black vulture
Coragyps atratus

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Cathartiformes
Family: Cathartidae

ILLINOIS STATUS
common, native

FEATURES
The black vulture averages 23 to 27 inches in length. It has a short tail. Except for white patches in the wing tips which can be seen as it flies, this bird is entirely black, including its bare head and legs.

BEHAVIORS
The black vulture is an uncommon, permanent resident in extreme southern Illinois. It is occasionally seen as a vagrant elsewhere in the state. Nesting occurs in April and May. No nest is built. The female lays two eggs in a shallow cave or tree cavity. The gray-green to dull-white eggs have brown marks. Both the male and female take turns incubating during the 28- to 39-day incubation period. This bird lives in swampy woodlands and bluffs. It feeds by scavenging for dead organisms.

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Aquatic Habitats
bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats
bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats
none