

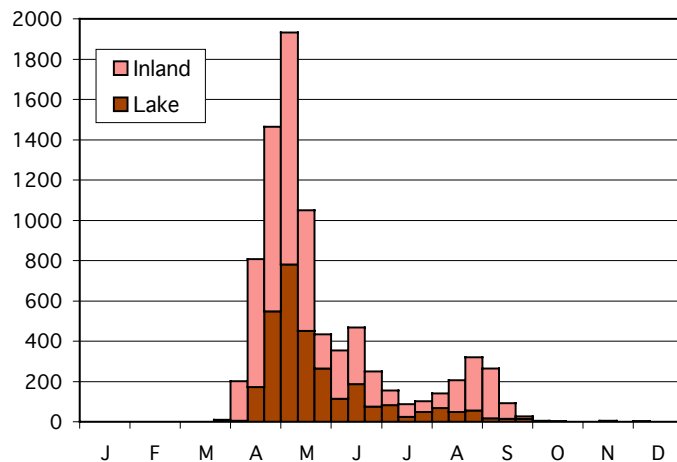
## Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

## *Poliophtila caerulea*

### Historical Information

First Published Record: Indiana's earliest Blue-gray Gnatcatcher report consisted of a specimen collected by A.W. Butler in Franklin County on 29 April 1885 (Mumford files).

Butler (1898) considered the Gnatcatcher a very abundant summer resident in the south, but absent at some locations. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it a common migrant and uncommon to fairly common summer resident. Mumford and Keller (1984) characterized the Gnatcatcher as a fairly common migrant and uncommon to locally common summer resident throughout the state.



### Current Status

The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher is a Fairly Common (5) summer resident and Common (4) spring migrant.

### Occurrence

This widespread species has been reported in at least 84 counties and has almost certainly occurred in all 92. The Gnatcatcher is more common in spring than in fall by a ratio of more than five to one (see migration histogram).

### Longshore Flights

In spring 1985 it was discovered that Gnatcatchers join the throng of migrants that execute morning flights along Lake Michigan's shores following a nocturnal migration. Subsequently, careful counts have yielded the state's largest daily tallies (see maximum count table).

### Extreme Records

Some five November records exist along with three December reports. The winter birds, all in the southern half of the state, include: one banded by J.B. Cope in Wayne County on 6 December 1948, one seen by D.E. Blackburn et al. in Clark County 17 December 1978, and another photographed by Denny Jones in Gibson County 9 December 1979 (all from the Mumford files). All of these reports involved singletons.

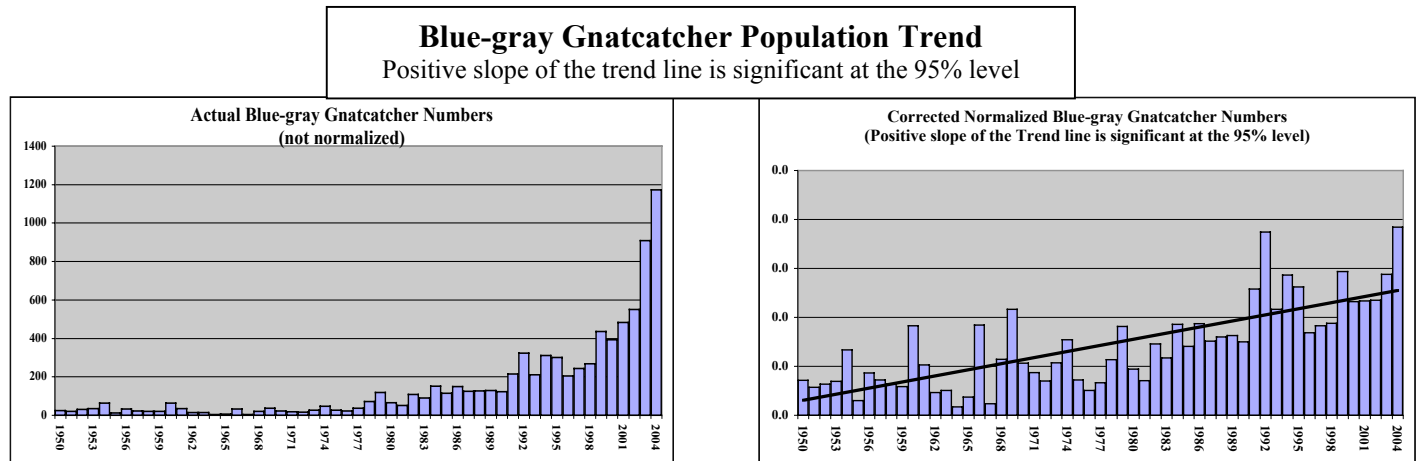
### Status

Physical Evidence: At least eleven specimens, plus eggs, are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
National Museum of Natural History				5
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				5
Univ. of Michigan Museum				3*
*Includes eggs				
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	4	6	5
Central Tier	n	4	6	6
Southern Tier	n	4	5	5
Entire State	n	4	5	5

## Population Trend

The 50-year population trend suggests that Gnatcatchers are thriving in Indiana. Positive slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



## Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) reported breeding evidence in 58 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks; there existed a decided concentration of reports in the southern tier. Mumford and Keller (1984) list egg dates from 7 May through 16 July.

### Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring/Summer				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
59*	29-Apr-2004	Dunes St Park	J.J. McCoy	KJB
52*	06-May-2004	Dunes St Park	J.J. McCoy	KJB
46	30-Jun-2004	S.E. Indiana	B.K. Jackson	BKJ
*Longshore flights				
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
30	26-Aug-1999	Lake Monroe	D.R. Whitehead	INB
28	17-Aug-2000	Lake Monroe	C.L. Wood	INB
22	17-Aug-2004	Lake Monroe	D.R. Whitehead	INB

### Migration Envelopes

Entire State						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
Spring	20-Mar-1983	17-Apr	4-May	26-May	Sum. Res.	1669
Fall	Sum. Res.	28-Jul	26-Aug	14-Sep	17-Nov-79	560

### **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.

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.