

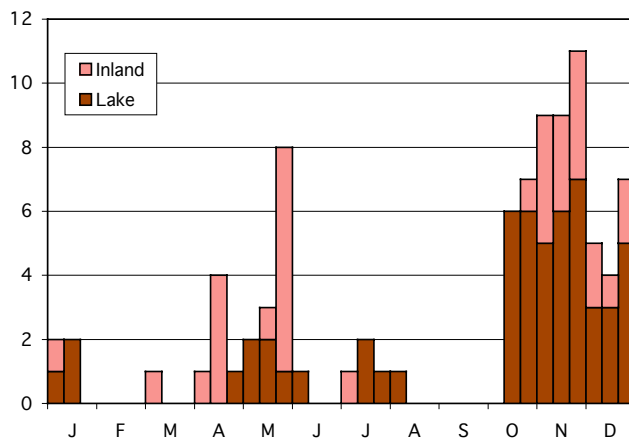
Western Grebe

Aechmophorus occidentalis

Historical Information

First Published Record: A Lake Michigan sight record off Dunes State Park 27 October 1945 (DuMont and Smith 1946) provided the state's first accepted record.

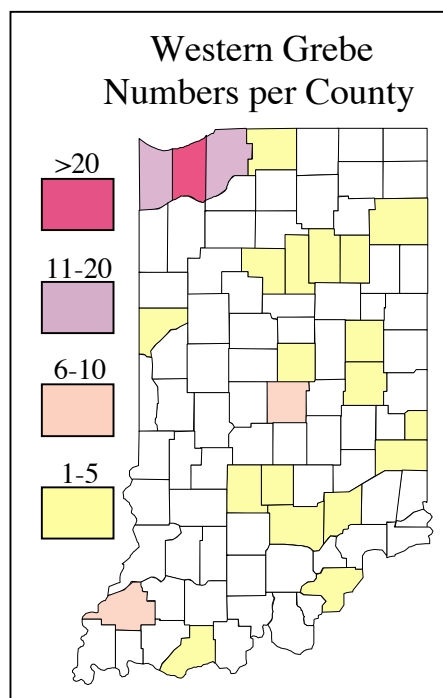
In referring to a missing specimen (the validity of which was later questioned) collected near Indianapolis in September 1886, Butler (1890) deemed this species an accidental visitor. In their annotated checklist Mumford and Keller (1975) noted that a specimen was lacking for the state, but that "numerous sight records" exist. Mumford and Keller (1984) considered it a casual migrant and winter visitor. Bruner (2002) referred to this grebe as primarily a fall migrant that occasionally occurs in spring and December.



Status

Specimens for Indiana apparently do not exist, but identifiable photographs are published in Bruner (2002).

| STATUS TABLE | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Specimens | | | | |
| Museum | | | | No. |
| No known specimens | | | | 0 |
| 20-Year Abundance Table | | | | |
| | Win | Spr | Sum | Fall |
| Northern Tier | 8 | 8 | 9 | 7 |
| Central Tier | 10 | 9 | n | n |
| Southern Tier | 10 | 10 | 10 | 8 |
| Entire State | 7 | 7 | 9 | 7 |



Current Status

The Western Grebe, which currently enjoys a Rare (7) status, has been reported in 16 years of the past twenty years. It occurred in autumn in nine of those years. Interestingly, it was recorded in only two of the last five years.

Occurrence

Though there are no February records, this elegant grebe has occurred eleven times in December and January, suggesting that it is also Rare (7) in winter. Surprisingly, there are four summer records, indicating an Occasional (9) status during this season. Roughly two-thirds of all birds have been reported on Lake Michigan; however, small numbers have been recorded across the state (see distribution map).

Migration

As illustrated in the migration histogram the spring flight is quite irregular and poorly defined, presumably due in part to sparse data. The spring peak appears to be near mid-May.

The fall flight, which peaks in November, closely follows the fall Common Loon flight. The only August record involved a bird that lingered at the Port of Indiana from 17 July to 1 August 1987 (Brock 1988).

Western Grebe Data

| Maximum Single Party Counts | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|------|
| Spring | | | | |
| Number | Date | Location | Observer | Ref. |
| 2 | 21-May-1967 | Geist Reservoir | C.E. Keller | REM |
| 2 | 17-Apr-1977 | Geist Reservoir | ??? | IQA |
| 2 | 23-May-1982 | Summit Lake | B. Jackson | IAQ |
| Fall | | | | |
| Number | Date | Location | Observer | Ref. |
| 3 | 19-Oct-1960 | Miller Beach | H. Land | REM |
| 2 | 13-Dec-1953 | Mich. City Harbor | R. Grow | Grow |
| 2 | 25-Oct-1959 | Mich. City Harbor | H.C. West | REM |

| Migration Envelopes | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|---------|
| Entire State | | | | | | |
| | Earliest | Arrive | Peak | Depart | Latest | Records |
| Spring | 5-Mar-1997 | --- | 11-May | --- | 5-Jun-1985 | 18 |
| Fall | 13-Oct-2002 | 28-Oct | 22-Nov | 1-Jan | 14-Jan-1980 | 55 |

References Cited

- Brock, K.J. (1988) Field Notes; Fall 1987, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 66:111-126.
- Bruner, A. W. (2002) From the Archives – The Grebes, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 80:20-41.
- Butler, A. W. (1890) The Birds of Indiana, Appendix to *Transactions of the Indiana Horticultural Society for 1890* (available on the web).
- DuMont, P.A. and E.K. Smith (1946) Middle-western region. *Aud. Mag. Suppl.*, 48:7-8.
- Mumford, R.E. and C.E. Keller (1975) An Annotated Check List of Indiana Birds, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 53:28-59.
- Mumford, R.E. and C.E. Keller (1984) *The Birds of Indiana*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 376 pp.