

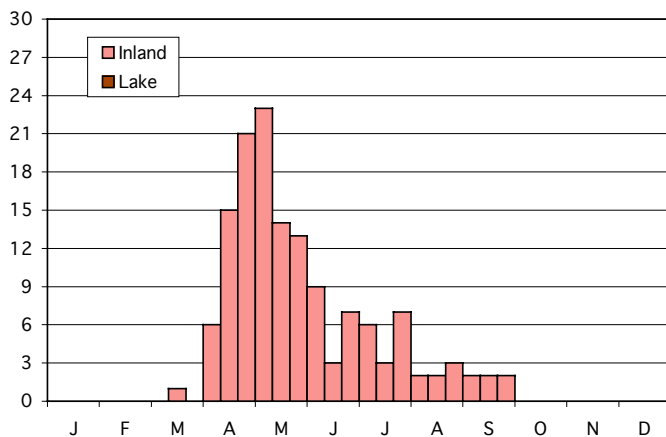
Bachman's Sparrow

Aimophila aestivalis

Historical Information

First Published Record: According to Butler (1898) Robert Ridgway found a Bachman's Sparrow near Wheatland, Knox County on 26 April 1881. This appears to constitute Indiana's earliest formal report.

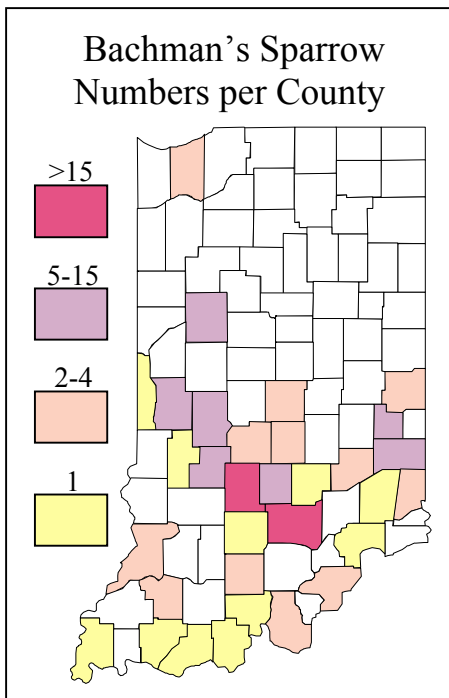
Butler (1898) deemed Bachman's Sparrow a "usually not common" summer resident in the southwestern quarter of the state. Keller et al. (1979) considered it a very rare to casual local summer resident. Mumford and Keller (1984) described Bachman's Sparrow as a very rare and local summer resident in the southern half of the state.



Status

Physical Evidence: Some six specimens are known to be housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
National Museum of Natural History				4
Univ. of Michigan Museum				2
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	n	n	n
Central Tier	n	n	n	n
Southern Tier	n	10	10	n
Entire State	n	10	10	n

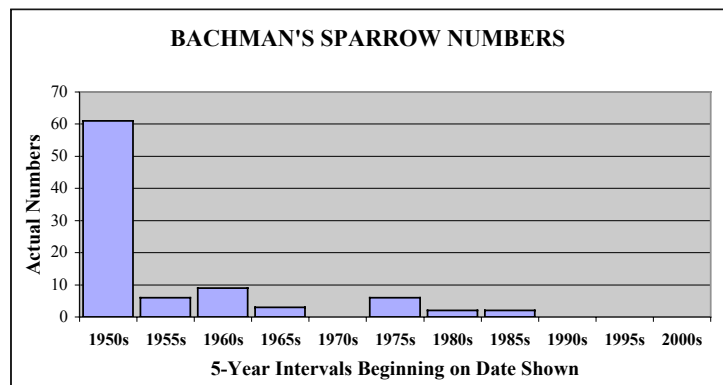


Current Status

Today Bachman's Sparrow is Accidental (10) in Indiana. It was formerly far more common (see Historical section).

Occurrence

This skillful songster is disappearing from Indiana. There are only two records since 1985, the most recent of which



occurred 4 June 1988 in Crawford County (Castrale et al. 1998). The above plot clearly illustrates the statewide

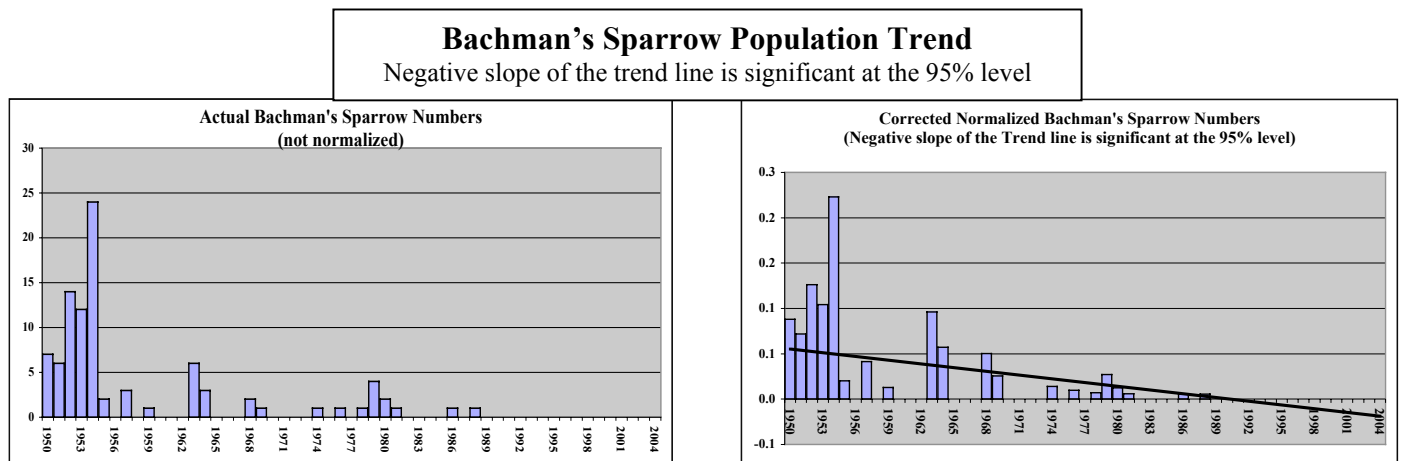
decline and suggests that a major decrease occurred in the late 1950s. In summer 1993 B.K. Jackson (1993) surveyed Bachman's Sparrow habitat in Indiana and found no birds.

Unreliable Record

An anomalous 5 November 1976 banding report from Allen County (U.S. Banding Lab) was deemed unreliable. It is more than 40 days after the next latest fall record and is some 100 miles from the next nearest known location.

Bachman's Sparrow Decline

Regarding preferred nesting habitat, a quote in Brooks (1938) states, "The choicest locations are about 50 to 100 yards down from the ridge tops in old deserted fields." This description frames the primary hypothesis for Bachman's Sparrow decline in Indiana. The abandonment of numerous farms in southern reaches of the state apparently supplied an abundance of "old deserted fields." As these gradually became overgrown the choice habitat disappeared. The second explanation is competition from other species, especially Field Sparrows. Jackson (1993) found, without exception, Field Sparrows at every site visited and these birds responded vigorously to recordings of the Bachman's song. The 50-year population data clearly illustrate this sparrow's decline. Negative slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) found no confirmed or probable breeding evidence for this species in Indiana. The Mumford files reported a nest with four eggs in June 1933; the young were banded 23 July.

Bachman's Sparrow Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Entire Year				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
6	15-Apr-1954	Multiple Sites*	R.E. Mumford	REM
4	15-May-1893	Putnam Co	???	REM
4	22-May-1894	Brown Co	???	BU2
4	23-Jul-1933	Decatur Co	???	DNR
4	10-Jun-1951	Fayette Co	R.E. Mumford	REM
4	26-Jun-1952	Multiple Sites	R.E. Mumford	DNR
*Two in Brown, 2 in Jackson, and 2 in Pike Counties				

Migration Envelopes						
Entire State						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
Spring	19-Mar-1908	11-Apr	2-May	28-May	10-Jun-1951	73
Fall	18-Jul-1950	---	15-Aug	---	24-Sep-1902	19

References Cited

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

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Jackson, B.K. (1993) A review of Bachman's Sparrow habitat in Indiana. Indiana Dep. Nat. Resour. Nongame Prog. Rep. 80pp.

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.