

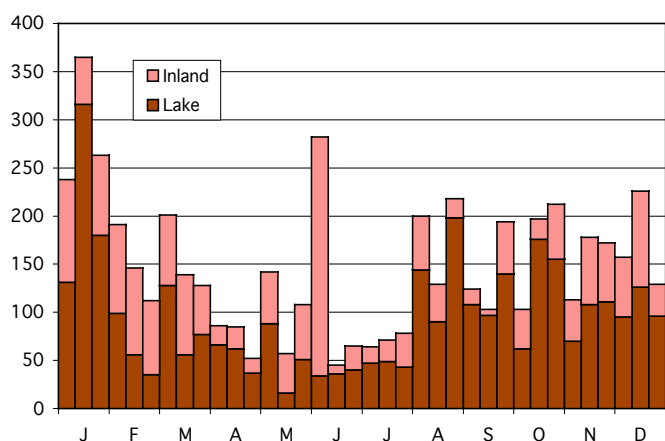
Mute Swan

Cygnus olor

Historical Information

First Published Record: It is difficult to determine the first legitimate record of this invading Old World swan. Mumford and Keller (1975) noted that a few free-flying birds (possibly escapes) had been reported. They further commented, "For the present, this species might be considered an exotic." It is hypothesized that Indiana's Mute Swans originated from the established Michigan population. McPeck (1994) reported a Michigan population of 47 in the 1940s and over 500 in the 1980s. Accordingly, it is conceivable that the two birds observed by L.A. Casebere at Grass Lake, Steuben County 1 October 1975 (Keller et al. 1979), constitute Indiana's first authentic Mute Swans.

Keller et al. (1979) considered the Mute Swan a casual winter visitor. Mumford and Keller (1984) listed a number of reports spanning the interval 1955 to 1966, and noted that since 1974 free-flying birds have been reported annually in the state. They also listed a maximum count of 14 birds on the 19 December 1981 Columbus Christmas Bird Count.



Current Status

The Mute Swan is a locally Common (4) permanent resident.

Occurrence

Mute Swans have now been reported in more than 61 counties. Following the pattern established in Michigan, Indiana's Mute Swan population expanded very rapidly. More than 100 birds per year have been reported since 1987. As shown in the Population Trend plots, numbers peaked in the late 1990s, with more than 400 birds reported in 1996 and 1997. Subsequent annual counts declined slightly, but rebounded in 2002. The state's largest population occurs on Wolf and George Lakes in extreme northwest Lake County where breeding occurs and sizeable numbers winter. A substantial population is also becoming established in Steuben County where J.A. Haw recorded a peak count of 71 on 12 December 2002 (IN-BIRD).

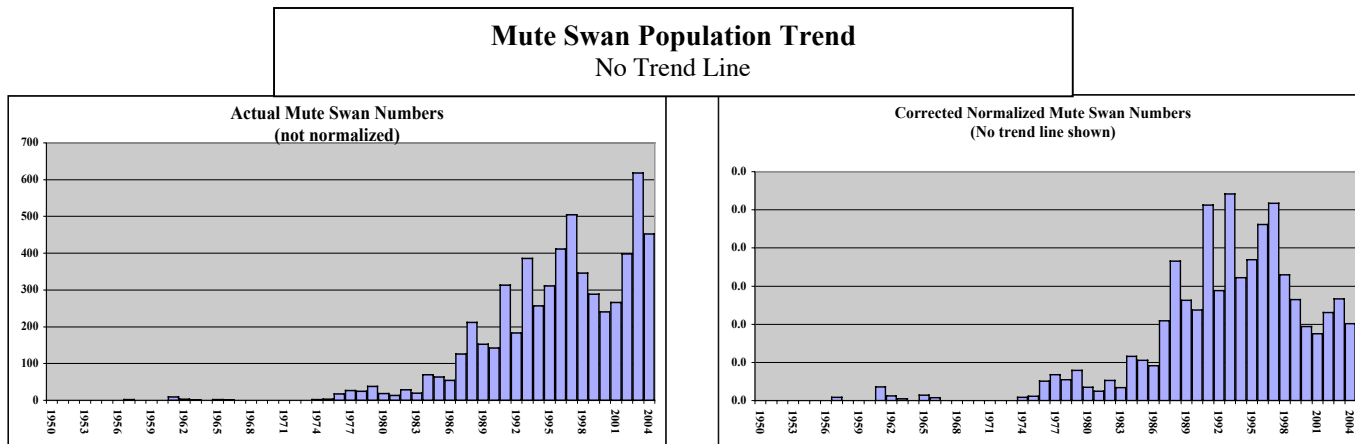
Status

Physical Evidence: Apparently no specimens exist. However, a photo of two Harrison County birds appears on front cover of the *Indiana Audubon Quarterly* 1976 Vol. 54, No. 3.

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
No known specimens				0
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	4	5	6	4
Central Tier	7	7	8	9
Southern Tier	6	7	9	7
Entire State	4	4	6	4

Population Trend

The plots below clearly illustrate the dramatic increase in the Indiana Mute Swan population. Although the trend line is not shown, its positive slope is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) reported breeding evidence in fewer than one percent of the state's 647 priority blocks, with evidence in only nine counties. Nests and/or young have been reported in Elkhart, Lake, LaGrange, LaPorte, Newton, St. Joseph, Shelby, and Steuben Counties, and at Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge. Nesting dates range from 25 March through 21 June.

Mute Swan Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
145	7-Feb-2003	Wolf Lake	???	AB6
136	14-Jan-1996	Wolf Lake	W.J. Marcisz	NAB
87	02-Jan-1997	Lakefront	J.J. McCoy	KJB
71	12-Dec-2002	Steuben Co	J.A. Haw	INB
68	25-Jan-1995	Wolf Lake	J.J. McCoy	KJB

References Cited

Castrale, J.S., E.M. Hopkins, and C.E. Keller (1998) *Atlas of breeding Birds of Indiana*, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, 388 pp.

IN-BIRD, a Listserve dealing with Indiana birds developed and maintained by P.W. Kelly. The records are archived at: <http://listserv.indiana.edu/archives/in-bird-1.html>

Keller, C.E., S.A. Keller, and T.C. Keller (1979) *Indiana Birds and Their Haunts*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 214 pp.

McPeck, G.A. editor (1994) *The Birds of Michigan*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 358 pp.

Mumford, R.E. and C.E. Keller (1975) An Annotated Check List of Indiana Birds, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 53:28-59.

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