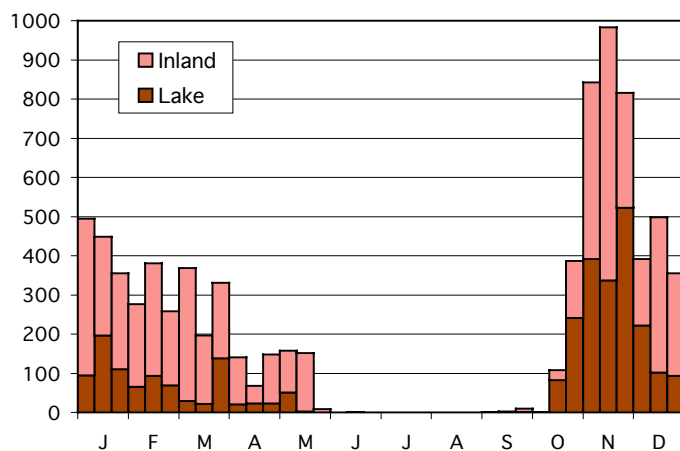


*Coccothraustes vespertinus*

## Historical Information

First Published Record: According to Butler (1898) an Evening Grosbeak was taken near Lafayette in November 1878, but the first fully dated report consists of five that were shot by H.K. Coale at Whiting Station, Lake County on 20 December 1883 (Butler 1898).

Regarding this species Butler (1898) commented, “Very irregular winter visitor; sometimes found in numbers.” Keller et al. (1979) considered it irregular and abundant to uncommon in winter, noting invasions in 1973, 1975, and 1977. Mumford and Keller (1984) deemed the Evening Grosbeak an irregular winter visitor throughout Indiana.



## Status

Physical Evidence: At least 21 specimens are known to be housed in museums (S.F. Jackson, unpublished list).

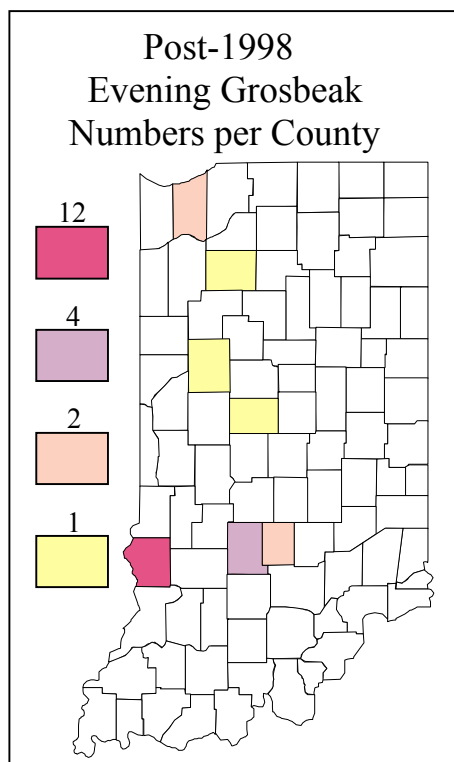
STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Carnegie Museum of Natural History				2
Chicago Academy of Sciences				4
Chicago Field Museum				8
National Museum of Natural History				2
Denver Museum				1
Milwaukee Public Museum				4
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	6	6	n	6
Central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

### Current Status

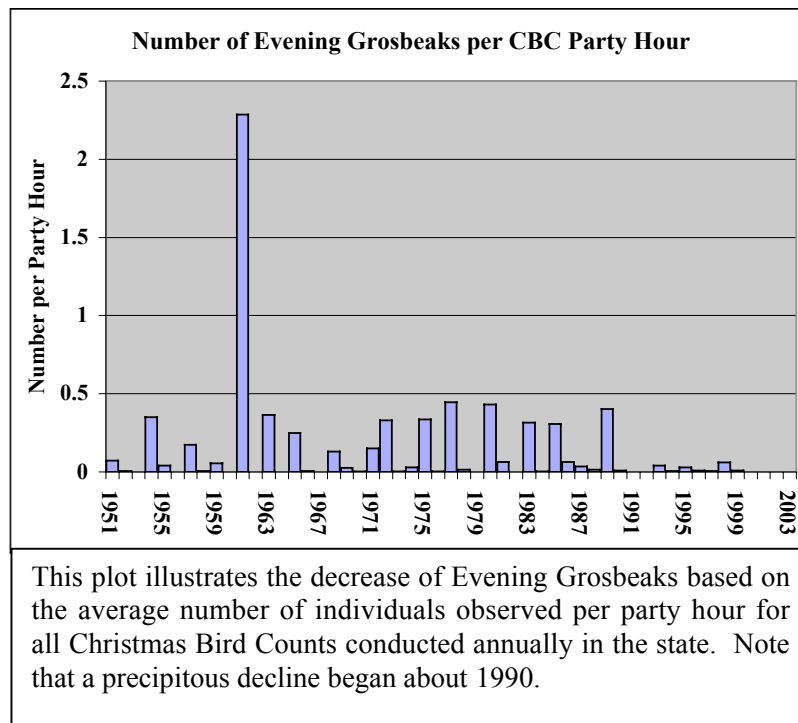
Over the last two decades the Evening Grosbeak has been an Uncommon (6) migrant and winter visitor; however, since the late 1990s it has become exceedingly rare.

## Occurrence

Over the years this plump finch was recorded in at least 71 counties, but numbers have declined dramatically over the last decade. Indeed, since 1998 only 23 have been reported in the state (see post-1998 map). This decline, which actually began about 1990, is most dramatic. The 50-year Population Trend graph reveals a statistically significant downward trend since 1950. In addition, a plot of Christmas Count data (see graph below) reveals a similar population decline.

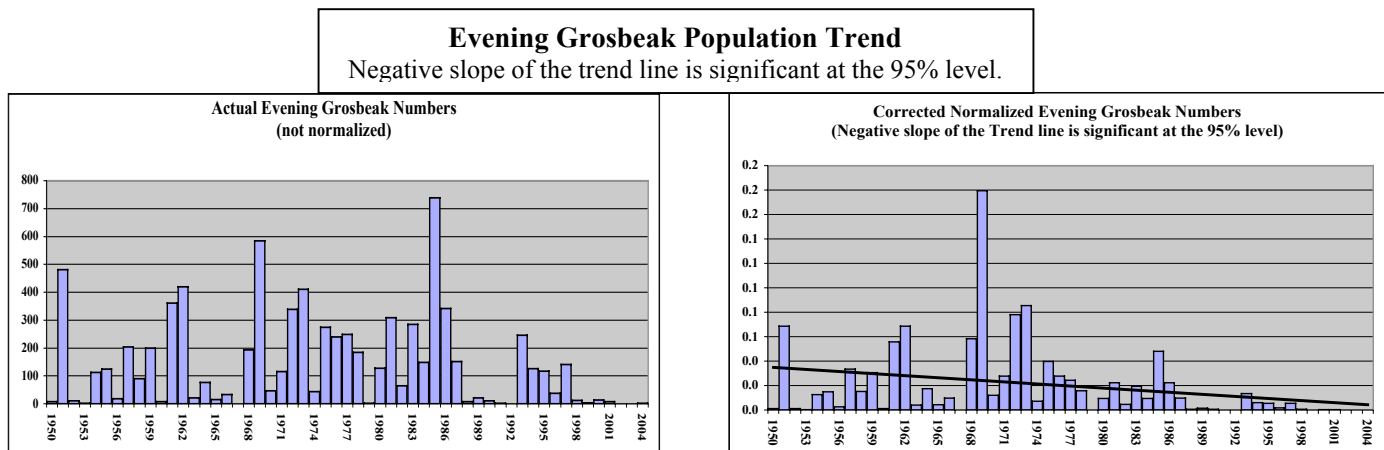


An explanation for the decline was provided by Bolgiano (2004), who noted that Evening Grosbeaks did not occur regularly in the East prior to the late nineteenth century. He proposed that the grosbeaks expanded into the region from the west to take advantage of spruce budworm infestations. The most recent incursion was linked to an enormous budworm outbreak that occurred in the mid-1970s. Based on CBC data Bolgiano noted high Evening Grosbeak numbers between 1968 and 1985 in the Great Lakes states. The Indiana birds were apparently associated with this incursion.



### Population Trend

The dramatic decrease in Evening Grosbeaks is well illustrated in the below plots. Negative slope of the trend line is significant at the 95 percent level.





Male Evening Grosbeak at a Chesterton feeder January 1984.  
Photo by K.J. Brock.

### Evening Grosbeak Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Entire Year				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
200	24-Nov-1951	N. Porter Co	Raymond Grow	IAQ
150	09-Nov-1985	Lawrence Co	J.S. Castrale	IAQ
120	15-Nov-1973	Newton Co	E. Rix	REM
110	25-Nov-1951	Indiana Dunes	L.C. Binford	REM
104	07-Jan-1962	Starke Co	S. Bend Aud. Soc.	NIQ
100*	11-Nov-1961	St Joseph Co	S. Bend Aud. Soc.	NIQ
*100 were reported on two additional occasions				

Migration Envelopes						
Winter						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
State	10-Sep-1960	30-Oct	Win. Vis.	30-Apr	24-May-1977	614

### References Cited

Bolgiano, N.C. (2004) Changes in Boreal Bird Irruptions in Eastern North American Relative to the 1970s Spruce Budworm Infestation, *American Birds*, 58:26-33.

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

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

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