

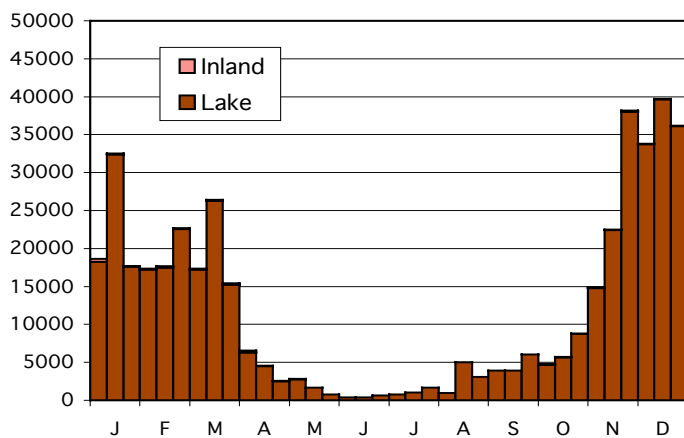
Herring Gull

Larus argentatus

Historical Information

First Published Record: According to the Mumford files J.J. Audubon reported the Herring Gull in Vanderburgh County on 2 November 1820.

Butler (1898) referred to the “American Herring Gull” as a common migrant, which occasionally wintered “in considerable numbers” on Lake Michigan. Keller et al. (1979) considered it an abundant migrant in the north, and uncommon elsewhere. Mumford and Keller (1984) deemed it a permanent resident along Lake Michigan and an uncommon migrant and winter resident inland.



Current Status

On Lake Michigan the Herring Gull is Very Abundant (1) in winter, Abundant (2) in spring and fall, and Common (4) in summer.

Occurrence

The Herring Gull is a permanent resident in Indiana, but is least prevalent in summer. At all times it is far more common along the shores of Lake Michigan than elsewhere in the state. It has been recorded in only 45 inland counties where an average of about 100 birds per year are reported (compared to 23,000 per year on Lake Michigan). The largest inland count consisted of 50 counted by Paul Wharton at the Great Miami Oxbow, Dearborn County, on 1 February 1992 (Brown 1993). Throughout the state it is most numerous in winter, November through March.

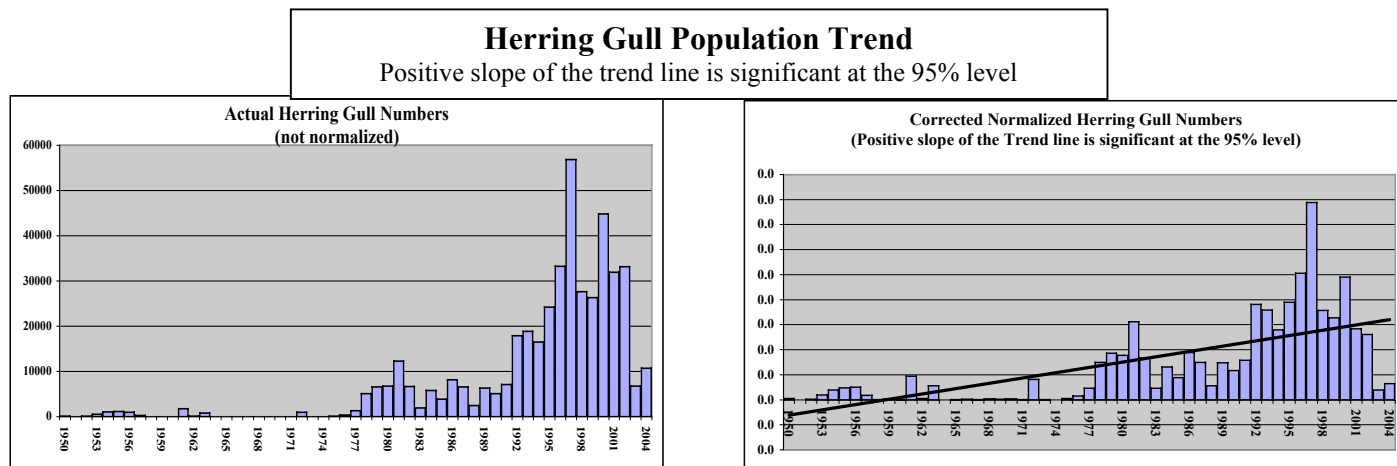
Status

Physical Evidence: At least fifteen specimens are known to exist in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Field Museum				3
National Museum of Natural History				6*
Indiana State Museum				1
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				4
University of Michigan Museum				1
* Includes one skeleton				
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	1	2	4	2
Central Tier	6	7	10	7
Southern Tier	5	6	8	6
Entire State	1	2	4	2

Population Trend

As is the case with many North American gulls the Herring Gull population has expanded in recent decades. Slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

The Herring Gull is a recent addition to Indiana's list of breeding birds. The first breeding occurred at the Port of Indiana, Porter County, where two large nests were observed on the breakwater boulders 5 June 1985. P.B. Grube photographed three eggs in one nest on 9 June and Clyde Fields observed a nestling on 30 June 1985, and a fledgling on 26 July (Brock and Fields 1987). Except for 1988, one or two nests were observed at this site annually through 1989.

Lake County Sites

On 4 June 1987, while conducting a Piping Plover survey on the Lake County beaches, T.T. Cable discovered and photographed a Herring Gull nest containing two eggs at the Inland Steel plant (Brock notes). It is now known that small to modest numbers of Herring Gulls regularly nest in the lakefront Ring-billed Gull colonies. During a 18 May 1998 survey of the Ring-billed Gull colony, for example, J.S. Castrale counted 460 Herring Gull nests (Brock 1998).

Inland Breeding

On 4 June 1989 Tim Young found a nest at the Fort Wayne sewage terminal pond # 1 (Jackson 1990). J.A. Haw and Ed Powers reported an adult sitting on a nest at this site 6 July 1997 (Jackson 1998).

Herring Gull Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
9000	15-Mar-1997	Lakefront	K.J. Brock	KJB
7000	19-Feb-2000	Lakefront	J.K. Cassady	JKC
7000	28-Feb-2002	LaPorte Dump	K.J. Brock	KJB
Fall/Winter				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
5000	18-Dec-1999	Mich. City Harbor	J.J. McCoy	KJB
5000	16-Dec-2000	LaPorte Dump	J.K. Cassady	KJB
5000	19-Jan-2002	Lakefront	K.J. Brock	KJB

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Win. Res.	6-Mar	2-Apr	14-May	Sum. Res.	350
Central	Win. Vis.	---	25-Mar	---	Sum. Vis.	28
South	Win. Res.	5-Mar	3-Apr	5-May	Sum. Vis.	85
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Res.	12-Aug	21-Oct	24-Nov	Win. Res.	461
Central	Sum. Vis.	---	14-Oct	---	Win. Vis.	13
South	Sum. Vis.	24-Sep	3-Nov	23-Nov	Win. Res.	74

References Cited

Brock notes: personal field notes and seasonal summaries beginning in 1972.

Brock, K.J. (1998) Middlewestern Prairie Region, Spring Season 1998, *Nat. Audubon Soc. Field Notes* 52:335-339.

Brock, K.J. and C. Fields (1987) Indiana's First Nesting Record of the Herring Gull, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 65:15-17.

Brown, M.R. (1993) Field Notes Winter 1991-92, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 71:35-42.

Butler, A. W. (1898) The Birds of Indiana, Indiana Department of Geology and Natural Resources Annual Report, 22:575-1187.

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

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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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Mumford, R.E. and C.E. Keller (1984) *The Birds of Indiana*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 376 pp.

Richards, R.L. (1987) The Vertebrate Collection of the Indiana State Museum: "Old" Specimens and Records, *Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science* 97:547-570.