

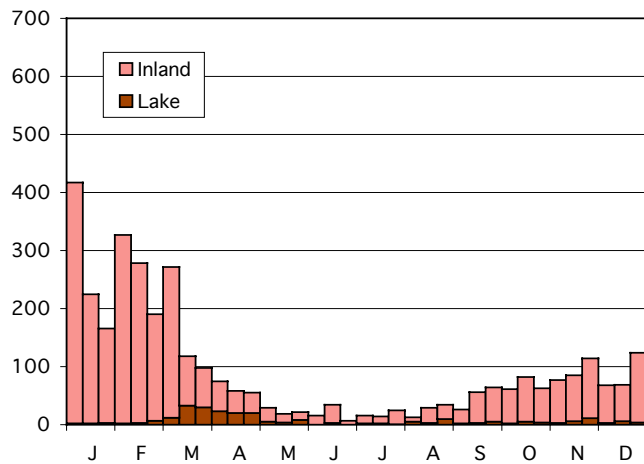
Bald Eagle

Haliaeetus leucocephalus

Historical Information

First Published record: The earliest report of this species in Indiana involved breeding birds from Tolleston (northern Lake County) in 1871; however, the first fully dated report occurred at Brookville 19 April 1881 (Butler 1898).

Butler (1890) noted that the Bald Eagle was a local resident, but widespread in fall, winter, and spring. Keller et al. (1979) listed this eagle as a very rare winter visitant except at Lake Monroe where it was uncommon. Mumford and Keller (1984) provided no abundance assessment.



Status

Physical Evidence: Some seven specimens are housed in the nation's museums (S.F. Jackson, unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).

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

Current Status

The highly successful reintroduction programs in Indiana and adjacent states, have substantially increased the Bald Eagle population. It is now Fairly Common (5) to Rare (7) throughout the year, and is especially prevalent in the central and southern tiers.

Occurrence

The Bald Eagle has been recorded in more than 77 counties with the largest numbers occurring in south-central and west-central portions of the state. It is especially prevalent at Lake Monroe where a breeding population is established. As illustrated in the migration histogram and the maximum counts table, it is observed most frequently in winter.

Migration

The migration histogram reveals no significant migration; consequently, migration envelopes were not calculated for this species. A weak spring movement is detected along Lake Michigan where the flight peak occurs in late March.

Breeding

Butler (1898) reported recent breeding in LaPorte, Knox, Porter, and Starke Counties and mentioned former breeding in Dekalb County, Lake County, Carroll County, and in the

Whitewater Valley. The last known nesting of this era involved a nest at Miller Beach in 1897 (Mumford and Keller 1984).

As a nesting species Bald Eagles were then extirpated from Indiana until the Indiana Nongame Program implemented a restoration project in 1985. This program released 73 young eagles at Lake Monroe during the 1985 – 1989 interval; the Indiana Atlas reported confirmed breeding in Martin and Monroe Counties (Castrale et al. 1998). This restoration proved remarkably successful with nesting now reported in Bartholomew, Brown, Carroll, Crawford, Daviess, Dubois, Gibson, Greene, Harrison, Jackson, Knox, Marion, Martin, Monroe, Morgan, Orange, Owen, Parke, Posey, Ripley, Tippecanoe, Vermillion, Vigo, and Wabash Counties.

Bald Eagle Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Entire Year				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
105	10-Feb-93	West central Ind.	J.S. Castrale	BBC
84	6-Feb-01	West central Ind.	J.S. Castrale	BBC
78	18-Jan-03	Parke Co	A.W. Bruner	NNB
66	28-Jan-01	Parke Co	P.E. Scott	IAQ
57	10-Jan-02	Southwest. Ind.	J.S. Castrale	BBC
48	5-Jan-00	Southwest. Ind.	J.S. Castrale	BBC

References Cited

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.

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