

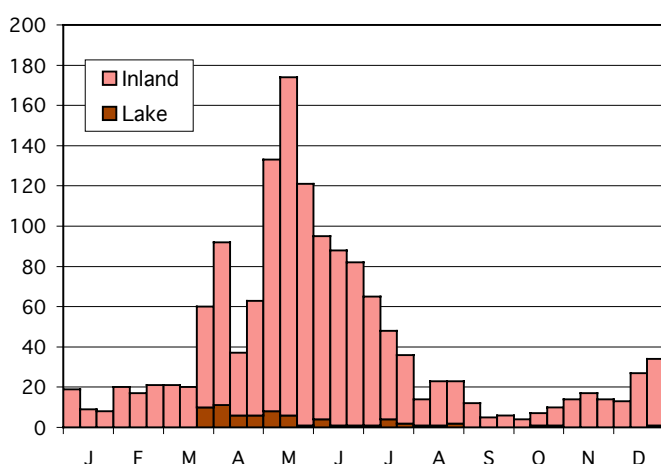
Loggerhead Shrike

Lanius ludovicianus

Historical Information

First Published Record: Nesting took place in Lake County in spring 1886; however, the first fully dated record occurred in Franklin County 17 March 1887 (Butler 1898).

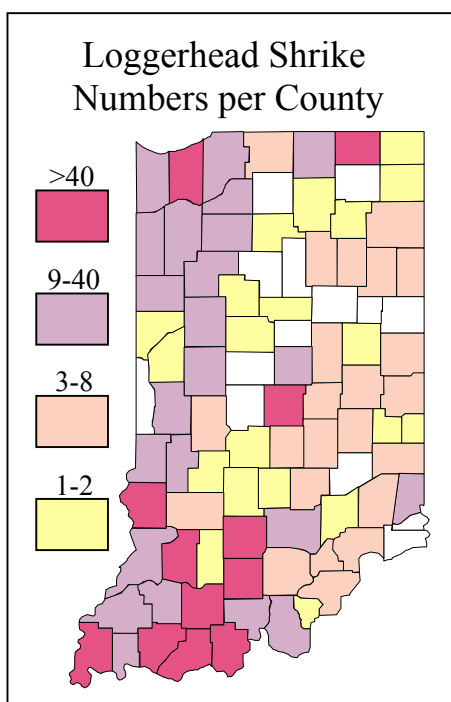
Butler (1898) described the “Butcher Bird,” a name commonly applied to both shrikes, as a summer resident, which was most numerous in central and northern Indiana. Keller et al. (1979) characterized it as a rare (south) to very rare resident and noted a decline over the previous decade. Mumford and Keller (1984) also detected a population decrease and characterized this shrike as a rare migrant and very rare summer resident, commenting, “In southern Indiana, where it was formerly an uncommon winter resident, it is now generally rare.”



Status

Physical Evidence: A dozen specimens are known to be archived in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Chicago Field Museum				4
National Museum of Natural History				5*
Indiana State Museum				1
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				3
Univ. of Michigan Museum				5*
*Includes eggs				
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	10	7	7	8
Central Tier	10	9	9	8
Southern Tier	7	6	6	7
Entire State	7	6	6	7



Current Status

Over the last 20 years the Loggerhead Shrike has been Uncommon (6) in spring and summer in southwestern Indiana, but the population clearly takes large swings (see Breeding section).

Occurrence

The distribution map reveals that Loggerhead Shrikes are concentrated in western, and especially southwestern, Indiana. As illustrated in the migration histogram this species is rarely encountered along Lake Michigan's shores. Over the past 20 years an average of 42.5 birds has been reported annually.

Migration

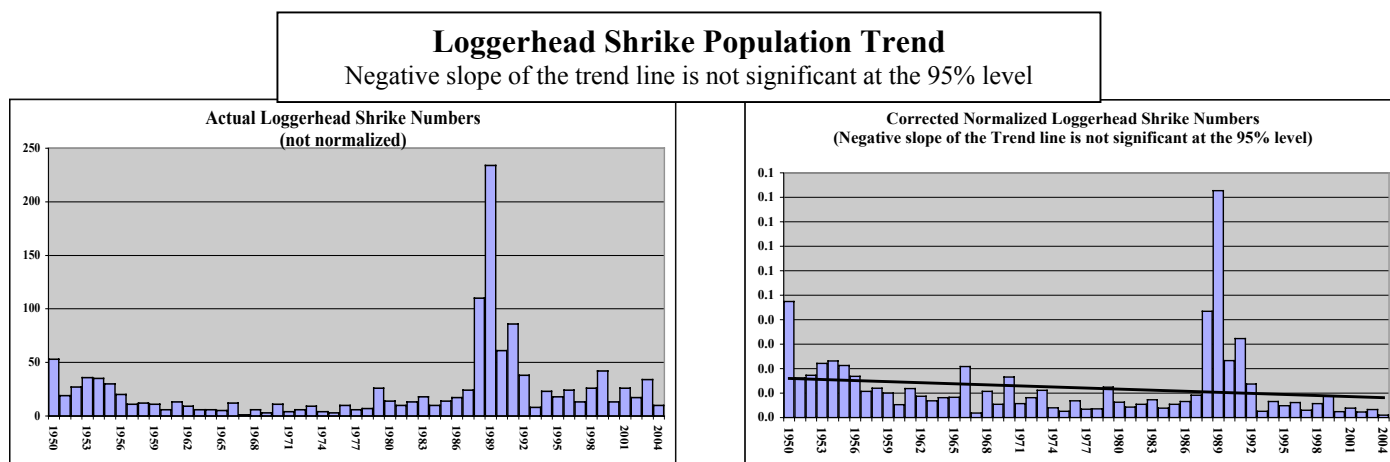
The migration histogram suggests that the Loggerhead Shrike is primarily a spring migrant and summer resident; indeed, there is little evidence of a fall flight. Critical dates for the spring-summer peak are: arrival 30 March, peak 20 May, and depart 23 July.

Large Counts

Several reports from the U.S. Banding Lab exceed the highest numbers in the maximum count table (e.g., 17 banded in Perry County during the first five days of May 1989). However, as banding dates are coded in groups of five days, it is impossible to confirm that all of these birds were banded on the same day.

Population Trend

The large spike shown in the late 1980s and early 1990s represents a surge of breeding birds in southwestern Indiana (see Breeding section). In 2004 L.W. Sterrenburg and Ken Burton surveyed the sites occupied during this expansion and found no shrikes. Therefore, it is not surprising that the 50-year trend line shows a negative slope; however, this slope is not statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Indiana's breeding population of this endangered species has varied widely over the decades. Burton (1993) suggested that during the pre-settlement era, Indiana's extensive forests likely precluded the presence of most Loggerhead Shrikes. Butler (1898) noted that clearing of forests expanded the habitat for this shrike so that by 1900 it was a common summer resident.

Mumford and Keller (1984) reported that the nineteenth century expansion had been reversed and Burton (1991) discussed possible explanations for this decline. However, Burton (1993) noted evidence of a population recovery, especially in the traditional southern tier breeding counties. In 1988 the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Nongame program sponsored a two-year survey, which revealed that, at least in southwestern Indiana, Loggerhead Shrikes were considerably more common than previously believed (see table).

DNR TWO-YEAR BREEDING LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE STUDY			
Year	Adults	Nesting Pairs	Counties
1988	167	53	15
1989	248	98	15
Data from Burton (1989) and (1990)			

However, the late 1980s surge in shrike numbers was short lived. The primary sites covered by Burton were resurveyed by Castrale and Ferchak (2001), revealing that only 19 percent of Burton's sites, were occupied in 1999 and 2000. Surprisingly, in the Castrale and Ferchak investigation only half of the 26 occupied sites in 1999 had shrikes in 2000. Even more disconcerting, an informal 2004 survey by L.W. Sterrenburg and Ken Burton, yielded absolutely no shrikes (Brock 2004).

Castrale et al. (1998) reported breeding evidence in five percent of the 647 priority blocks. Breeding was confirmed in 16 counties, all except three of which were in the southern tier. Mumford and Keller (1984) listed egg dates from 28 March through 22 June. The Castrale et al. (1998) map also shows two confirmed nestings in Ohio County; unfortunately, these records could not be located.

Loggerhead Shrike Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Entire Year				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
8	27-May-1950	Geist Reservoir	H.C. West	HCW
8	04-Jul-1991	White Co	R.L. Hedge	IAQ
8	12-Jun-1999	Daviess Co	J&S Hengeveld	INB
7	19-May-1956	Starke Co	Dorothy Buck	DNR
6	07-May-1936	NW Indiana	D.H. Boyd	REM

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