

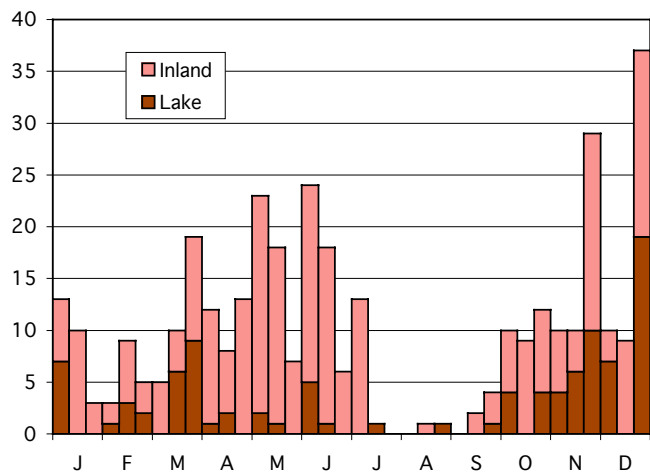
Ruffed Grouse

Bonasa umbellus

Historical Information

First Published Record: The DNR files mentioned “some pheasants around” in Hamilton County in 1831, but earliest formal report was collected at Brookville 10 May 1879 (Butler 1898).

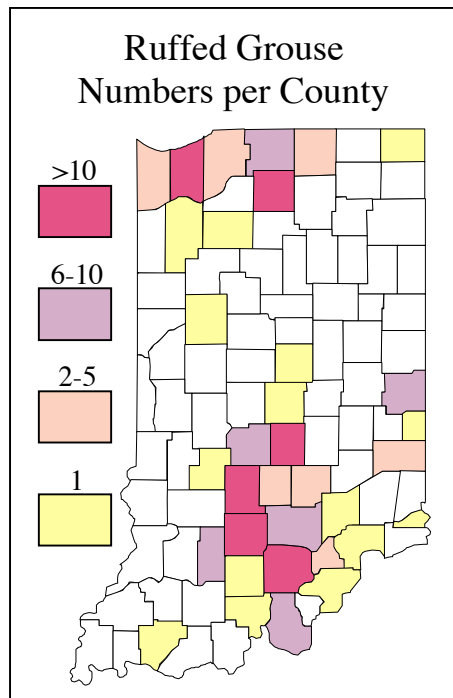
Butler (1890) characterized the Ruffed Grouse as a resident, which was common in the densely wooded districts. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it as rare in the north and locally uncommon in the balance of the state. Mumford and Keller (1984) described the distribution throughout the twentieth century and restocking efforts.



Status

Physical Evidence: Ten specimens are housed in museums as listed in the Status Table (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Academy of Sciences				1
Milwaukee Public Museum				1
National Museum of Natural History				7
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				1
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	9	n	10
Central Tier	n	8	n	n
Southern Tier	8	7	9	10
Entire State	8	7	9	9



Current Status

Reports over the past thirty years indicate that the

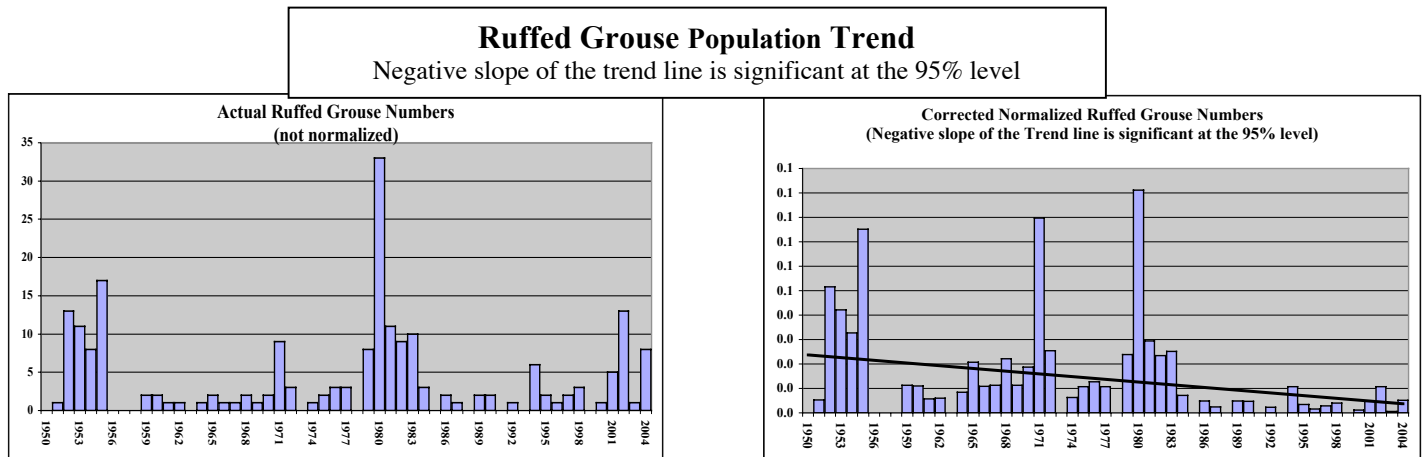
Ruffed Grouse has fared poorly. Surveys conducted by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (Backs 2003) reveal a steady decline in census data over the past three decades. Today it is at best Rare (7) during spring in the southern tier.

Occurrence

Mumford and Keller (1984) noted that by the 1950s this species was restricted in 16 counties in south-central Indiana. Past observational reports suggest that the Ruffed Grouse was concentrated in both south-central and northern Indiana (see distribution map). Virtually all of the northern Indiana birds are now extirpated and the state's remaining population is situated in south-central Indiana forests; however, even this population has decreased significantly since 1980 (Backs 2003).

Population Trend

Observational data are consistent with survey reports by Backs (2003), as the negative slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) found breeding evidence in only ten percent of the state's 647 priority blocks and these results were concentrated in south-central Indiana. Egg dates are listed from 3 April through 7 June (Mumford and Keller 1984).

Ruffed Grouse Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
13*	14-May-1952	Brown Co	J. Helvie	REM
13	13-Jun-1980	Atterbury FWA	Boyd Gill	REM
10	31-Dec-1955	Indiana Dunes	Ted Nork	VRS
10	31-Dec-1901	Marshall Co	???	REM
10*	08-May-2002	Monroe Co	R.L. Hedge	INB
*These were actually egg counts.				

References Cited

Backs, S.E. (2003) Breeding Indices of Ruffed Grouse – Sprint 2003, Wildlife Management and Research Notes, No. 831.

Butler, A. W. (1890) The Birds of Indiana, Appendix to *Transactions of the Indiana Horticultural Society for 1890* (available on the web).

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