

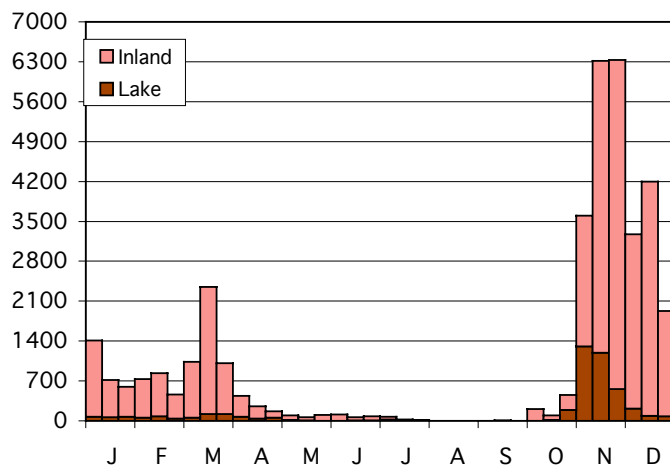
Hooded Merganser

Lophodytes cucullatus

Historical Information

First Published Record: Butler (1890) stated, "Mr. Robert Ridgway found it breeding in hollow trees in Knox County in the spring of 1881." However, the earliest completely dated Hooded Merganser record involved a specimen collected by B.W. Evermann in Carroll County 8 April 1885 (Mumford files).

Butler (1890) referred to this petite duck as a common migrant and winter resident, which nested throughout the state. Ten years later (Butler 1898) upgraded the status to "an abundant migrant." Keller et al. (1979) deemed it a fairly common migrant, but rare to very rare in summer and winter. Mumford and Keller (1984) characterized it as an uncommon migrant.



Current Status

Today the Hooded Merganser must be considered a permanent resident of Indiana. It is Very Common (3) in fall migration and Uncommon (6) during summer.

Occurrence

Having been reported in more than two-thirds of all Indiana counties, this species is widespread across the state. It often frequents the smaller bodies of water and is six times more common at inland sites than on Lake Michigan. Hooded Mergansers are most common in fall when flocks, often exceeding 100 birds, gather for migration.

Status

Physical Evidence: Eleven specimens are preserved as indicated in the Status Table (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

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



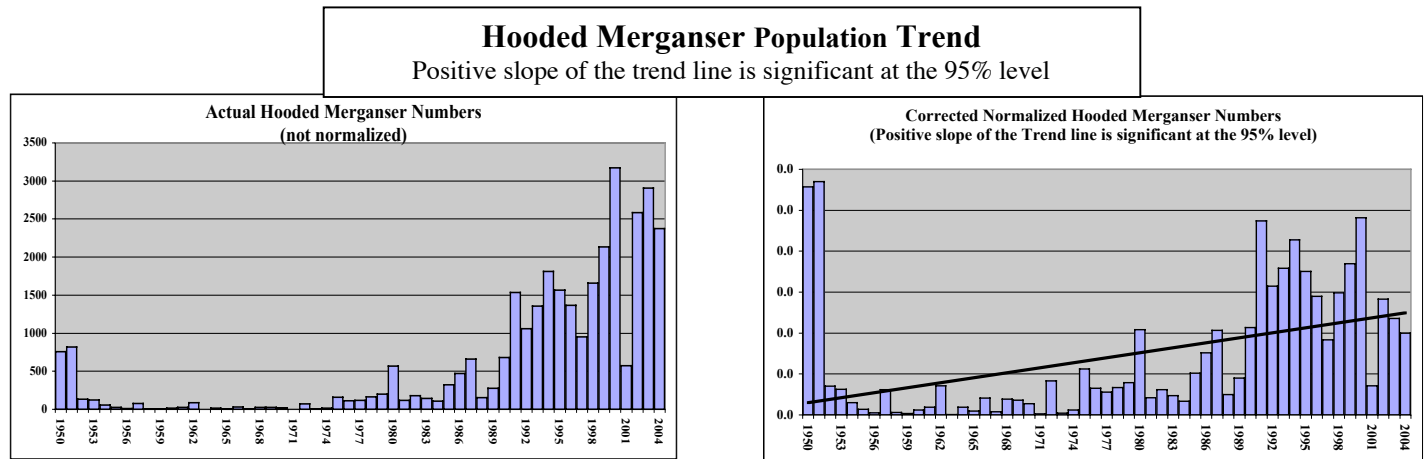
Apparent male Hooded Merganser X Common Goldeneye hybrid, Hammond Marina 24 January 2004. Photo by J.J. McCoy.

Hybrids

Apparent hybrid Hooded Merganser X Common Goldeneye have been reported on the lakefront during the winters of 1976-77, 1980-81, 1998-99, 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04 (see photo). Except for an observation on 1 January 1981 at Trail Creek (Michigan City), all were males; a 1981 male was accompanied by what appeared to be a hybrid female.

Population Trend

The positive slope shown on the normalized plot is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

Mumford and Keller (1984) note more than two-dozen breeding records for the state. The Indiana Atlas reports confirmed breeding evidence in Jackson, Lake, Posey, Starke, and Wells Counties. Downy chicks or family groups have been reported during the interval 6 April through 23 July.

Hooded Merganser Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
800	17-Mar-1951	Central Indiana	???	M&K
600	18-Mar-1950	Lake Freeman	???	M&K
90	07-Mar-1996	Parke Co	A.W. Bruner	IAQ
Fall/Winter				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
570	14-Dec-2000	Lake Monroe	D.R. Whitehead	INB
525	19-Dec-2004	Lake Gibson	J.J. McCoy	INB
500	21-Nov-2000	Lake Gibson	C.L. Wood	NNB

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Win. Res.	23-Jan	22-Mar	4-May	Sum. Res.	553
Central	Win. Res.	20-Jan	26-Mar	3-Jun	Sum. Res.	131
South	Win. Res.	15-Jan	3-Mar	25-May	Sum. Res.	234
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Res.	28-Oct	16-Nov	11-Dec	Win. Res.	545
Central	Sum. Res.	29-Oct	19-Nov	15-Dec	Win. Res.	108
South	Sum. Res.	4-Nov	23-Nov	19-Dec	Win. Res.	270

References Cited

Butler, A. W. (1890) The Birds of Indiana, Appendix to *Transactions of the Indiana Horticultural Society for 1890* (available on the web).

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

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.

Last update: 21 December 2004