

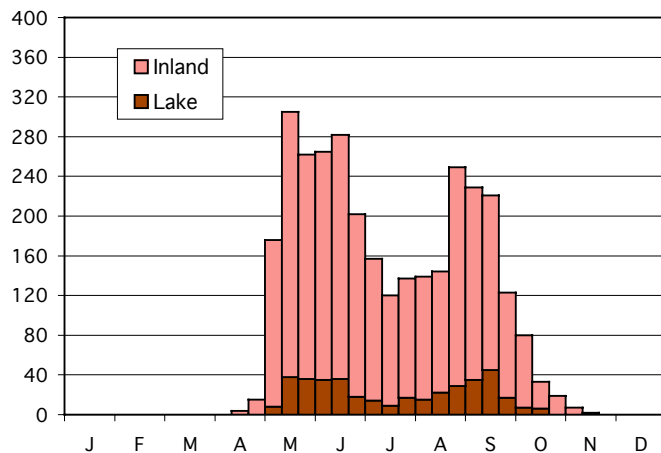
Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Coccyzus americanus

Historical Information

First Published Record: The earliest published Yellow-billed Cuckoo record came from A.W. Butler who reported one in Franklin County 10 October 1884 (Butler 1898).

Butler (1898) referred to the “Rain Crow” as a common summer resident, which was more common in the south. Keller et al. (1979) deemed the Yellow-billed Cuckoo a common to uncommon summer resident. Mumford and Keller (1984) concurred with Butler’s assessment.



Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the George Lake woodlot, Hammond, on 20 May 2003.
Photo by J.K. Cassady.

Status

Physical Evidence: At least 28 specimens, plus a number of eggs, are preserved in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum	No.			
Carnegie Museum of Natural History	3*			
Chicago Academy of Sciences	3			
Chicago Field Museum	8			
National Museum of Natural History	9			
Indiana State Museum	1			
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory	4			
Univ. of Michigan Museum	7*			
*Includes eggs				
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	6	7	6
Central Tier	n	6	7	6
Southern Tier	n	5	6	5
Entire State	n	5	6	5

Current Status

Today the Yellow-billed Cuckoo remains most common in southern Indiana where it is a Fairly Common (5) migrant and Uncommon (6) summer resident.

Occurrence

Over the past two decades an average of 109.7 Yellow-billed Cuckoos per year were found in the state; the peak year occurred in 2004 when some 399 birds were reported; this large number concurred with extensive hatching of the 17 year cicada. The lowest annual number was 26 in 1989, a time when

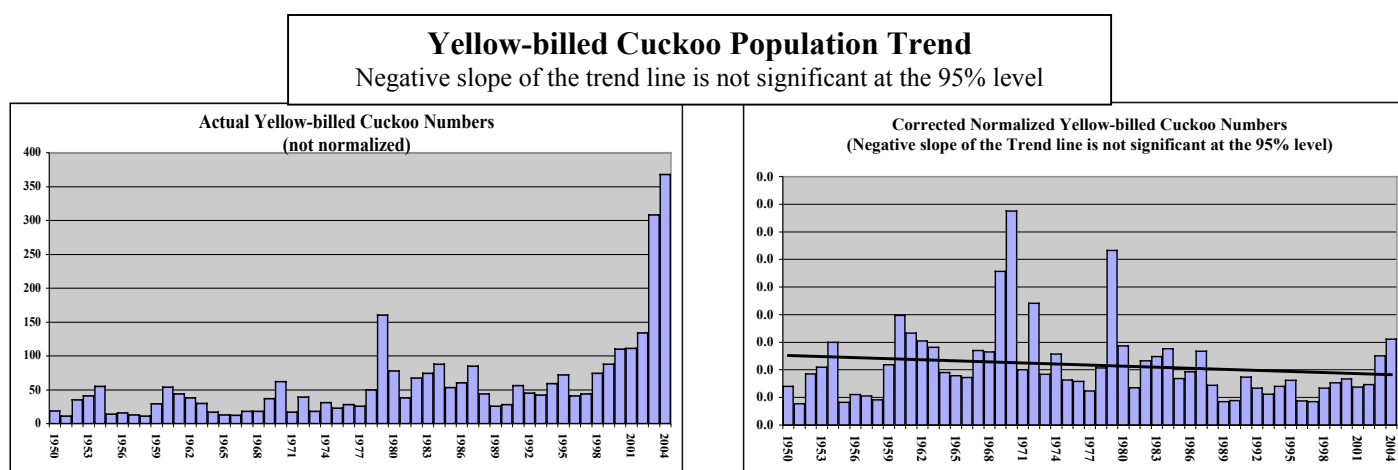
observer effort was considerably lower than today. This cuckoo has also been recorded in at least 83 counties.

Migration

The migration histogram reveals that a majority of Indiana's Yellow-billed Cuckoos are recorded away from Lake Michigan. Although, migration peaks are visible on the histogram, peak fall dates listed in the migration envelopes do not show a consistent pattern throughout the state. Apparently, the numerous summer residents in southern Indiana mask the occurrence of migrants.

Population Trend

The slightly negative slope of the trend line is not statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Mumford and Keller (1984) listed egg dates from 20 May to 3 September. Castrale et al. (1998), reported that breeding evidence occurred in 79 percent of the 647 priority blocks. These were distributed across ten northern counties, 14 central Indiana counties, and 14 southern Indiana counties.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
27	17-May-2005	Monroe & Brown Cos	Mike Clark	INB
22	19-Jun-2001	Bigs Oaks NWR	Refuge Personnel	BON
20*	30-May-1963	Tippecanoe Co	I.W. Burr	IAQ
*20 were reported on one additional date				
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
12	22-Aug-2000	Monroe Co	C.L. Wood	INB
10	17-Sep-2003	Fulton Co	Michael Hooker	INB

9	21-Aug-1983	Willow Slough	W.H. Buskirk	REM
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Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	19-Apr-1980	11-May	23-May	7-Jun	Sum. Res.	282
Central	25-Apr-1954	8-May	18-May	5-Jun	Sum. Res.	197
South	15-Apr-1986	2-May	16-May	7-Jun	Sum. Res.	180
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Res.	28-Jul	31-Aug	24-Sep	6-Nov-1985	525
Central	Sum. Res.	29-Jul	3-Sep	8-Oct	10-Nov-1999	316
South	Sum. Res.	26-Jul	30-Aug	6-Oct	13-Nov-1994	189

References Cited

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

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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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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.

Last update: 18 May 2005