

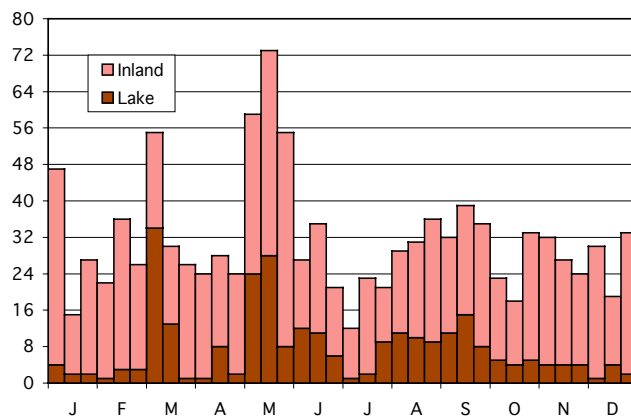
Eastern Screech-Owl

Megascops asio

Historical Information

First Published Record: Indiana's earliest published date involved a bird taken in Starke County on 12 February 1887 (Merriam and Fisher 1893).

Butler (1898) referred to the "Screech Owl" as an abundant resident. Keller et al. (1979) lowered the status to a fairly common resident. Mumford and Keller (1984) considered it common throughout the state.



Current Status

Based on the criteria used in this work the Eastern Screech-Owl is an Uncommon (6) to Rare (7) resident in Indiana.

Occurrence

Although this nocturnal bird has been recorded in 74 Indiana counties, Screech-Owls likely occur in many more, but simply have not been sought. The higher numbers in May (see migration histogram) likely reflect increased vocalization associated with breeding activities. Over the past 20 years an average of almost 31 Screech-Owls per year was reported in the state.

Large Counts

Most of the higher counts listed in the maximum count table were recorded on owl surveys conducted by the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore staff.

Color Morphs

Butler (1898) mentioned that the red morph was the more common morph in Indiana. He also noted that in the Wabash valley 95 percent were red and suggested that the color morph ratio varied both temporally and geographically. Mumford and Keller (1984) pointed out that a continuum of colors exists between these two ends. Reports since the mid-1950s yield 20 red and 31 gray morphs statewide.

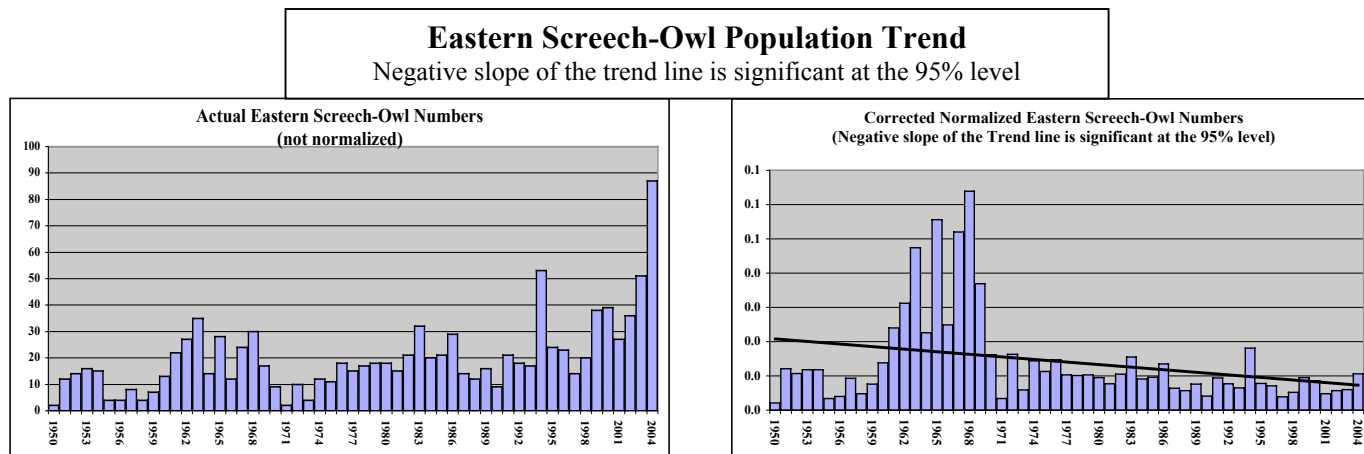
Status

Physical Evidence: A remarkable 47 specimens, including eggs, are preserved in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Carnegie Museum of Natural History				2
Chicago Field Museum				1
National Museum of Natural History				21
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				15
Univ. of Michigan Museum				8*
*Includes eggs				
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	7	6	7	7
Central Tier	7	7	7	6
Southern Tier	7	6	7	6
Entire State	7	6	7	6

Population Trend

The 50-year population trend, dominated by higher reported numbers in the 1960s, shows a strongly negative slope to the trend line, which is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

The Indiana Atlas project reported breeding evidence in 61 percent of the 647 priority blocks. Confirmed breeding was established in some 24 counties, which were distributed rather uniformly across the entire state (Castrale et al. 1998). Eggs have been observed during the interval 23 March to 24 April (Mumford and Keller 1984) and fledglings have been noted well into July.

Eastern Screech-Owl Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Entire Year				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
23	08-Mar-1994	Indiana Dunes	N.Lakeshore Staff	BBC
13	04-May-1994	Indiana Dunes	N.Lakeshore Staff	BBC
8	09-Mar-1995	Indiana Dunes	N.Lakeshore Staff	BBC
8	17-Jun-1978	Multiple Sites	Tom Stankus	IAQ
7	17-Jun-1993	Indiana Dunes	Clyde Fields	KJB
Six were recorded on six occasions.				

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.

Merriam, D.H. and A.K. Fisher (1893) *The Hawks and Owls of the United States in their Relation to Agriculture*, Gov. Printing Office, Washington D.C. 210 pp.

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