

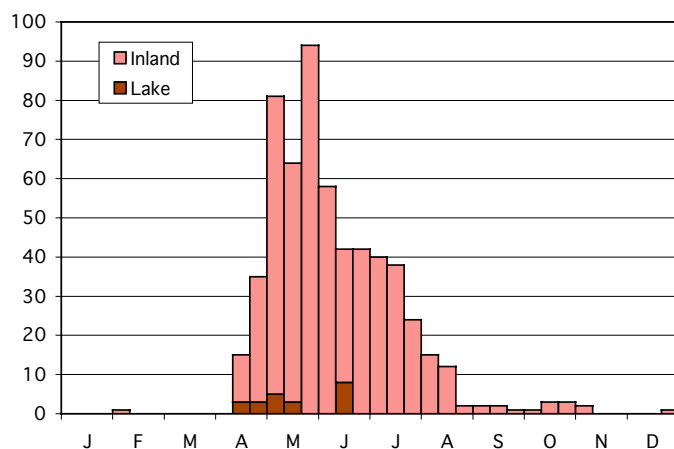
Lark Sparrow

Chondestes grammacus

Historical Information

First Published Record: Butler (1898) mentioned that this sparrow was present in Lake County in 1871; however, the earliest fully dated Lark Sparrow report involved one collected in Marion County 6 October 1877 (Mumford files).

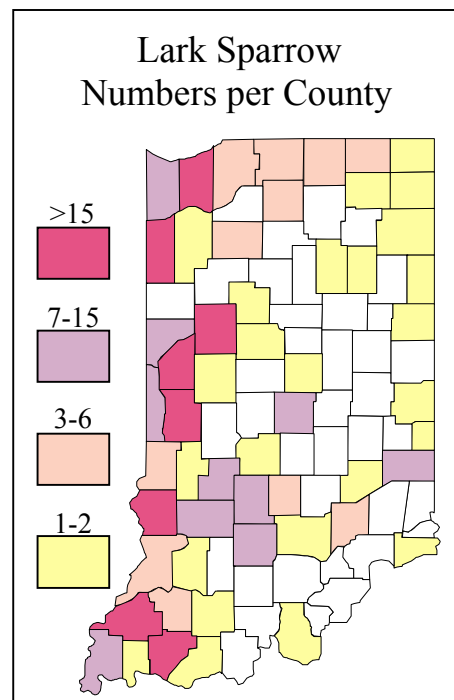
Butler (1898) noted that this prairie species was expanding into formerly forested areas, but was rare or scarce in Indiana. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it a locally very rare to uncommon (south) summer resident. Mumford and Keller (1984) considered the Lark Sparrow a locally rare migrant and summer resident throughout the state.



Status

Physical Evidence: Some 14 specimens are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Carnegie Museum of Natural History				1
Chicago Field Museum				1
National Museum of Natural History				5
Indiana State Museum				1
Milwaukee Public Museum				4
Univ. of Michigan Museum				2
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	7	7	7
Central Tier	n	7	7	8
Southern Tier	n	6	6	8
Entire State	n	6	6	7



Current Status

The Lark Sparrow is an Uncommon (6) spring migrant and summer resident and a Rare (7) fall migrant.

Occurrence

Although Lark Sparrows dominantly occur along the western margin of the state (see distribution map), this western sparrow has been recorded in approximately 54 counties. Huntington and Wabash Counties share a single bird that was reported at Salamonie Reservoir. The Clay County record involved a bird reported at the Chinook Mine; it is unclear whether this bird was observed in Clay or in Vigo County.

Excluded Records

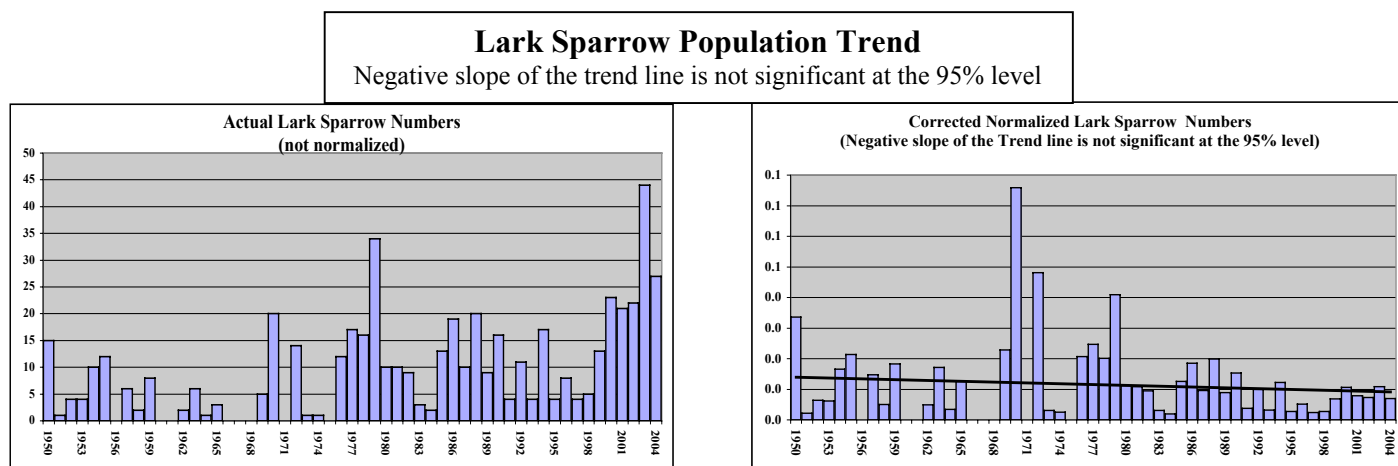
Butler (1898) listed the report of a flock of 50 near Sedan, DeKalb County on 16 August 1887; as this unprecedented number was also far outside the normal Lark Sparrow range in Indiana, this record was deemed unreliable. Without citation Mumford and Keller (1984) also included a late date of 20 November and two March records.

Winter Records

Indiana's only December record was provided by I.W. Burr (1979), who reported that Arthur Branham observed two on the 30 December 1954 Christmas Bird Count (a brief description is given). The only other winter record involved one at a Mishawaka feeder on 4 to 6 February 1977 (Mumford and Keller 1984).

Population Trend

The 50-year population data suggest a slight decline in Indiana Lark Sparrow numbers; however, negative slope of the trend line is not statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) found breeding evidence in only 2 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks. These were scattered along Indiana's western margin from Lake County to Warrick County. Mumford and Keller (1984) reported nest building by 18 April, young in the nest 12 May, and eggs on 27 June.

Lark Sparrow Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
13	26-May-1988	Sullivan Co	M.R. Brown	IQM
8	03-May-1949	Newton Co	Amy Baldwin	REM
8	08-May-1955	Posey Co	John Louis	REM
Eight were recorded on one additional occasion				

Late Summer/Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
15	12-Jul-1986	Sullivan Co	M.R. Brown	NIQ
12	04-Aug-1897	Vermillion Co	???	BU2
10*	17-Jul-1979	Willow Slough FWA	T.T. Cable	REM
10* were reported on one additional occasion				

Migration Envelopes						
Entire State						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
Spring	12-Apr-1954	26-Apr	14-May	6-Jun	Sum. Res.	205
Fall	Sum. Res.	---	10-Oct	---	6-Nov-1982	16

References Cited

Burr, I. W. (1979) The Birds of Tippecanoe County, Indiana, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 57:1-43.

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.

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.