

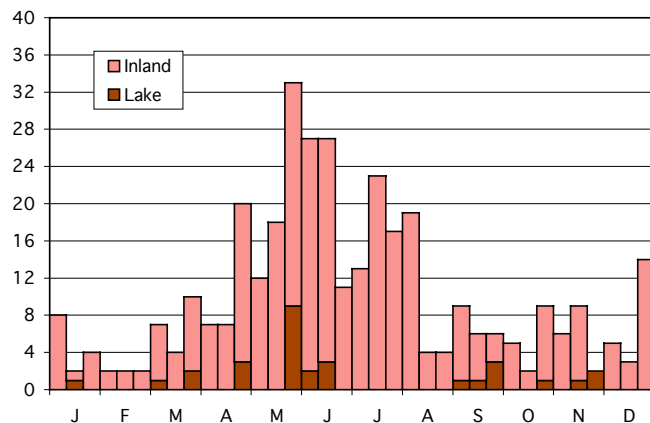
## Barn Owl

## *Tyto alba*

### Historical Information

**First Published Record:** Mumford and Keller (1984) mentioned an 1879 record, but a specimen killed near Brookville on 25 October 1883 (Butler 1898), appears to constitute Indiana's first fully dated Barn Owl record.

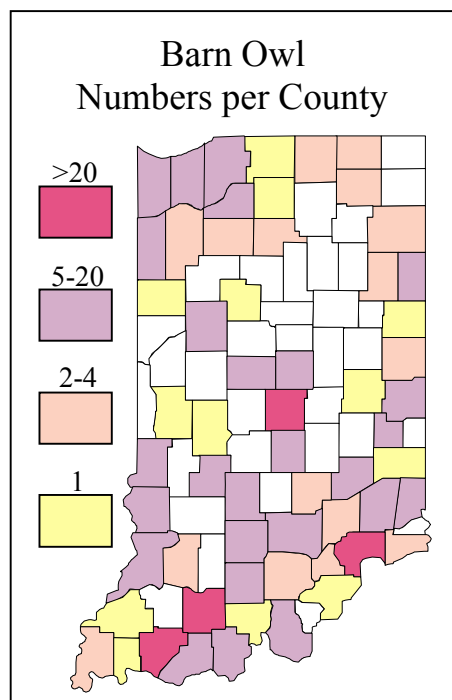
Butler (1898) termed the Barn Owl a local resident, which was rare in the north. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it a casual resident and Mumford and Keller (1984) noted a decline, but provided no status assessment.



### Status

**Physical Evidence:** Some 19 specimens are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson, unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Academy of Sciences				1
Chicago Field Museum				4
National Museum of Natural History				3
Indiana State Museum				3
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				4
Univ. of Michigan Museum				4
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	10	8	n	8
Central Tier	10	9	7	9
Southern Tier	7	7	7	7
Entire State	7	7	7	7



### Current Status

The Barn Owl is Rare (7) in the southern tier of counties.

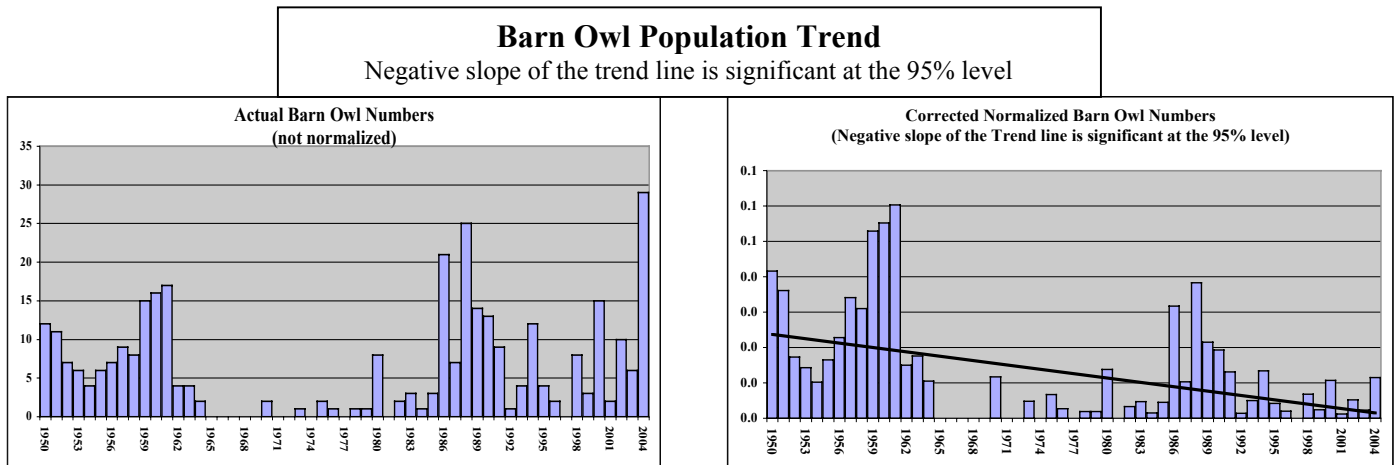
### Occurrence

The Barn Owl has been reported in 59 of Indiana's 92 counties, with a slightly higher concentration in southern reaches of the state. Although Barn Owls wander, as evidenced by records from the lakefront where breeding does not occur, it is not clear that a distinct migration takes place. The increased rate of occurrence in May through July (see migration histogram) likely reflects the presence of family groups rather than migrants.

A study of Barn Owl pellets from southern Indiana (Castrale et al. 1983) indicated that voles constituted the dominant prey item.

## Population Trend

Quite clearly Barn Owls have not fared well in Indiana. Negative slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



## Breeding

The Barn Owl is currently listed as endangered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Castrale et al. (1998) obtained evidence of confirmed breeding in 17 counties; all but one of these were located in the southern tier. The outlying county was Johnson, which is immediately adjacent to the southern tier.

For many years a pair nested in a large Paulownia tree at the Lanier Mansion in Jefferson County. Details are provided in Poindexter and Webster (1993).

## Barn Owl Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Entire Year				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
14*	21-Jun-2004	Dubois Co	J.S. Castrale	NNB
9+	8-Apr-2005	Lawrence & Owen Cos	J.S. Castrale	INB
8#	8-Apr-2005	Lawrence & Owen Cos	DNR- staff	INB
6**	25-Mar-1961	Adams Co	Ruth Moser	DNR
6**	08-Sep-2000	Dubois Co	Amy Ferchak	IAQ
*Includes 4 adults, 4 chicks, and 6 eggs				
+Includes 3 adults & 6 eggs				
# Includes a pair of adults and 6 eggs				
**Egg count				

## 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., L.E. Lehman, and G.C. Iverson (1983) Summer Prey of a Barn Owl in South-Central Indiana with Additional Records of Occurrence, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 61:158-161.

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.

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

Poindexter, W.E. and J.D. Webster (1993) Observations on the Lanier Mansion Barn Owls, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 71:47-50.

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.