Division/Phylum:** Chordata  
**Class:** Aves  
**Order:** Strigiformes  
**Family:** Strigidae

**FEATURES**  
The eastern screech-owl averages seven to 10 inches in length. It has ear tufts. This small owl has two color phases: red and gray.

**BEHAVIORS**  
The eastern screech-owl is a common, permanent resident statewide in Illinois. Nesting takes place from April through May. No nest is built, but the eggs are deposited in a cavity in a hollow tree, an old woodpecker hole, an abandoned building or a nest box, if one is available. The female lays from three to seven white eggs and incubates them herself for the 21- to 30-day incubation period. The eastern screech-owl lives in woodlands, residential areas, city parks and orchards. It may roost in conifers, tree cavities and buildings. Its call is a wavering series of notes that descend in pitch. This owl eats insects, small birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

**ILLINOIS STATUS**  
common, native

**ILLINOIS RANGE**

Unless otherwise noted, photos and images © Illinois Department of Natural Resources.
gray and red phases
Aquatic Habitats
bottomland forests

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

Prairie Habitats
none