

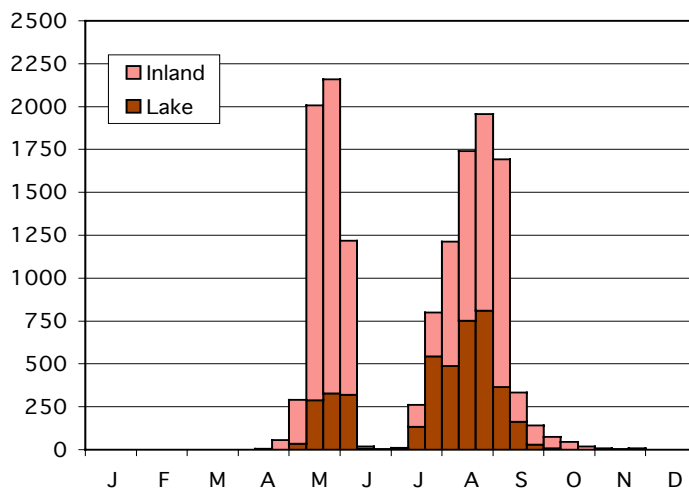
semipalmated Sandpiper

Calidris pusilla

Historical Information

First Published Record: Although Brayton (1879) referred to this species as very abundant near Lake Michigan, the earliest fully dated record was reported in Tippecanoe County by L.A. and C.D. Test 6 September 1894 (Butler 1898).

According to Butler (1890) the Semipalmated Sandpiper was a migrant; “generally rare, but in some localities not uncommon.” Keller (1958) referred to it as a common spring and fall migrant. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it a common migrant, except in the south where insufficient data were available. Mumford and Keller (1984) considered it a common to fairly common migrant throughout the state.



Juvenile Semipalmated Sandpiper on the Michigan City Harbor jetty 5 September 2002. Photo by K.J. Brock.

Status

Physical Evidence: A dozen specimens are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Field Museum				4
National Museum of Natural History				3
Milwaukee Public Museum				1
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				1
Univ. of Michigan Museum				3
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	4	4	3
Central Tier	n	6	7	5
Southern Tier	n	5	6	5
Entire State	n	4	4	3

Current Status

Today the Semipalmated Sandpiper is a Very Common (3) to Common (4) migrant, which is reported most frequently in the northern tier.

Occurrence

This widespread “peep” has been reported in more than 66 Indiana counties. It is more common at inland locations (compared to Lake Michigan), especially in spring.

Migration

The Semipalmated Sandpiper is a rather late spring migrant with an average departure date in early June. The first southbound migrants (or perhaps non-breeders) appear in late June. Consequently, records span virtually the entire month. There is, however, a short hiatus between 16 and 22 June. Although this species might appropriately have been considered a summer visitor, this break was taken as the transition between the spring and autumn flights. Fall juveniles trail the adults by about four weeks.

Late Fall Records

It is well established in the literature that most fall Semipalmated Sandpipers depart North America by mid-October (see Gratto-Trevor 1992 for example). In addition, based on a study of specimens Phillips (1975) concluded that "there is no well-authenticated winter (Semipalmated Sandpiper) record yet for Mexico or the United States, except for a recent specimen from the tip of Florida." These considerations suggest that it is prudent to examine very late records carefully. The Indiana literature contains five early November records, all identified by reputable observers (three of these are listed in the fall migration envelopes). Two even later records, seven birds observed 29 November 1997 (Buskirk 1999) and one on 5 December 1953 (Mumford and Keller 1984), were excluded from this study.

Semipalmated Sandpiper Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
250	02-Jun-1977	Willow Slough	E.M. Hopkins	REM
200	27-May-1961	Indy Sewage	C.E. Keller	REM
200	15-May-1963	Indy Sewage	C.E. Keller	IAQ
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
200	17-Aug-1996	S. Porter Co	K.J. Brock	KJB
150	01-Sep-1950	Indy Sewage	C.E. Keller	REM
150	19-Aug-1998	Fountain Co	A.W. Bruner	IQM

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	26-Apr-1992	11-May	23-May	4-Jun	16-Jun-1998	241
Central	21-Apr-1953	10-May	20-May	2-Jun	15-Jun-1982	86
South	18-Apr-2004	2-May	17-May	1-Jun	14-Jun-2002	78
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	22-Jun-1999	24-Jul	19-Aug	10-Sep	4-Nov-1986	778
Central	11-Jul-1971	1-Aug	28-Aug	21-Sep	4-Nov-1956	218
South	22-Jun-2002	31-Jul	30-Aug	3-Oct	8-Nov-1999	148
By Age: Fall flight						
Adult	7-Jul-2005	18-Jul	31-Jul	15-Aug	8-Sep-2004	155
Juv.	26-Jul-1996	13-Aug	24-Aug	11-Sep	19-Oct-1986	277

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