

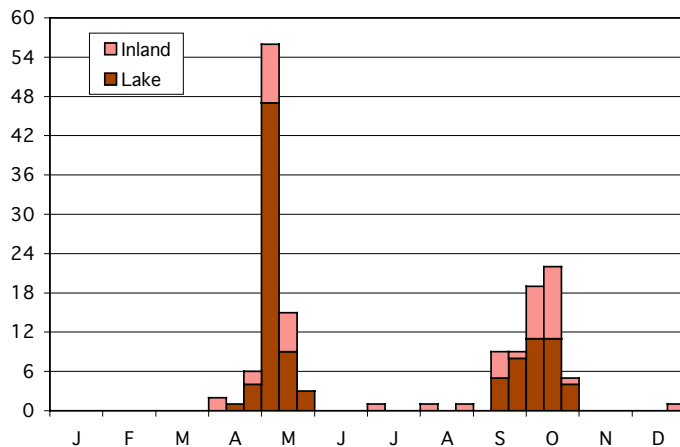
## Clay-colored Sparrow

## *Spizella pallida*

### Historical Information

**First Published Record:** W.S. Blatchley collected a Clay-colored from a sparrow flock near Terre Haute on 27 September 1890 (Butler 1898); this constitutes Indiana's first record.

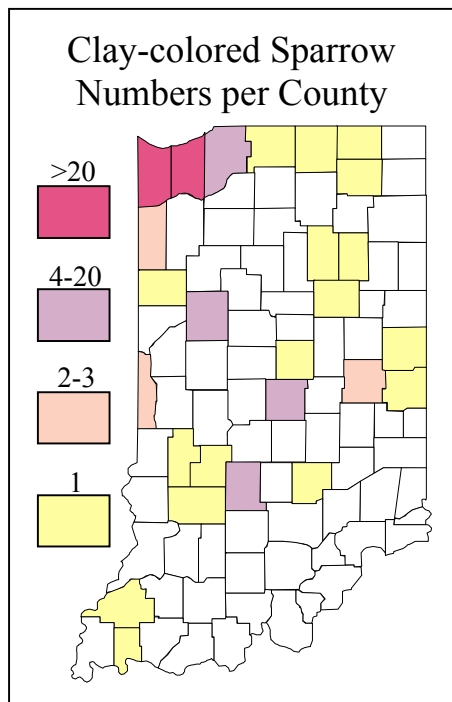
Butler (1898) considered the Clay-colored Sparrow a rare migrant and possible summer resident. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it casual. Mumford and Keller (1984) described the Clay-colored Sparrow as an apparent casual migrant, "possibly more abundant than records now indicate."



### Status

**Physical Evidence:** Two specimens are known to be preserved in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list).

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



### Current Status

The Clay-colored Sparrow is a Rare (7) migrant and Accidental (10) summer resident.

### Occurrence

This elusive migrant has been recorded in some 26 counties, but is encountered most frequently in the lakefront traps where it associates with migrant sparrow flocks. Over the past 20 years an average of 5.8 birds per year has been recorded.

### Summer Record

Brother Edwin Mattingly found a singing male Clay-colored Sparrow in St. Joseph County on 4 July 1989. The bird behaved territorially as it constantly moved atop a row of 2 to 3 meter scotch and red pines. To avoid disturbance no search for the nest was conducted. The sparrow's song was taped on 8 July, which is the last date it was reported (Jackson 1990).

### Extreme Records

An exceptionally early fall record, involving a singing bird, was discovered by Chris Anderson at Pine Creek Gamebird Habitat Area, Benton County on 4 August 1999; the observation was confirmed the following day by J.B. Dunning (IN-BIRD).

### **Breeding**

Castrale et al. (1998) stated that this sparrow, "...was included as a probable breeder in a non-priority atlas block in St. Joseph County." This was in reference to the summer record described above.

<b>Clay-colored Sparrow Data</b>				
<b>Maximum Single Party Counts</b>				
<b>Spring</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Observer</b>	<b>Ref.</b>
6	10-May-2003	n. Lake Co	C.A. Marsh	INB
5	10-May-2002	Wolf Lake	C.A. Marsh	INB
4*	06-May-2004	Lakefront	J.J. McCoy	INB
*4 were reported on one additional occasion				
<b>Fall</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Observer</b>	<b>Ref.</b>
3	07-Oct-2001	Lake Co traps	J.J. McCoy	INB
3	28-Sep-2005	Indianapolis	Don Gorney	INB
2*	01-Oct-1997	Hammond Sanctuary	Joy Bower	KJB
*Two were reported on 5 additional occasions				

<b>Migration Envelopes</b>						
<b>Spring</b>						
	<b>Earliest</b>	<b>Arrive</b>	<b>Peak</b>	<b>Depart</b>	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Records</b>
<b>North</b>	19-Apr-1985	1-May	9-May	14-May	26-May-1989	64
<b>Central</b>	3-Apr-1950	---	9-May	---	17-May-1973	13
<b>South</b>	30-Apr-1983	---	---	---	17-May-2003	3
<b>Fall</b>						
	<b>Earliest</b>	<b>Arrive</b>	<b>Peak</b>	<b>Depart</b>	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Records</b>
<b>North</b>	4-Aug-1999	15-Sep	9-Oct	21-Oct	26-Oct-1958	40
<b>Central</b>	25-Aug-1963	---	8-Oct	---	20-Oct-2001	18
<b>South</b>	18-Sep-1999	---	---	---	19-Oct-2003	5

### **References Cited**

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.

IN-BIRD, a Listserve dealing with Indiana birds developed and maintained by P.W. Kelly. The records are archived at: <http://listserv.indiana.edu/archives/in-bird-l.html>

Jackson, S.F. (1990) Field Notes Summer 1989, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 68:91-103.

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.

Last update: 29 Sep 2005