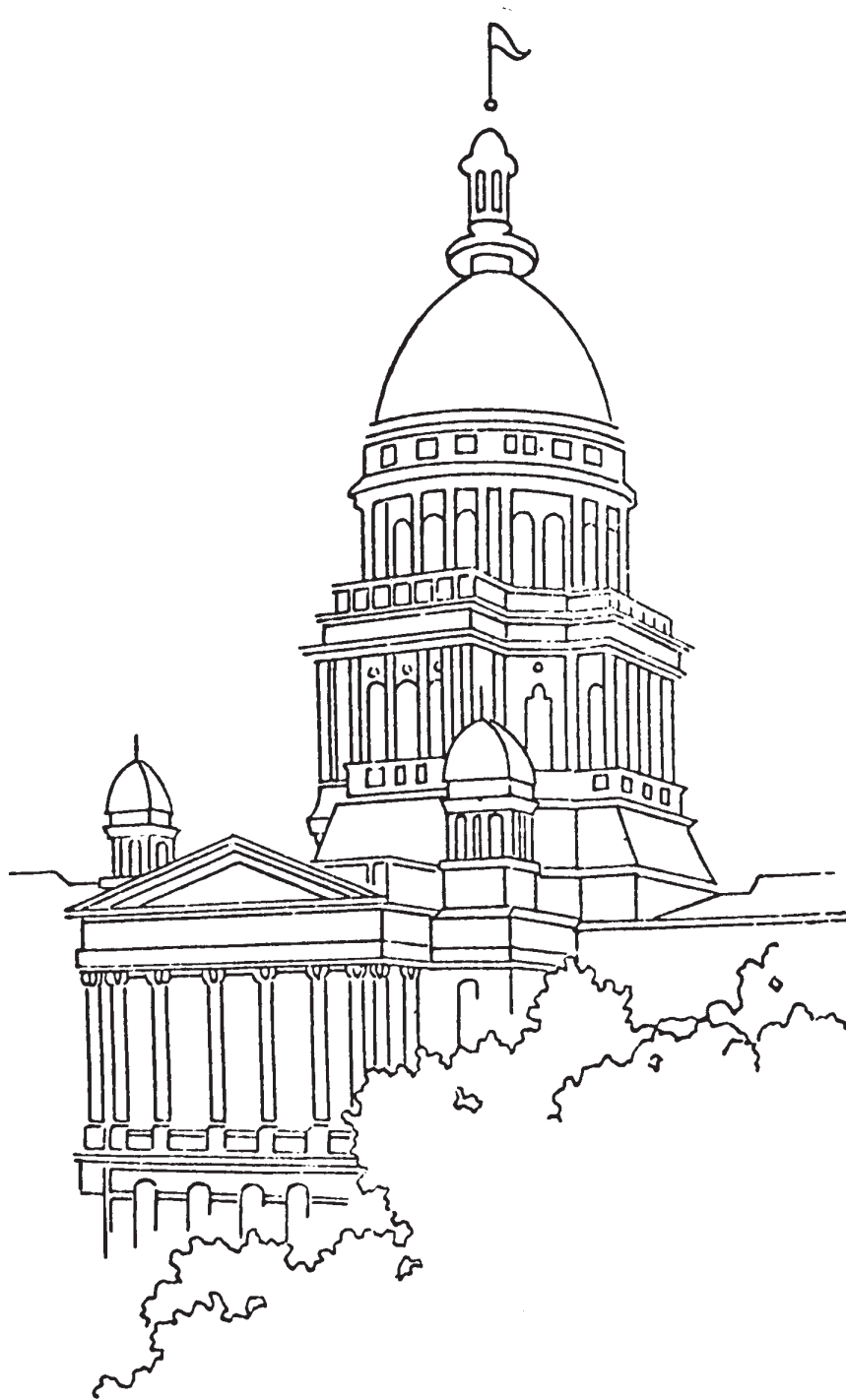


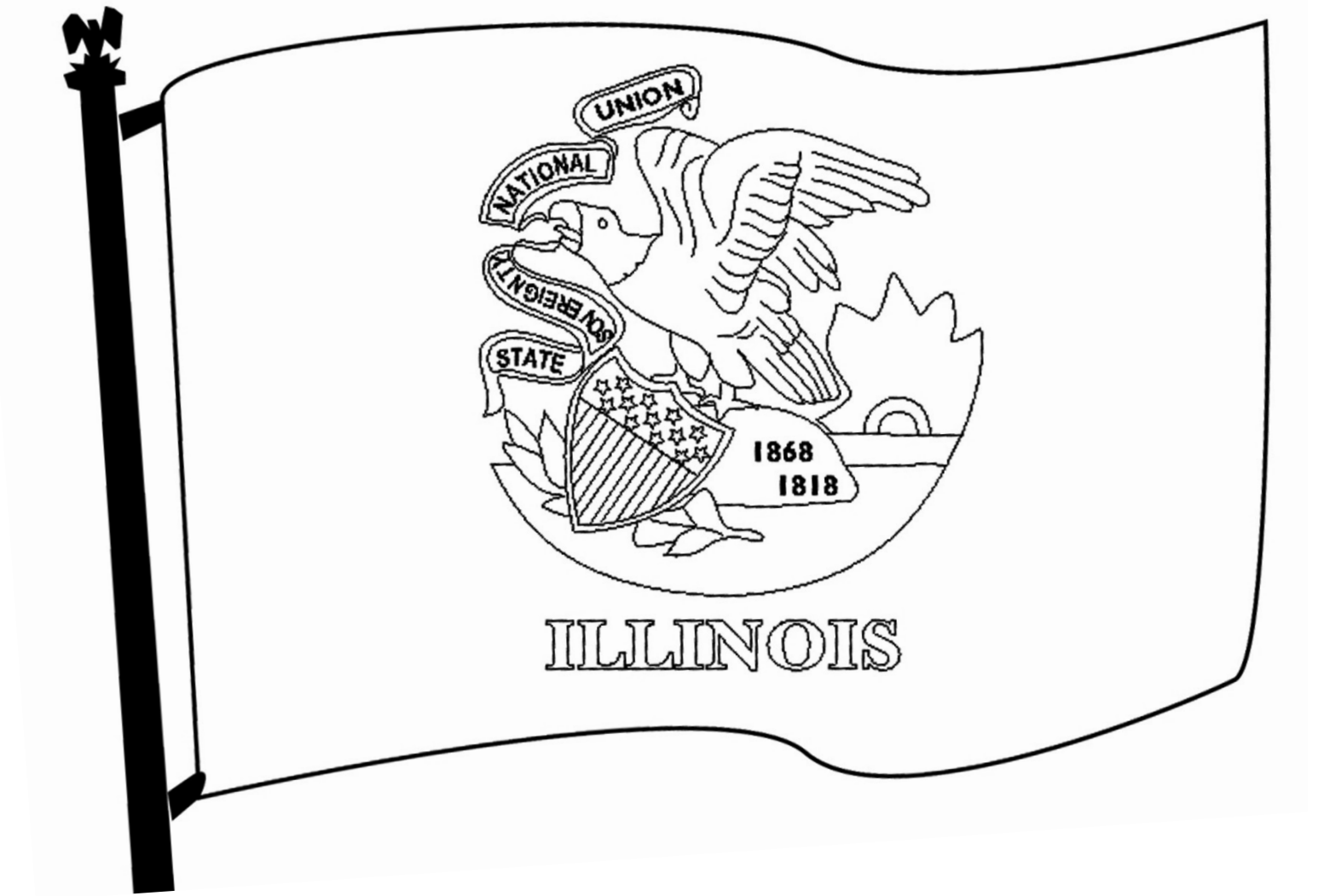
## STATE SEAL

In January 1867, Secretary of State Sharon Tyndale created the Great Seal of Illinois in use today. It is the third seal of its kind and has stayed the same since 1868. The Great Seal is used to make state documents official.



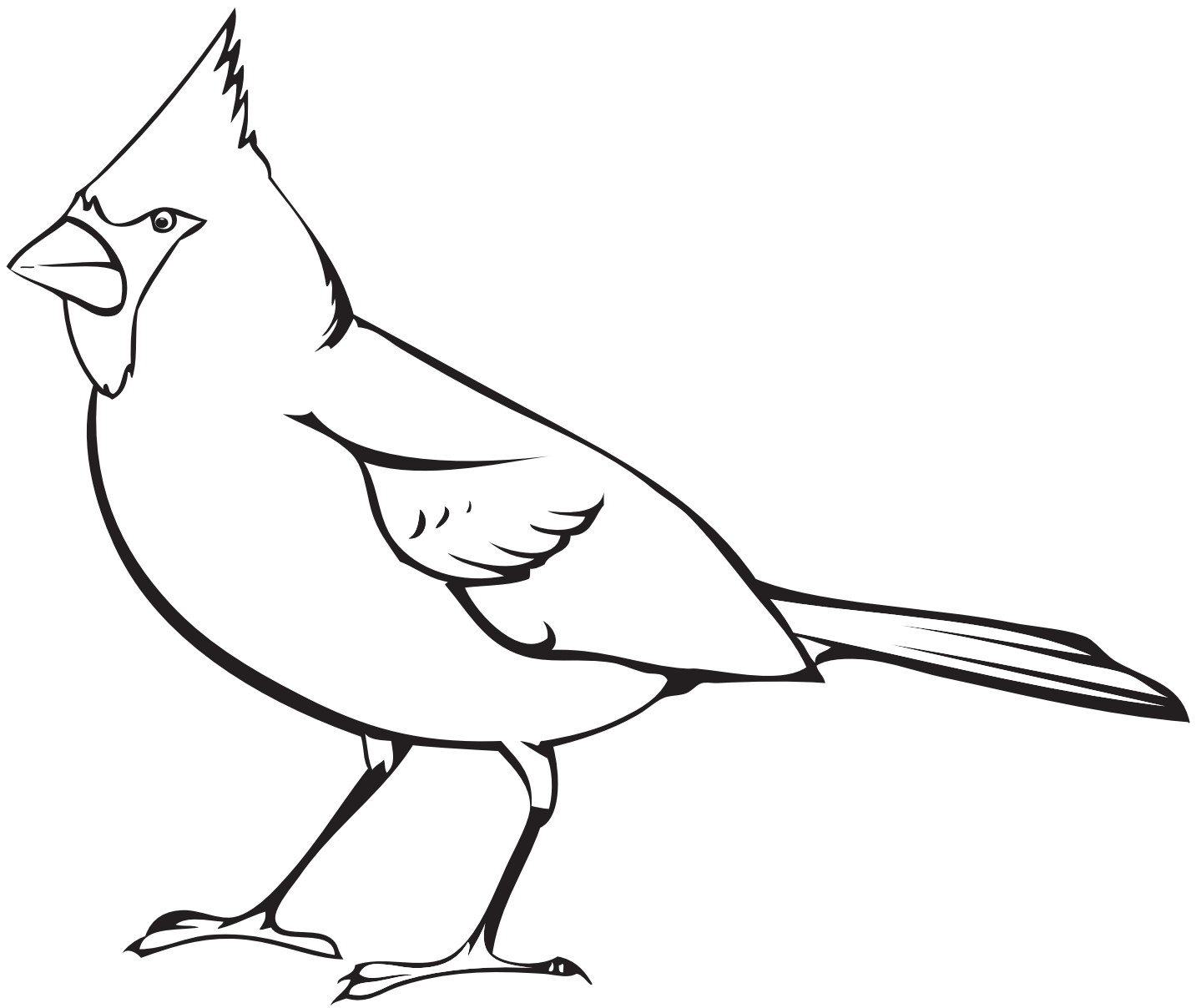
## STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

The present State Capitol Building is the state's sixth and the second in Springfield. Construction of the Capitol was completed in 1888, 20 years after it began. To the top of the dome the building measures 361 feet, which is 74 feet taller than the U.S. Capitol dome. The height to the top of the flag is 405 feet.



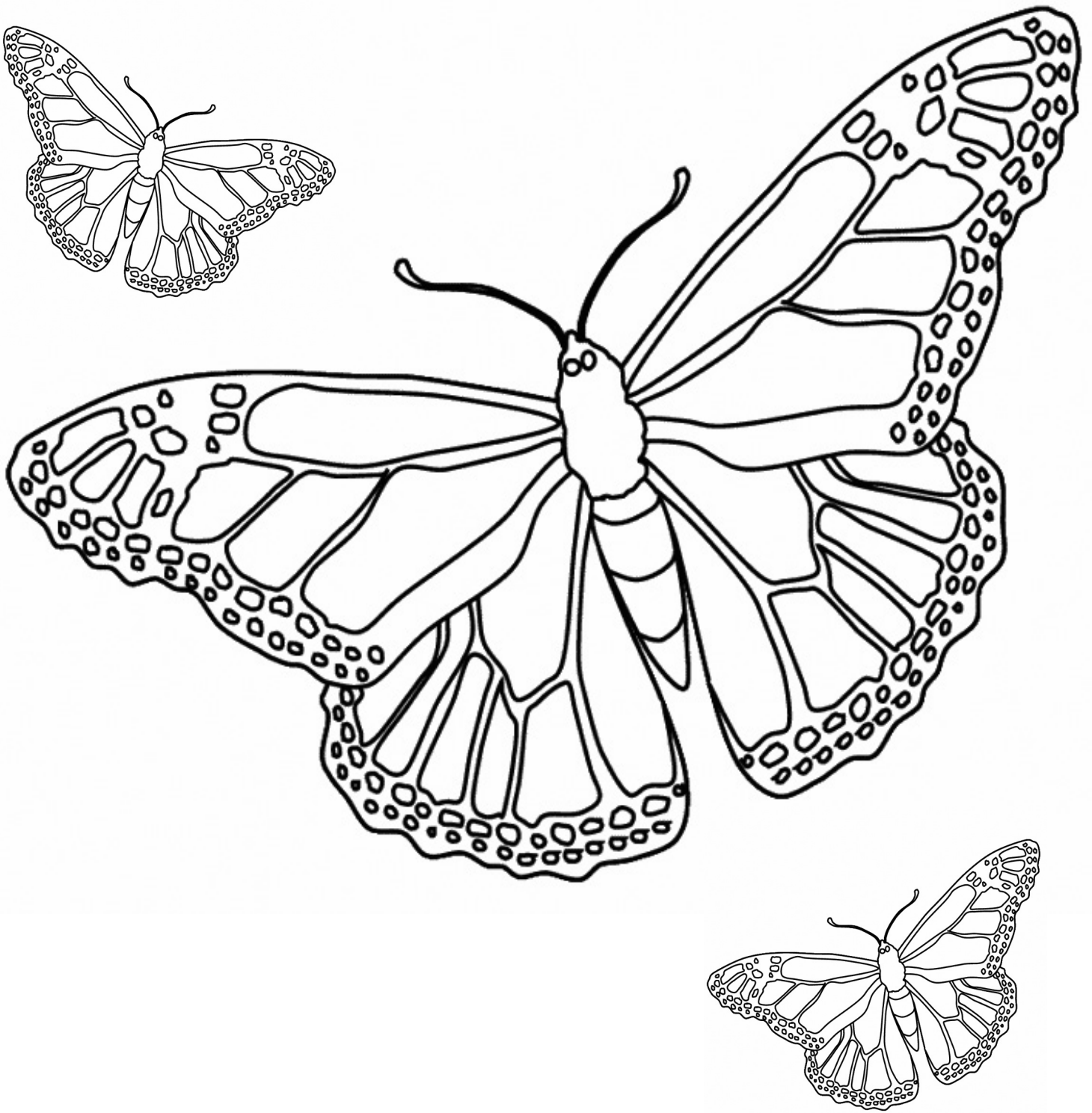
## STATE FLAG

Illinois has had two official state flags. The first one was adopted in 1915 and held only the Great Seal of Illinois on a field of white. The Flag Act of 1915 was amended in 1969 to add the word "ILLINOIS" under the seal. In July 1970, a flag design with an exact replica of the State Seal and the word "ILLINOIS" became the second official state flag of Illinois.



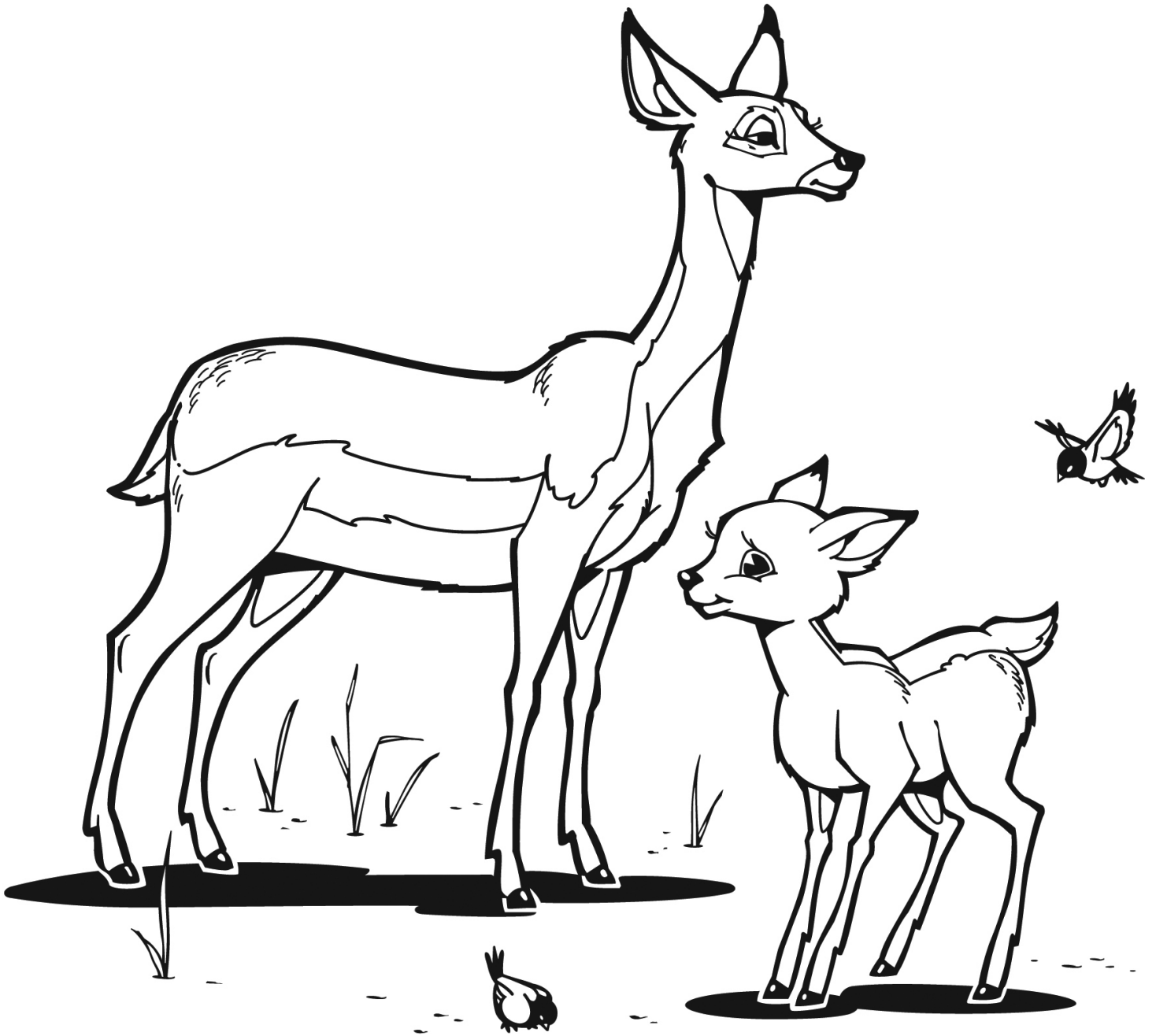
## STATE BIRD — CARDINAL

In 1928, Illinois schoolchildren selected the Cardinal as the state bird from a list of five birds that live in Illinois. The Cardinal became the official state bird in 1929. Male Cardinals have bright red feathers. Females have brownish-red feathers with a crest of red on their heads.



## STATE INSECT — MONARCH BUTTERFLY

In 1974, a third-grade class at Dennis School in Decatur proposed the bright orange and black Monarch Butterfly as the state insect. A bill making it official was signed into law in 1975



## STATE ANIMAL — WHITE-TAILED DEER

The White-Tailed Deer was selected by Illinois schoolchildren in 1980 as the state animal and became official in 1982. Native to North America, the deer has a gray coat that turns reddish-brown in summer and an eye-catching tail that is bright white on the underside.





## STATE FISH — BLUEGILL

The Bluegill was selected as the state fish by Illinois schoolchildren in 1986. A member of the sunfish family, the colorful Bluegill reaches only about nine inches in length and weighs an average 14 ounces, but it has a reputation as one of the best fighting game fish.



## STATE FLOWER — VIOLET

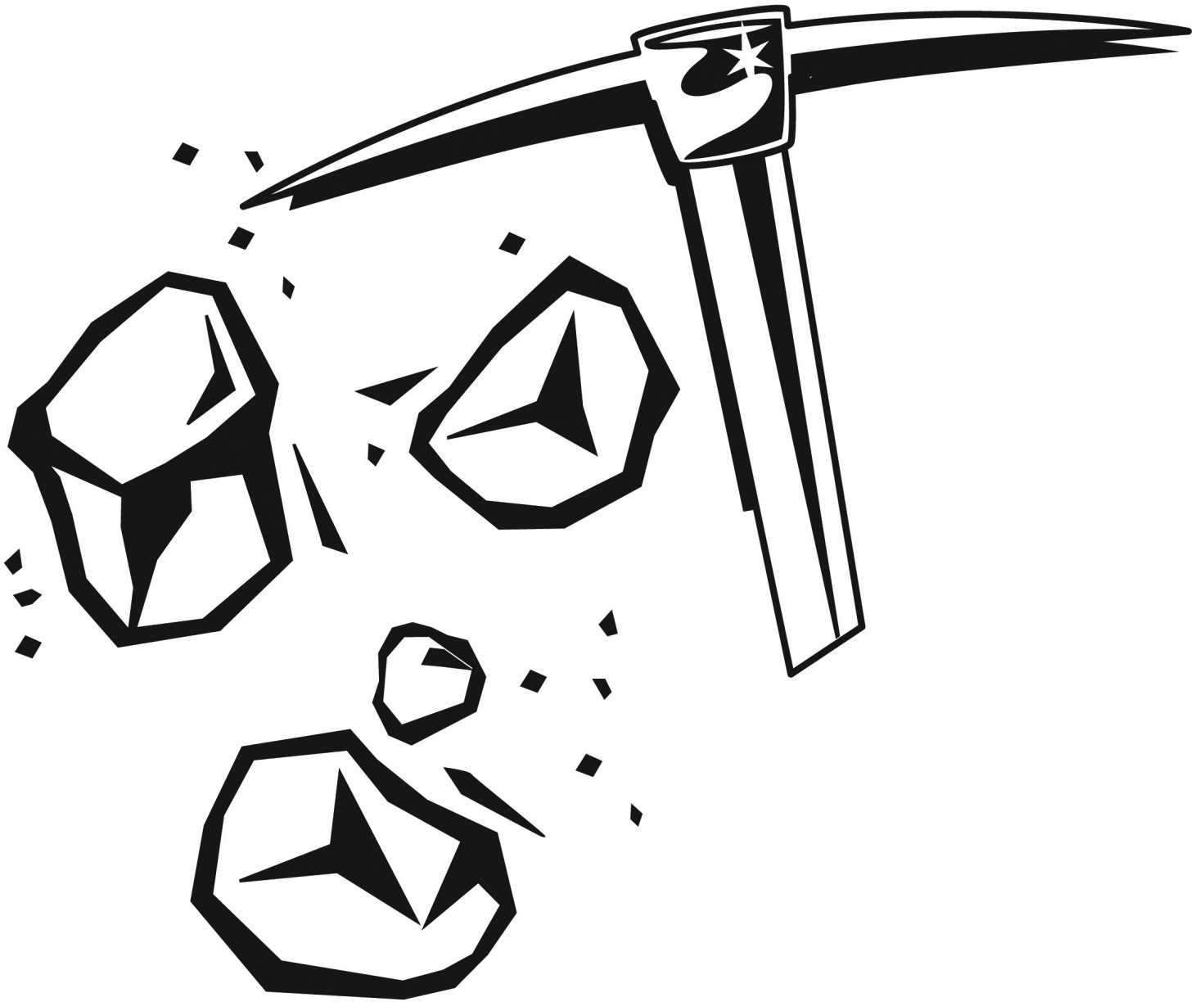
Mrs. James C. Fessler of Rochelle also suggested that Illinois schoolchildren vote for a state flower in 1907. They selected the Violet, and a bill making it official passed in 1908.





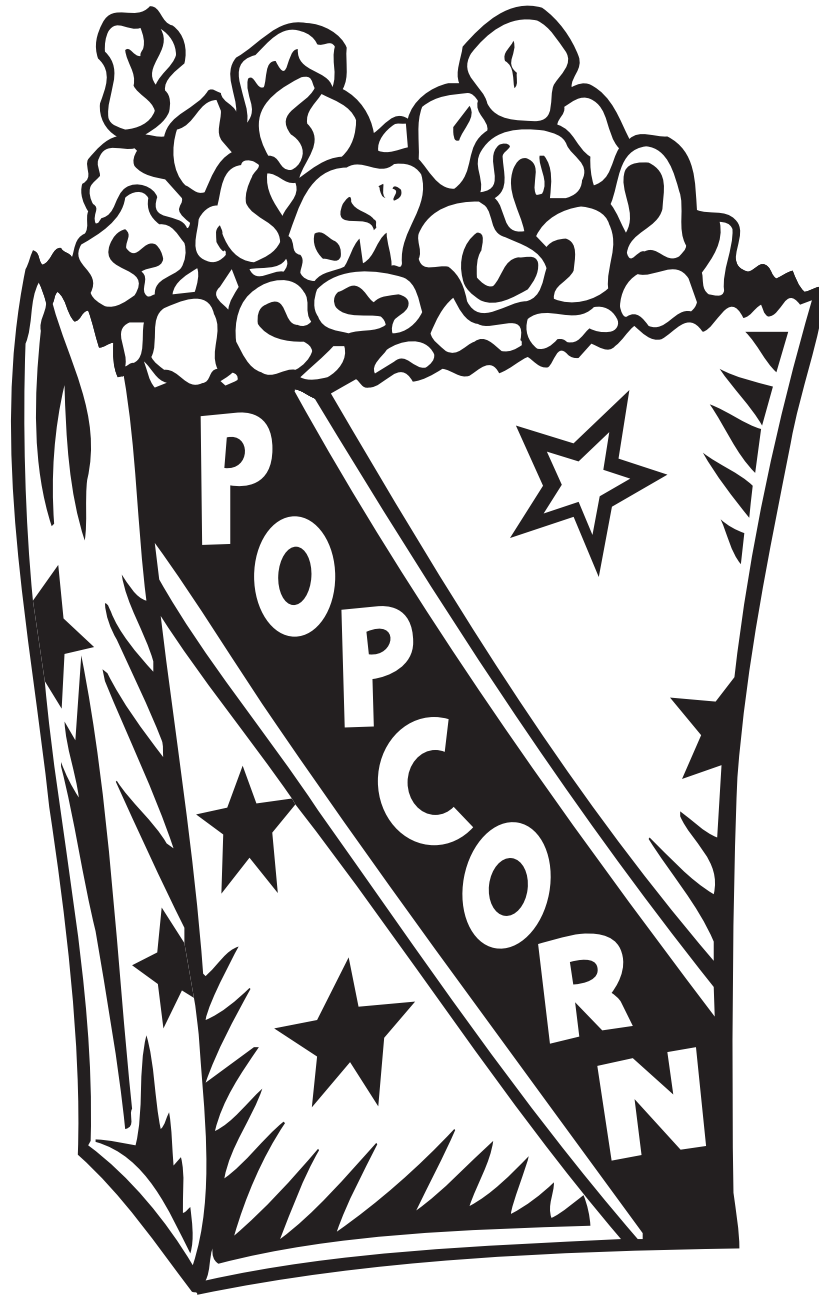
## **STATE PRAIRIE GRASS — BIG BLUESTEM**

Big Bluestem was chosen as the state prairie grass through a poll of students conducted by the Department of Conservation in 1988 and became official in 1989. Named for the bluish-purple cast of its stem, Big Bluestem is the tallest prairie grass in Illinois.



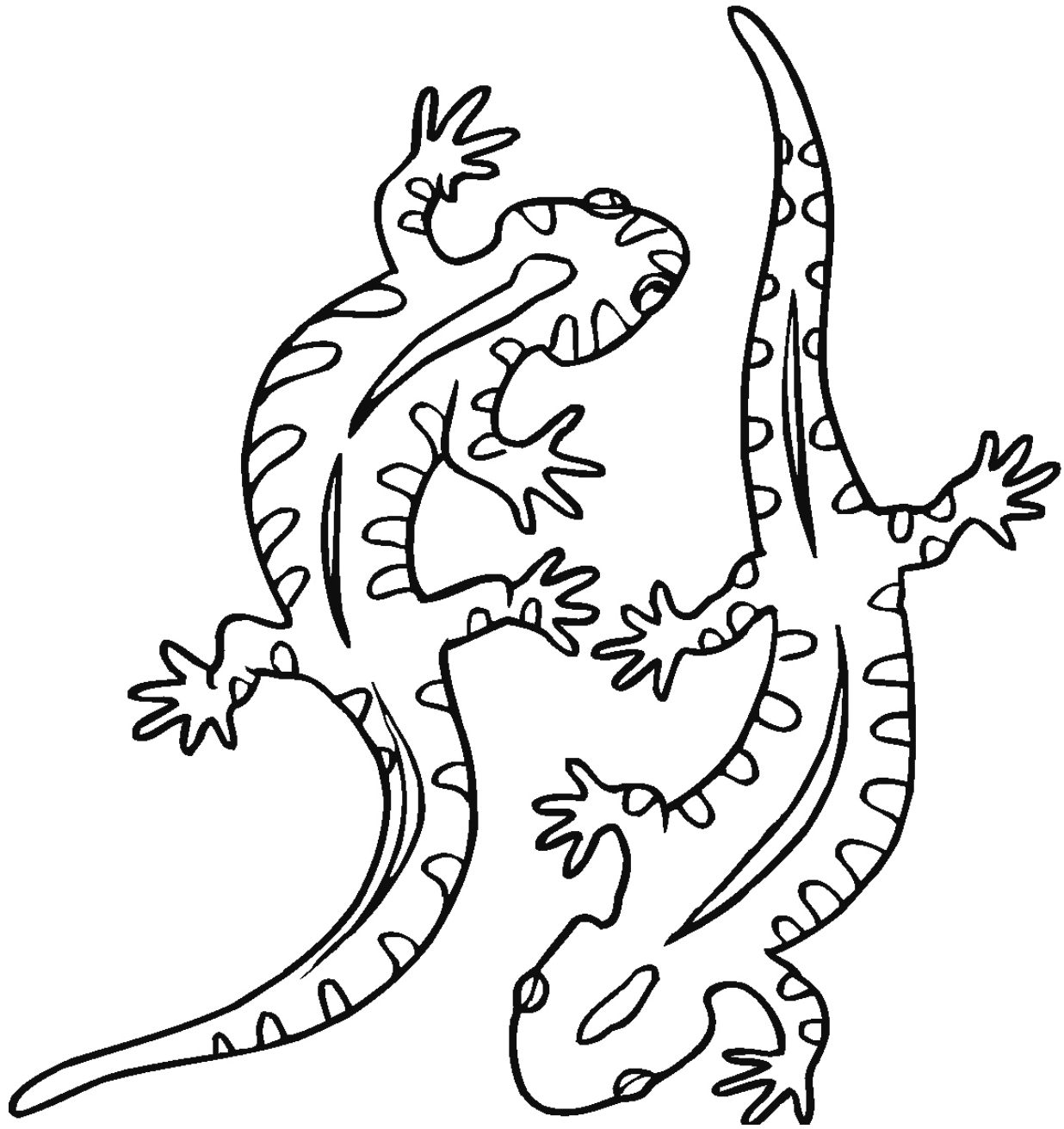
## STATE MINERAL — FLUORITE

A bill designating Fluorite as the official state mineral was passed in 1965. Calcium Fluorite, commonly called Fluorite, is a richly colored, glass-like mineral used in making steel, enamels, aluminum, glass and many chemicals. Illinois is the largest producer of Fluorite in the United States.



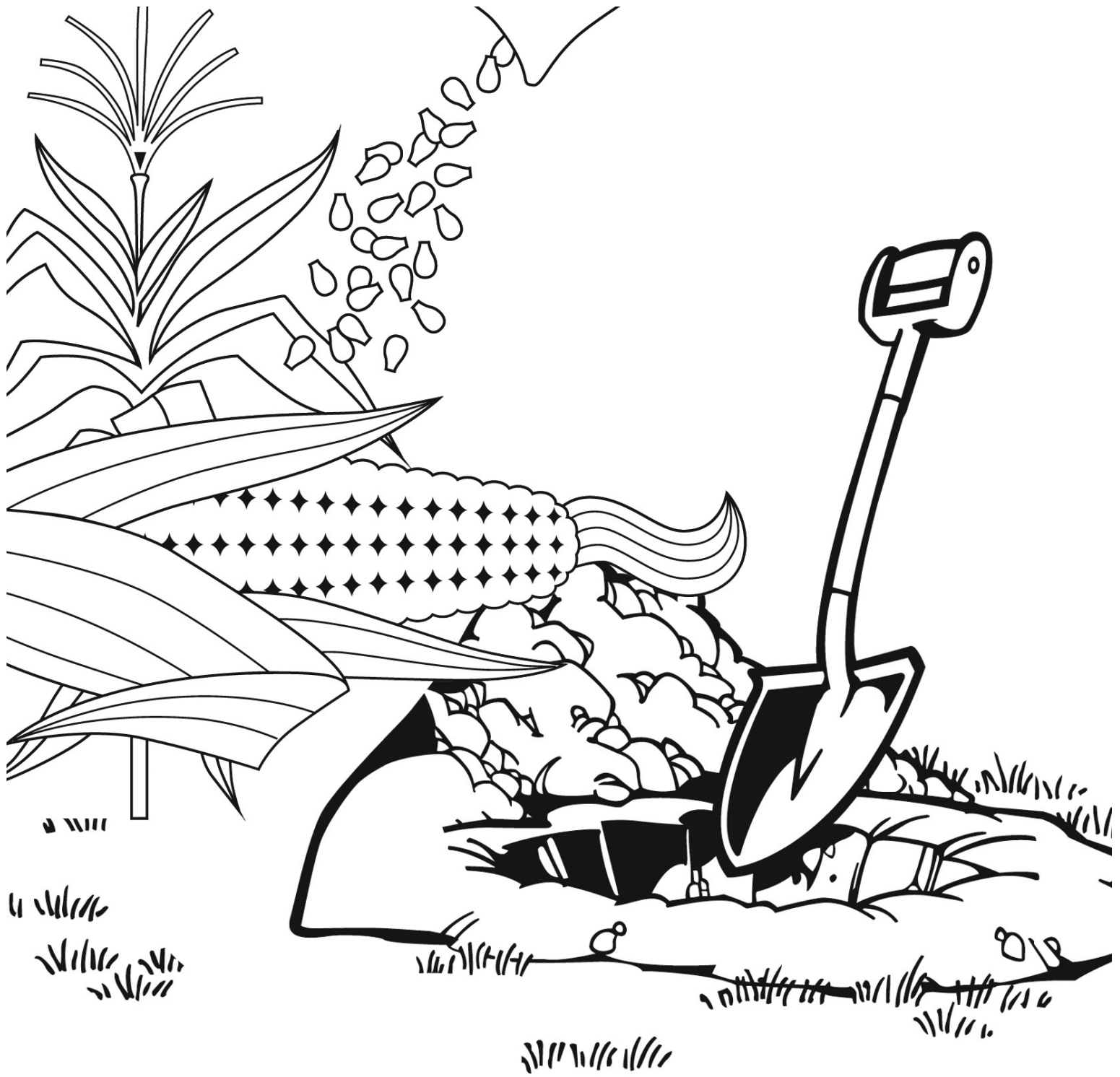
## **STATE SNACK FOOD — POPCORN**

Illinois is the third-largest producer of popcorn in the United States, with 333 popcorn farms growing about 47,000 acres of popcorn each year. Popcorn became the official state snack food in 2003 as the result of efforts by second-grade and third-grade students at Cunningham Elementary School in Joliet and their teacher Fran Hollister.



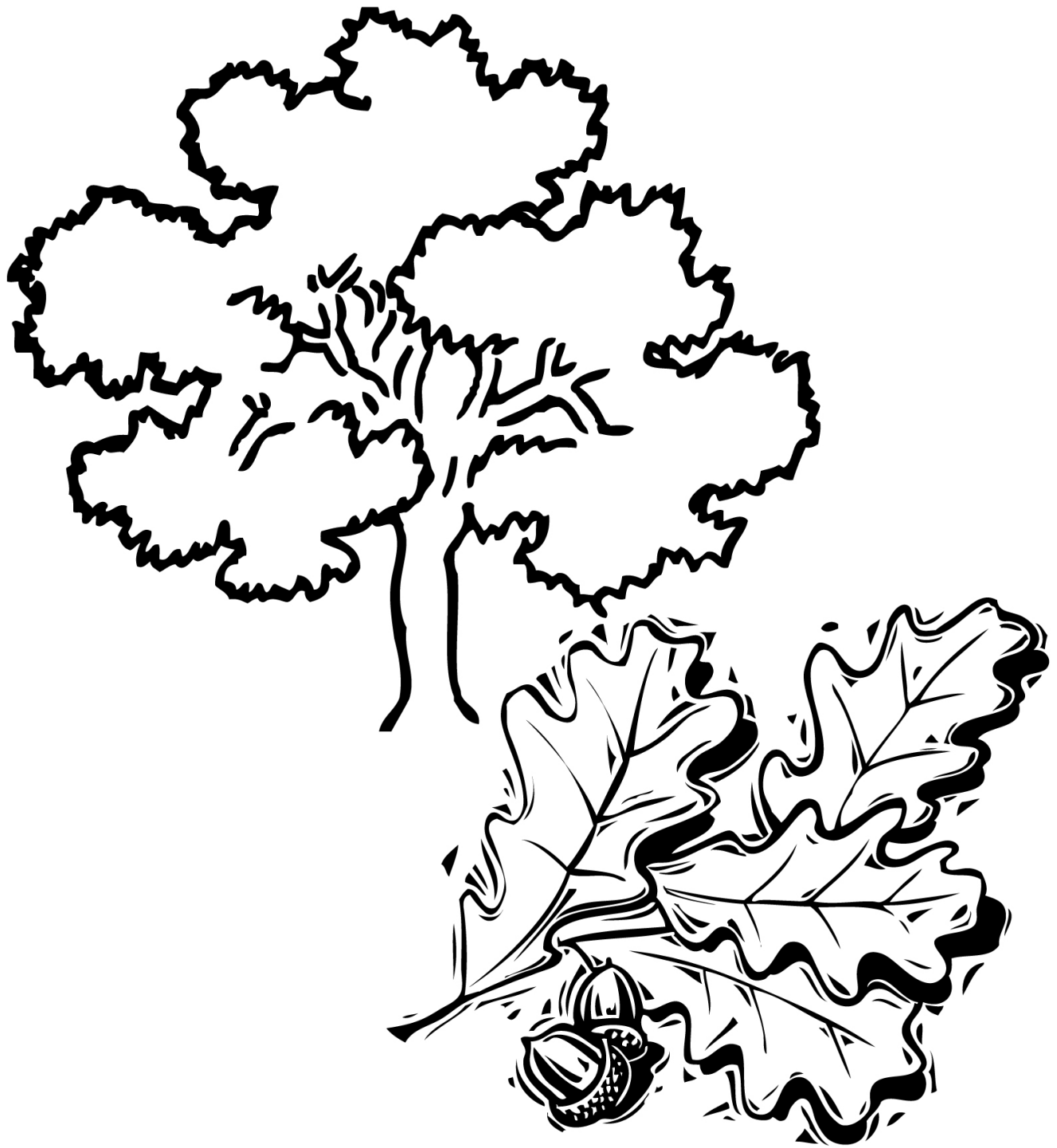
## **STATE AMPHIBIAN — EASTERN TIGER SALAMANDER**

The Eastern Tiger Salamander was selected as the state amphibian through an online voting contest in 2004 and became official in 2005. The salamander can grow to more than 12 inches in length and often is mistaken for a lizard or even a baby alligator. Adults are greenish black or brown with splotches of yellow, gold or olive.



## **STATE SOIL — DRUMMER SILTY CLAY LOAM**

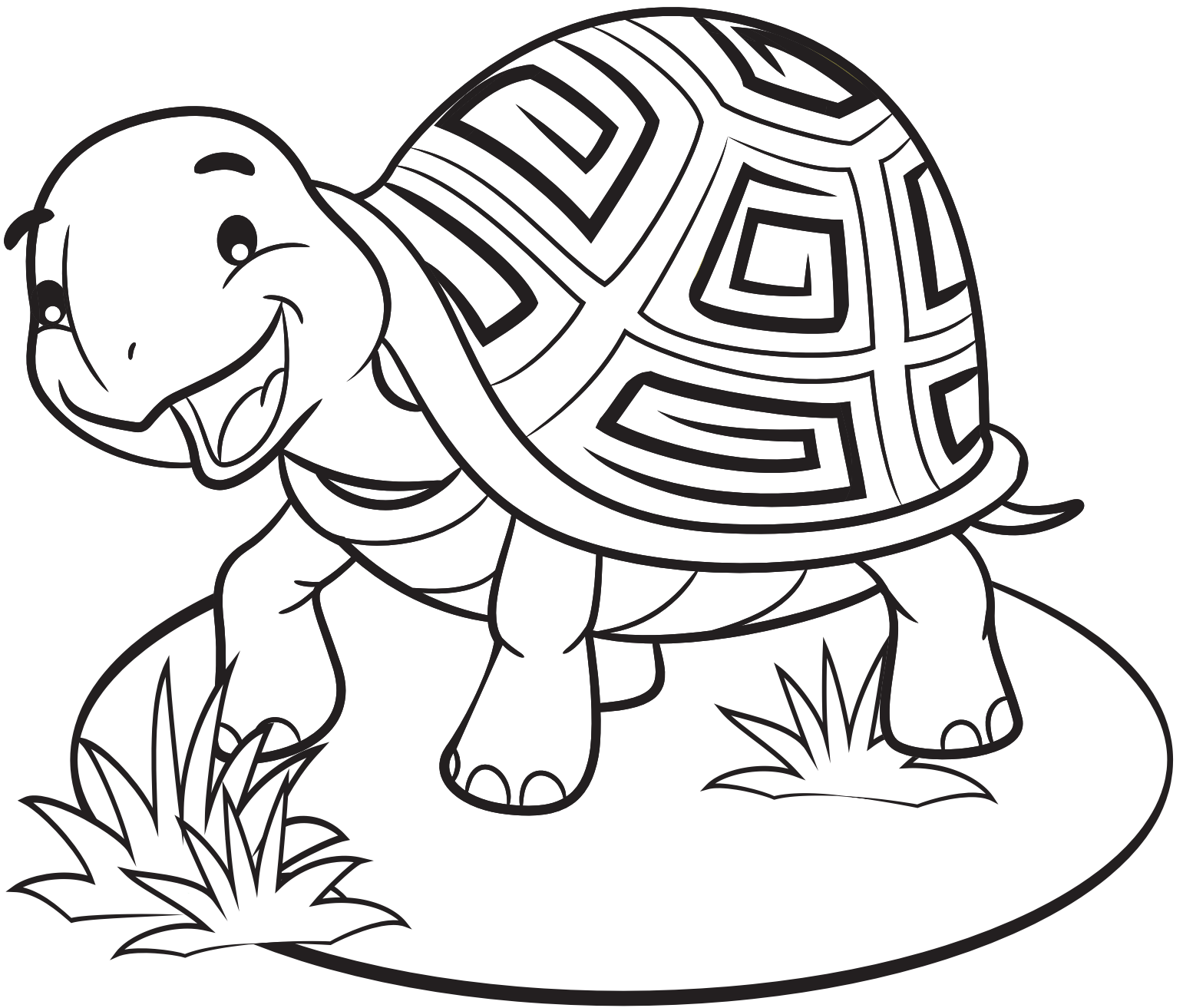
Students from Monticello High School's FFA and Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences lobbied to make Drummer Silty Clay Loam the state soil, which became official in 2001. The rich prairie soil is found on more than 1.5 million acres of Illinois land and supports the production of Illinois corn and soybeans.



## STATE TREE — WHITE OAK

In 1907, Mrs. James C. Fessler of Rochelle suggested that Illinois schoolchildren vote on a state tree. They selected the Native Oak and a bill making it official was passed in 1908. In 1973, a special poll of about 900,000 children changed the official state tree from the Native Oak to the White Oak.





## **STATE REPTILE — PAINTED TURTLE**

The Painted Turtle also was chosen through an online voting contest in 2004 as the state reptile and became official in 2005. The turtle can be seen in lakes and ponds across Illinois and is easily identified by its colorful markings of red, orange, yellow and black on its shell, head and legs.