

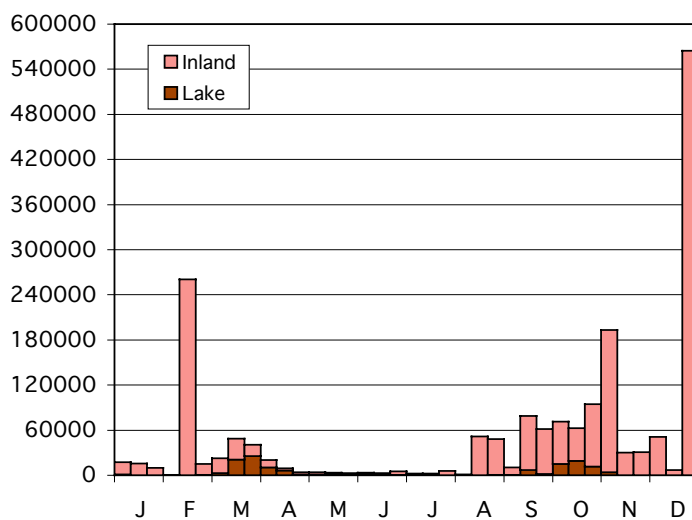
## Common Grackle

## *Quiscalus quiscula*

### Historical Information

**First Published Record:** A specimen collected in Franklin County on 12 March 1881 (Mumford files), appears to constitute the state's earliest formal record.

Butler (1898) listed the "Bronzed Grackle" as a common summer resident that occasionally wintered. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it an abundant summer resident; common in winter. Mumford and Keller (1984) considered the Common Grackle abundant in spring, summer, and fall, and locally uncommon to abundant in winter.



### Current Status

The Common Grackle is a permanent resident, which is Very Abundant (1) in fall and winter.

### Occurrence

This common and widespread blackbird, which often frequents suburban residential areas, has been recorded in every Indiana county. The largest numbers are observed in fall and winter when enormous flocks accumulate (see maximum count table). Many of the grackles retreat south of the northern tier during winter.

### Extreme Records

Jeff Riegel and Jeff Hammond logged the enormous tally of 250,000 in Knox and Gibson Counties on 15 February 2004 (many birds near Petersburg). They encountered a number of huge flocks and estimated the total Common Grackle count at between 250,000 and 500,000 individuals (IN-BIRD). The 400,000 that Jim and Susan Hengeveld reported at Beehunter Marsh on 21 December 2005 were part of a ribbon of 1.0-1.5 million blackbirds that passed over the marsh in the morning; 40 percent of the flock was estimated to consist of grackles (IN-BIRD).

### Status

**Physical Evidence:** Some 30 specimens, plus eggs, are preserved in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Academy of Sciences				1
Chicago Field Museum				3
National Museum of Natural History				7
Indiana State Museum				1
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				14
Univ. of Michigan Museum				8*
*Includes eggs				
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	4	2	3	1
Central Tier	2	3	3	1
Southern Tier	1	2	3	1
Entire State	1	2	3	1

## Breeding

The Indiana Atlas project reported breeding evidence in 96 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks (Castrale et al. 1998). Mumford and Keller (1984) listed egg dates from 15 April through 4 June.

Common Grackle Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Late Winter/Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
250000	15-Feb-2004	SW Indiana*	Jeff Riegel	INB
14000	12-Mar-1990	Mount Baldy	K.J. Brock	KJB
10000	02-Mar-2002	Hawthorn Mine	Dan Leach	INB
*Gibson and Knox Counties.				
Fall/early Winter				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
400000	21-Dec-2005	Beehunter Marsh	J. & S. Hengeveld	INB
130000	07-Nov-1965	Geist Reservoir	H.C. West	HCW
75000	03-Dec-1969	Warrick Co	Phillip Ohmit	IAQ
Caution is necessary in assessing these counts. In most cases there is no information about how the numbers were obtained (count, estimate, or guess). Additionally, most blackbird flocks contain a mixture of species, which renders determining the numbers of an individual species problematic.				

Migration Envelopes						
Entire State						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
Spring	Win. Res.	28-Feb	30-Mar	16-Apr	Sum. Res.	1810
Fall	Sum. Res.	15-Aug	2-Oct	7-Nov	Win. Res.	1697

## References Cited

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

Castrale, J.S., E.M. Hopkins, and C.E. Keller (1998) Atlas of breeding Birds of Indiana, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, 388 pp.

IN-BIRD, a Listserve dealing with Indiana birds developed and maintained by P.W. Kelly. The records are archived at: <http://listserv.indiana.edu/archives/in-bird-1.html>

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.

Richards, R.L. (1987) The Vertebrate Collection of the Indiana State Museum: "Old" Specimens and Records, *Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science* 97:547-570.

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