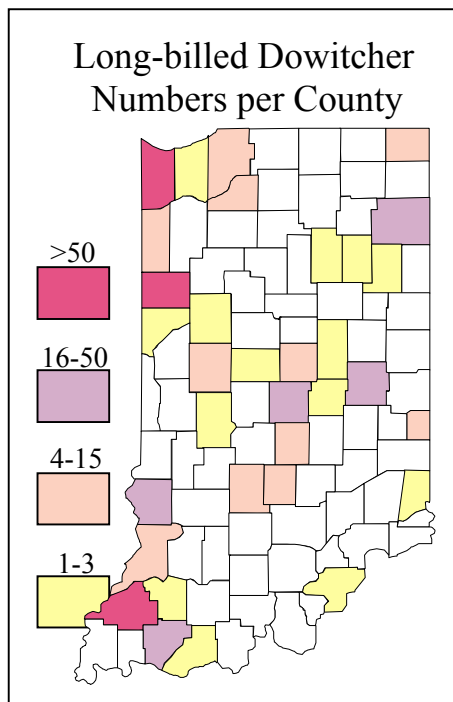
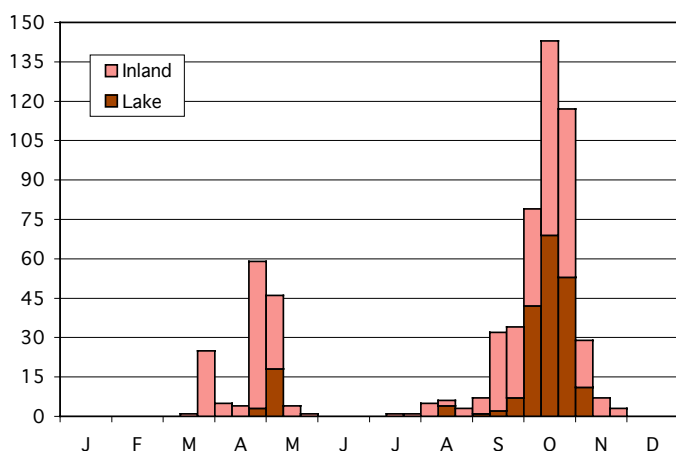


Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

Historical Information

First Published Record: The first published “Greater Gray-back” report involved a specimen collected by Ruthven Deane at English Lake, Starke County 11 March 1889 (Butler 1898). Interestingly, this record still constitutes Indiana’s earliest spring arrival date.

Based on at least a half dozen specimens, Butler (1890) reported that the “Red-bellied Snipe” was a rare migrant and Keller (1958) agreed with this assessment. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it a very rare to casual migrant. Mumford and Keller (1984) considered it casual in spring and rare to very rare in fall.



Status

Physical Evidence: Four Long-billed Dowitcher specimens are known to be housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Field Museum				1
National Museum of Natural History				2
Milwaukee Public Museum				1
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	7	10	6
Central Tier	n	8	10	7
Southern Tier	n	7	n	7
Entire State	n	7	10	6

Current Status

Today the Long-billed Dowitcher is a rare but regular migrant. It is Rare (7) in spring and Uncommon (6) in fall. However, difficulties in separating this shorebird from the similar *L. g. hendersoni*, casts an element of uncertainty on this status assessment.

Occurrence

On average this species passes through Indiana earlier in spring and later in fall than the Short-billed Dowitcher, but considerable overlap occurs. Based on present knowledge it appears that most, if not all, March and November Dowitchers are this species. The distribution map reveals that the Long-billed Dowitcher has been recorded in 33 counties; however, as with all shorebirds its occurrence is strongly controlled by habitat availability.

Spring Migration

On the migration histogram the late March “spike” primarily reflects the record spring count of 25 birds logged by C.E. Mills in the Patoka Bottoms 27 March 1976 (Mumford files). The latest spring record (see migration envelope) involved a bird identified by C.E. Keller (call note heard) at the Indianapolis sewage ponds 21 May 1967 (Mumford files).

Fall Migration

The existence of two July records suggests that a small number of early fall migrants pass through Indiana in late summer. The first involved a bird that J.S. Moore identified by call 21 July 2002 in Allen County (IN-BIRD). The second, an alternate plumed adult seen 20-21 July 2004, provided Boone County’s only record; it was identified by R.L. Hedge, C.L. Hedge, and Larry Peavler, employing both plumage and call (IN-BIRD).

Long-billed Dowitcher Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
25	27-Mar-1976	Patoka Bottoms	C.E. Mills	REM
17	26-Apr-1985	Gibson Co	D. Jones	NIQ
10	24-Apr-2004	Benton Co	J.J. McCoy	INB
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
38	16-Oct-1982	Roxana Pond	K.J. Brock	KJB
22	14-Oct-1977	Roxana Pond	K.J. Brock	KJB
19	20-Sep-1998	Big Pine wetland	J.B. Dunning	NNB

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	11-Mar-1889	---	2-May	---	11-May-1977	25
Central	18-Apr-1964	---	---	---	21-May-1967	8
South	27-Mar-1976	---	---	---	2-May-2004	9
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	21-Jul-2002	11-Sep	14-Oct	26-Oct	21-Nov-1998	62
Central	20-Jul-2004	2-Sep	12-Oct	29-Oct	2-Nov-1995	39
South	11-Sep-1983	27-Sep	13-Oct	11-Nov	29-Nov-1997	44
By Age: Fall flight						
Adult	20-Jul-2004	---	---	---	19-Oct-2003	9
Juv.	11-Sep-1990	---	9-Oct	---	12-Nov-1995	16



Juvenile Long-billed Dowitcher in a shallow pond south of the Tom Sporre preserve, southern Lake County 1 October 2005. Photo by J.K. Cassady.

References Cited

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Butler, A. W. (1898) The Birds of Indiana, Indiana Department of Geology and Natural Resources Annual Report, 22:575-1187.

IN-BIRD, a Listserv dealing with Indiana birds developed and maintained by P.W. Kelly. The records are archived at: <http://listserv.indiana.edu/archives/in-bird-l.html>

Keller, C.E. (1958) The Shorebird families: Charadriidae, Scolopacidae, Recurvirostridae, and Phalaropidae of Indiana. Part 4. *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 36:2-39.

Keller, C.E., S.A. Keller, and T.C. Keller (1979) *Indiana Birds and Their Haunts*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 214 pp.

Mumford files: An extensive accumulation of Indiana bird data on 5x7 file cards compiled by Professor R.E. Mumford of Purdue University, West Lafayette.

Mumford, R.E. and C.E. Keller (1984) *The Birds of Indiana*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 376 pp.