

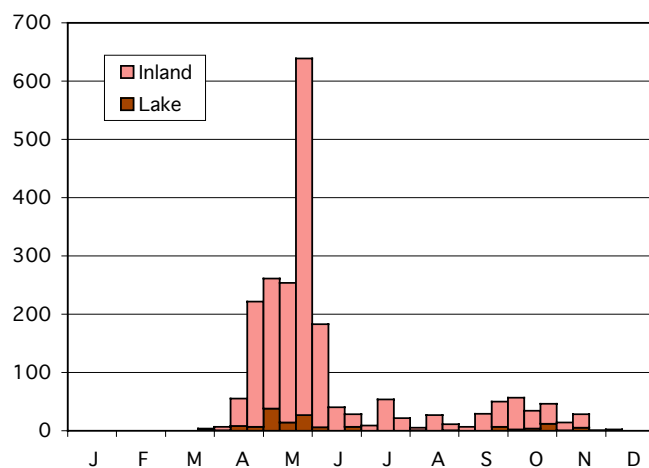
Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Historical Information

First Published Record: Indiana's first report of this invading species occurred 1 May 1964 when an injured bird was captured five miles north of Winamac, Pulaski County (Mumford 1964).

In citing two records, Keller (1966) termed the Cattle Egret "very rare, but expected to occur more frequently." It was deemed a very rare migrant by Keller et al. (1979) and a rare migrant by Mumford and Keller (1984). The latter authors noted that Indiana had 26 records by 1981. Bruner (2003) noted that in only three years the Cattle Egret expanded from a new species, to one that occurred annually in the state.



Status

Physical Evidence: At least four specimens are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson, unpublished list and Bruner 2003).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
National Museum of Natural History				3
Purdue Univ. collection				1
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	10	6	7	7
Central Tier	n	6	7	7
Southern Tier	10	5	6	6
Entire State	10	5	6	6

Current Status

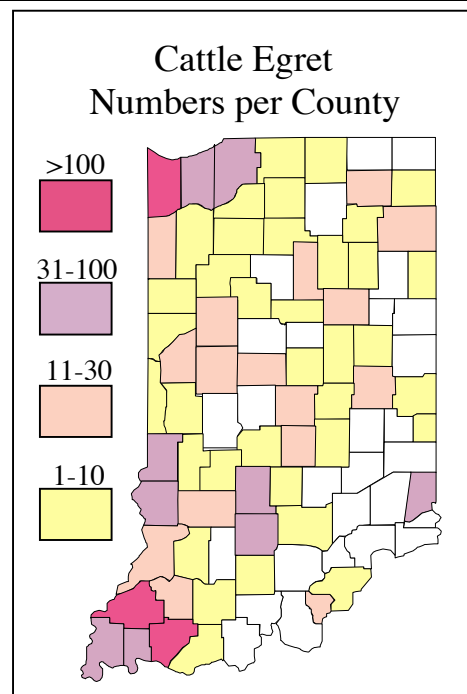
If the large numbers associated with the "breeding incursion" of 1996 through 1998, are ignored there has been a slight population decline in the state since the mid-1980s. This occurred despite a considerable increase in observer effort. The statewide status is Fairly Common (5) to Uncommon (6) except in winter.

Occurrence

As shown by the Migration Histogram, the Cattle Egret is far more common in spring than in fall. It is also seen more frequently away from Lake Michigan. Cattle Egrets have been reported in 65 counties, but the distribution map suggests that this species is encountered slightly more frequently in the western half of Indiana.

Winter Records

Two early December records, both involving single birds, have been reported in Miami County 23 November through



4 December 1987 (Mumford files) and by D.R. Whitehead in Monroe County 3 December 1992 (notes sent to NAB). In addition Bruner (2003) mentions undated December records in Adams (1979) and Wells Counties (1984).

Breeding

Mumford and Keller (1984) do not include the Cattle Egret among the state's breeding birds. This species' first nesting accompanied the big "egret invasion" of 1996 (Bowman and Bowman 1997). On that occasion some 130 Cattle Egret nests were estimated by M.R. Brown and T. Perrokek at the Lake Gibson rookery 1 June 1996 (Jackson 1997). The second breeding effort occurred at the Ayrshire Mine, Warrick County where a minimum of 15 nests were counted 29 June 1998 (Jackson 2000). According to Bruner (2003) young were reported at this site.



Alternate plumed Cattle Egret, Willow Slough FWA. 28 May 2005. Photo J.K. Cassidy.

Cattle Egret Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring/Summer				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
500	22-May-1996	Lake Gibson	G. & L. Bowman	IAQ
300	1-Jun-1996	Lake Gibson	M.R. Brown	IAQ
50	31-May-1998	Ayrshire Mine	Midge Lechner	NNB
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
32	24-Sep-1997	Ayrshire Mine	Don Andrews	NNB
29	14-Sep-1997	Ayrshire Mine	Don Andrews	NNB
20	9-Oct-1984	Fountain Co	A.W. Bruner	IAQ

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	24-Mar-1982	16-Apr	9-May	29-May	9-Jun-1989	77
Central	4-Apr-2005	15-Apr	6-May	23-May	6-Jun-1980	55
South	30-Mar-1986	19-Apr	9-May	31-May	7-Jun-1981	89
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	31-Jul-2002	11-Aug	21-Oct	12-Nov	4-Dec-1987	38
Central	15-Jul-2000	---	9-Oct	---	14-Nov-1999	23
South	15-Jul-1999	18-Jul	24-Sep	12-Nov	3-Dec-1992	40

References Cited

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