

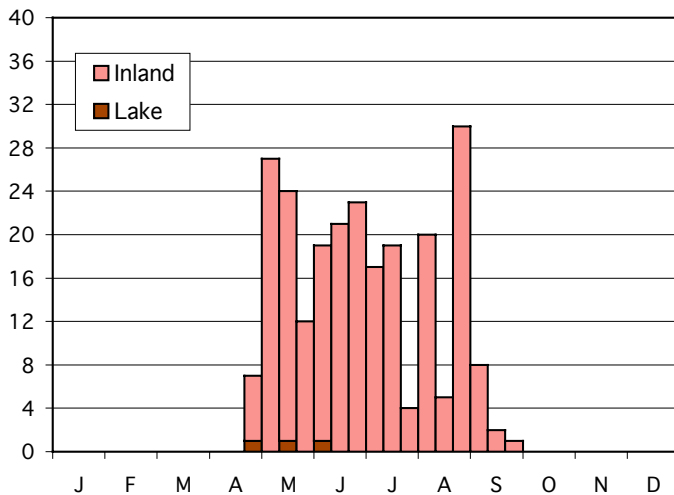
## Mississippi Kite

## *Ictinia mississippiensis*

### Historical Information

First Published record: Butler (1890) wrote, “Mr. Ridgway informs me that it is found about the cypress ponds of Knox County from May 15 to September.” Though no year is given this report clearly occurred in the 1800s. The earliest completely dated Mississippi Kite was observed in Knox County 18 September 1911 (Mumford and Keller 1984).

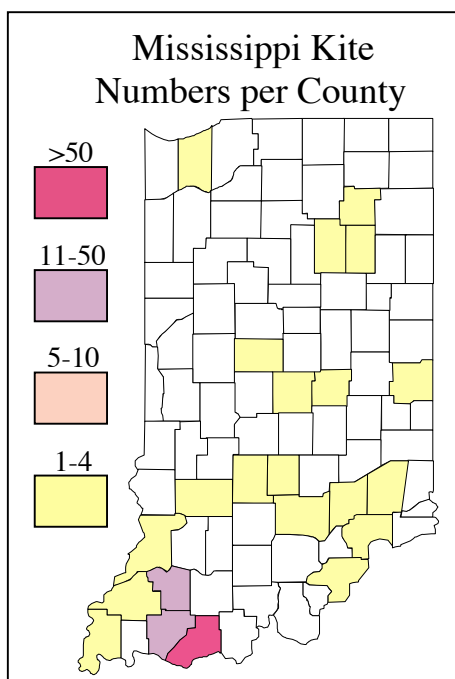
Butler (1890) described the Mississippi Kite as a rare summer resident in southwestern Indiana and a rare visitor elsewhere. Keller et al. (1979) considered it a casual summer visitant. Mumford and Keller (1984) referred to this kite as a casual summer visitor that may be increasing. They noted that following Butler’s reports Mississippi Kites were not reported in the state again until 1937 and again in 1959.



### Status

Physical Evidence: There are no known Museum specimens. Several photos have been published (T.C. Keller 1994).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
No known specimens				0
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	9	9	n
Central Tier	n	10	9	n
Southern Tier	n	7	6	7
Entire State	n	7	6	7



### Current Status

With the appearance of breeding birds in three counties, this kite is now Uncommon (6) to Rare (7) in the southern tier and Accidental (10) to Occasional (9) elsewhere in the state.

### Occurrence

In concert with a broad northward regional advancement of Mississippi Kites throughout the Midwest, the Indiana population of this species has expanded significantly over the past decade. For Indiana this resurgence began in 1992, when nesting was discovered in Pike County. Although it has now been recorded in 22 counties, the largest numbers are concentrated in Pike, Spencer, and Warrick Counties, where nesting occurs.

### Extralimital Reports

Reports originating outside southwestern Indiana consist primarily of singletons observed in May and June. Extralimital reports involving two birds include: a sighting by T. Marshall and T. Hicks in Whitley County 21 May 1984 (Brock 1985), a report by J.A. Haw and S. Schacht in Wabash County 10 June 1987 (Jackson and Jackson 1988), and two observed by C. Hedge and R.L. Hedge in Boone County 6 Jun 1999 (Hedge and Hedge 1999 and Jackson 2001). The only April record away from the southwest involved an adult seen by Clyde Fields and Bud Johnson at the Johnson Beach hawk watch 23 April 1992 (Brown 1993). The Indiana Bird Records Committee has not evaluated most of the records reported outside southwestern Indiana.

### **Breeding**

Butler (1890) noted that it breeds in the state. The first modern breeding evidence was summarized by Castrale et al. (1998); they reported that pairs, courtship behavior and the carrying of nesting material were observed, at both Lincoln State Park and Pike State Forest during the summer of 1992. In Warrick County Midge Lechner observed an adult feeding a nestling on 14 July and a fledgling was observed 10 August 2000 (Hedge 2001). All three of these sites remain active.

### **Mississippi Kite Data**

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring/Summer				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
10	31-May-2004	Pike & Spencer Co	J.J. McCoy	INB
8	08-Jul-1995	Spencer Co	J.A. Haw	Haw
7	06-May-1998	Spencer Co	David Dugas	INB
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
7	29-Aug-1992	Pike Co	J.H. Campbell	IAQ
7	27-Aug-2000	Spencer Co	J. & S. Hengeveld	INB
5	04-Aug-1999	Spencer Co	Don Gorney	IQM

Migration Envelopes						
Summer						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	23-Apr-92	---	---	---	14-Jun-1994	7
Central	7-May-70	---	---	---	4-Jul-1975	5
South	23-Apr-99	1-May	Sum.Res.	8-Sep	22-Sep-1990	93

### **References Cited**

- Brock, K.J. (1985) Field Notes; Spring Migration, 1984, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 63:30-51
- Brown, M.R. (1993) Field Notes Spring 1992, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 71:77-89.
- Butler, A. W. (1890) The Birds of Indiana, Appendix to *Transactions of the Indiana Horticultural Society for 1890* (available on the web).

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

Hedge, R.L. (2001) Field Notes Summer 2000, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 79:41-59.

Hedge, R.L. and C.L. Hedge (1999) Mississippi Kites Observed in Boone County, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 77:221.

Jackson, B.K. (2001) Field Notes Summer 1999, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 79:32-41.

Jackson, S.F. and B.K. Jackson (1988) Field Notes Summer 1987, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 66:60-68.

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

Keller, T.C. (1994) Index of Published Photographic Documentation of the Birds of Indiana, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 72:119-130.

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