

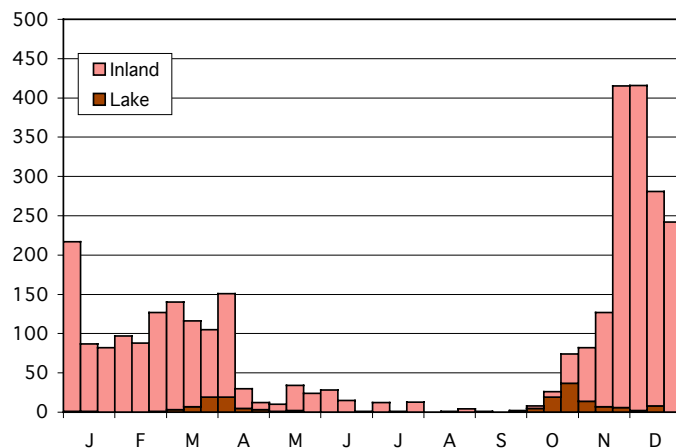
Short-eared Owl

Asio flammeus

Historical Information

First Published Record: According to Butler (1898) a specimen was taken in the Whitewater Valley 8 November 1878; this constitutes Indiana's earliest published record.

Butler (1898) considered the Short-eared Owl a resident in the north and irregular elsewhere. Keller et al. (1979) described this owl as a rare to very rare winter visitant. Mumford and Keller (1984) deemed it an uncommon to rare winter visitor and local permanent resident.

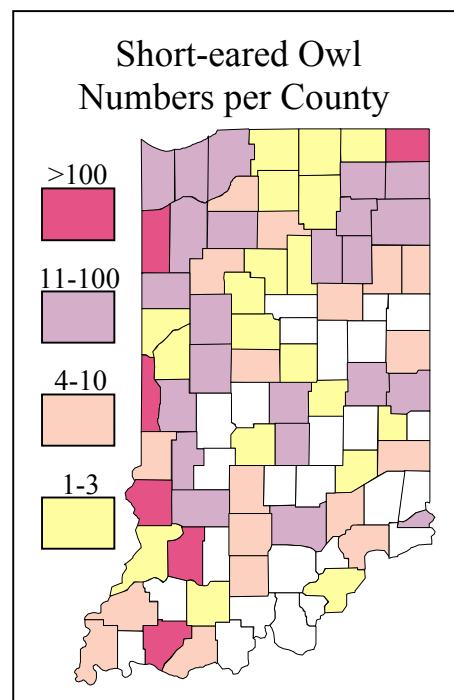


Status

Physical Evidence: A hefty 27 specimens are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list, J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list, and Richards 1987).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				2
Chicago Field Museum				4
National Museum of Natural History				12
Indiana State Museum				2
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				5
Univ. of Michigan Museum				2
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	6	6	10	6
Central Tier	6	7	10	6
Southern Tier	5	6	7	6
Entire State	5	6	7	5



Current Status

The Short-eared Owl is a permanent resident, which is Fairly Common (5) in fall.

Occurrence

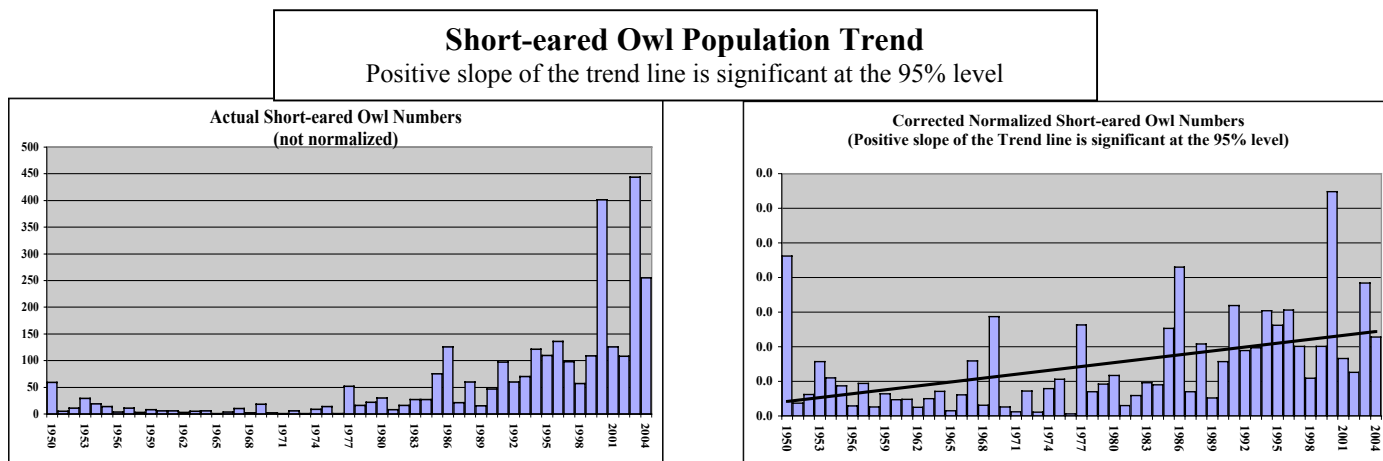
This widespread owl has been recorded in at least 66 counties across the state (see distribution map). It appears frequently in the reclaimed strip mines along the south central and southwestern edge of the state. Over the past 20 years an average of 130 birds per year has been reported. The largest yearly total occurred in 2003 when almost 500 were reported.

Migration

Short-eared Owls are clearly migratory; this is most evident on the lakefront and is well illustrated in the migration histogram. Migration envelopes, based solely on lakefront data, suggest flight peaks near 2 April in spring and 27 October in fall.

Population Trend

It appears that development of grasslands on reclaimed strip mines has benefited Short-eared Owls. Positive slope of the 50-year trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

The Indiana Atlas project confirmed the breeding of this state endangered species in five counties (Clay, Pike, Sullivan, Vigo, and Warrick), all of which are located along the southwestern margin of Indiana (Castrale et al. 1998). Mumford and Keller (1984) list egg dates from 19 April to 6 May. In addition M.R. Brown discovered a nest containing five young and one egg at Minnehaha FWA on 19 May 1990 (Brown 1991). Most recently J.J. McCoy found a nest in Whitley County 19 July 1996 (Jackson 1997).

Short-eared Owl Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Entire Year				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
100	18-Dec-2000	Daviess Co	Tony Sanders	IAQ
83	30-Nov-2003	Greene & Sullivan Cos	D.R. Whitehead	INB
80	10-Dec-2000	Universal Mine	John Favinger	INB
68	06-Dec-2003	Multiple Sites*	L.W. Sterrenburg	INB
60	27-Nov-2000	Universal Mine	P.E. Scott	IAQ
54	30-Nov-2003	Universal Mine	L.W. Sterrenburg	INB
*Hawthorn mine and Greene County				

Migration Envelopes						
Dunes Area						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
Spring	29-Feb-2000	16-Mar	2-Apr	21-Apr	18-May-1957	48
Fall	27-Sep-1999	12-Oct	27-Oct	18-Nov	30-Nov-90	75
Note: these dates based solely on lakefront records.						

References Cited

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

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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.

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.

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