

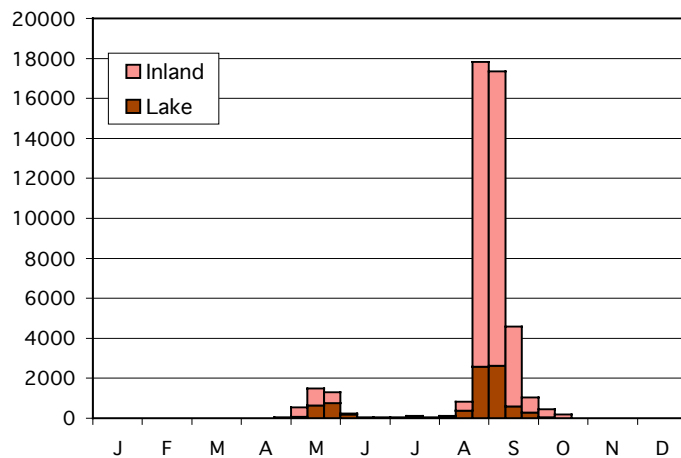
Common Nighthawk

Chordeiles minor

Historical Information

First Published Record: The earliest published Common Nighthawk report came from Franklin County on 17 May 1885 (Butler 1898).

Butler (1898) referred to the “Bull Bat” as an abundant migrant, most numerous in fall. Keller et al. (1979) considered it a summer resident: common in spring and abundant in fall. Mumford and Keller (1984) deemed the Nighthawk a common migrant and summer resident.



Current Status

The Common Nighthawk remains a summer resident, which is Fairly Common (5) in spring and Very Common (3) in fall.

Occurrence

The Nighthawk is widely distributed, with reports from at least 82 counties, but large numbers are rarely encountered except during fall migration. Although an average of more than 800 birds per year has been recorded over the past 20 years, there is concern that numbers are dwindling (see Population Trend). This contention is supported by the observation that, despite increased birder effort, yearly totals have exceeded the twenty-year mean only twice in the past decade. Note also that the most recent count in the maximum count table occurred back in 1983.

Fall Migration

The autumn flight is far more spectacular than the spring migration, as large (sometimes enormous) loose flocks move southward together. The movements account for the impressive fall numbers in the maximum count table. There exist three November records, all in the southern two-thirds of the state. Eugene Muench documented the latest on 21 November 1982, as it circled over Terre Haute (Brock 1983). The other two included one observed by Lene Rauth in Clark County 13 November 1990 (Rauth records) and another seen by Boyd Gill in Johnson County 5 November 1981 (Mumford files).

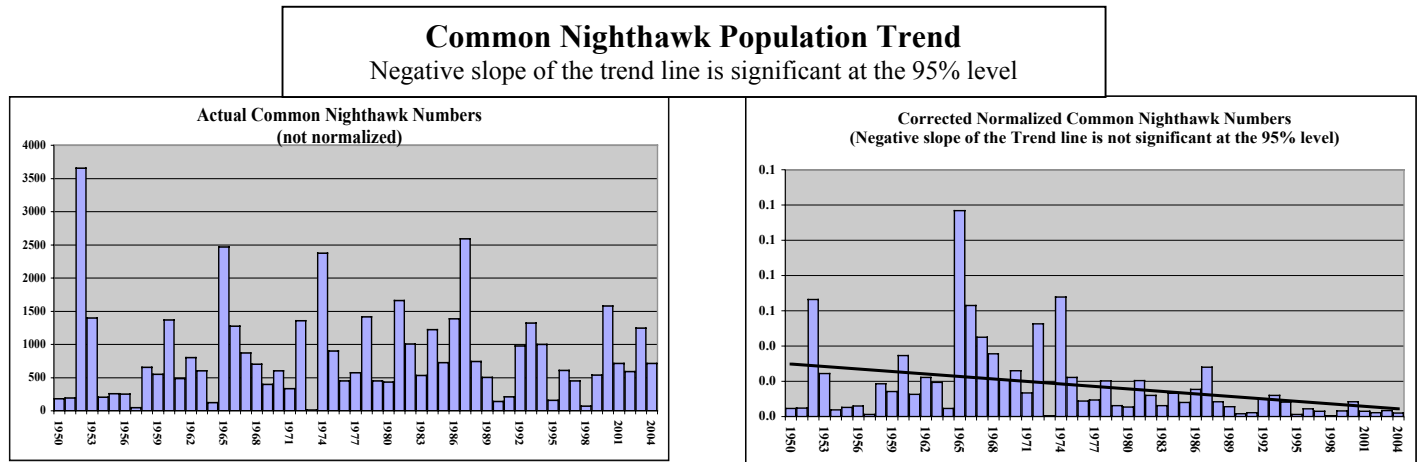
Status

Physical Evidence: At least ten specimens are preserved in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Field Museum				1
National Museum of Natural History				2
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				7
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	5	6	3
Central Tier	n	5	7	3
Southern Tier	n	5	6	3
Entire State	n	5	6	3

Population Trend

Concerns about Indiana's Nighthawk population are justified by the population trend data. Negative slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) reported breeding evidence in only 18 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks. Mumford and Keller (1984) provide egg dates from 26 May through 7 July, though there is also a report of eggs in Tippecanoe County 13 July 1987 (Mumford files).

Common Nighthawk Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
300	23-May-1976	Lake Waveland	A.W. Bruner	REM
286	25-May-1953	Baileytown	V. Reuter-skiold	VRS
158	09-May-1983	Summit Lake	B.K. Jackson	IAQ
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
2000	01-Sep-1952	Putnam Co	J.M. Allen	REM
1500	01-Sep-1952	Jackson Co	R.E. Mumford	REM
1500	05-Sep-1965	Marion Co	C.E. Keller	REM

Migration Envelopes

Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	25-Mar-2004	8-May	19-May	30-May	Sum. Res.	334
Central	5-Mar-1992	2-May	13-May	24-May	Sum. Res.	182
South	8-Mar-1949	26-Apr	10-May	26-May	Sum. Res.	96
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Res.	20-Aug	31-Aug	19-Sep	18-Oct-98	353
Central	Sum. Res.	22-Aug	3-Sep	22-Sep	21-Nov-82	250
South	Sum. Res.	23-Aug	8-Sep	30-Sep	13-Nov-90	179

References Cited

Brock, K.J. (1983) Field Notes; Fall Migration, 1982, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 61:113-131.

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.

Rauth records. The personal notes of L. Rauth, which were recorded in southern Indiana during the interval 1972 to 1988.