

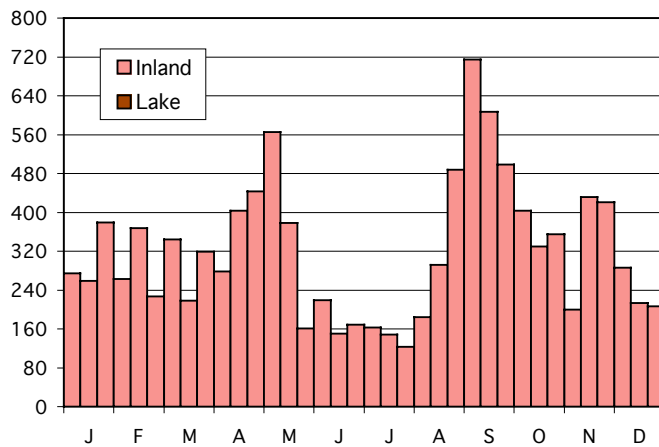
Carolina Chickadee

Poecile carolinensis

Historical Information

First Published Record: Butler (1898) reported mating birds on 31 March 1884; this appears to constitute the state's earliest published report.

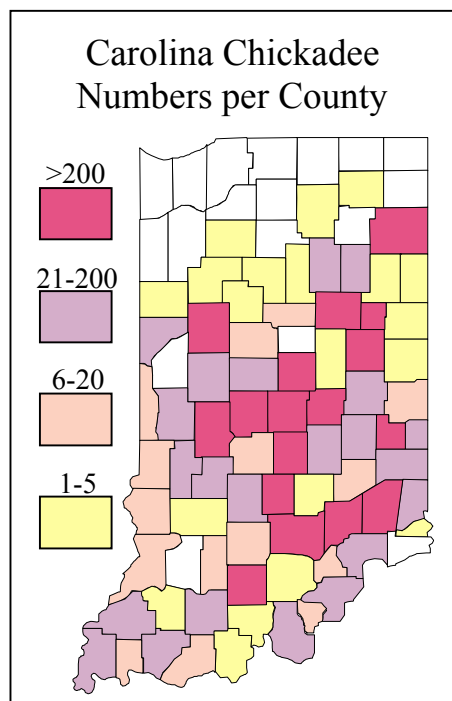
Butler (1898) deemed the Carolina Chickadee an abundant resident throughout southern Indiana. Keller et al. (1979) considered it an abundant resident south of a line connecting Lafayette and Fort Wayne. Mumford and Keller (1984) provided no status assessment, but mentioned the slow northward movement of Carolina Chickadees in northeast Indiana.



Status

Physical Evidence: At least a dozen specimens, plus a nest and eggs, are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and the Mumford files).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum	No.			
Carnegie Museum of Natural History	1			
Chicago Field Museum	3			
National Museum of Natural History	2**			
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory	6			
Univ. of Michigan Museum	11*			
J. Moore Museum, Earlham College	1			
Denver Museum of Natural History	1			
*Includes eggs	**Nest			
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	6	4	6	4
Central Tier	4	4	5	3
Southern Tier	4	4	5	4
Entire State	4	4	5	3



Current Status

South of a line from Warren County to Allen County the Carolina Chickadee is a Common (4) to Very Common (3) permanent resident.

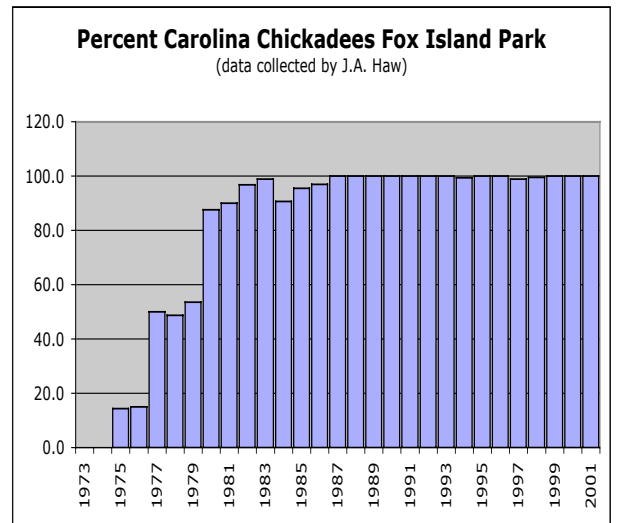
Occurrence

This tiny bird is widespread across the southern three-fourths of Indiana. In addition to counties indicated on the distribution map, Castrale et al. (1998) reported birds in Daviess, Fountain, Fulton, and Marshall Counties. Merritt (1981) also lists records from Whitley County.

In winter 1975 and early spring 1976 Merritt (1981) conducted a chickadee study in northeastern Indiana. Results of this investigation suggest that the Carolina Chickadee is sedentary and that the boundary between this species and the Black-capped Chickadee was stable. However, data from Fox Island Park, about 40 miles northwest of the Merritt study site, indicate that the contact zone is not stationary.

Northward Expansion

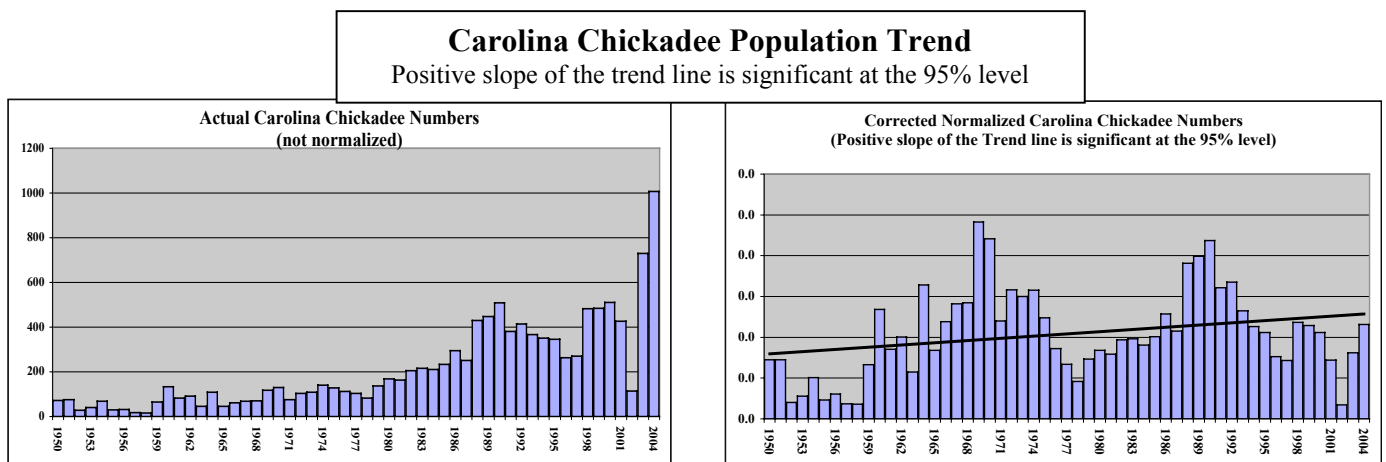
Data from Allen County indicate that Carolina Chickadees are indeed expanding northward. The most compelling evidence comes from Fox Island Park (located slightly southwest of Fort Wayne), where J.A. Haw recorded field-data for more than 30 years. Field identifications were based primarily on song, but plumage characters were applied to silent birds (Haw pers. comm.). Chickadee data from this site show a most dramatic replacement of Black-capped by Carolinas within a single decade (see graph). The graph plots the percentage of all chickadees that were Carolinas. The percent of *P. carolinensis* increased from zero in 1973 and 1974, to 98.8 percent by 1983. During this interval a number of birds believed to be hybrids were observed. Beyond 1986 virtually all chickadees in the park were Carolinas (though Haw noted that after about 1987 the chickadees were not examined closely, but no Black-capped songs were heard). J.A. Haw also reported that as of 2004 the contact zone is on the north side of Fort Wayne.



Extreme Count

Indiana's largest single party count consisted of 201 reported by S. Pelikan at Muscatatuck NWR on 18 November 1990 (Ned Keller's web page).

Population Trend



Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) reported breeding evidence in 74 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks. Eggs have been reported from 24 April through 25 May (Mumford files).

Carolina Chickadee Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
50	01-Mar-1998	Muscatatuck NWR	Neill Cade	NKE
40	02-May-2003	Whitewater SP	C.C. Warren	INB
27	13-May-1995	Warrick Co	J.H. Campbell	IAQ
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
201	18-Nov-1990	Muscatatuck NWR	Steve Pelikan	NKE
35	26-Dec-1940	Marion Co	H.F. Wright	REM
30	16-Sep-1993	Fox Island Park	J.A. Haw	Haw

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.

Keller, Ned, a web page, *Birding in Cincinnati*, found at:
<http://cincinnatibirds.com/database/index.php>

Merritt, P.G. (1981) Narrowly Disjunct Allopatry between Black-capped and Carolina Chickadees in Northern Indiana, *Wilson Bulletin*, 93:56-66.

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.