

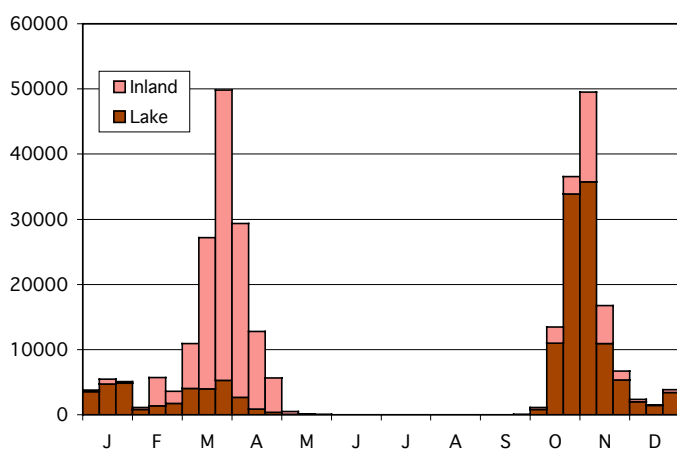
## Lesser Scaup

## *Aythya affinis*

### Historical Information

First Published Record: A.W. Butler observed the “Little Black-head” at Brookville, Franklin County, on 6 May 1883 (Butler 1898), to provide Indiana’s earliest published report.

Butler (1898) characterized the Lesser Scaup as a very abundant migrant and rare summer resident. Indeed, he referred to this species as the most common of all our ducks. Keller et al. (1979) considered it a common spring migrant, an uncommon to rare fall migrant, and a very rare winter visitant. Mumford and Keller (1984) deemed the “Little Bluebill” a common spring migrant and noted the existence of both summer and winter records.



### Current Status

The Lesser Scaup is Abundant (2) to Very Abundant (1) in every season except summer. Except for the winter months on Lake Michigan, this is the expected scaup in Indiana.

### Occurrence

This widespread duck has been recorded in more than 71 Indiana counties. Interestingly, the Lesser Scaup is more common at inland sites than on Lake Michigan in spring, but the reverse is true in fall (see migration histogram). This results from the occurrence of enormous migrating flocks on Lake Michigan in autumn.

### Summer Records

Over the past twenty years summer birds have been reported seven times, primarily in the northern tier; the average summer count for this period was 1.5 birds per year. The largest summer count involved a flock of 13 reported by Ruthven Deane at English Lake, Starke County 5 June 1888 (Butler 1898).

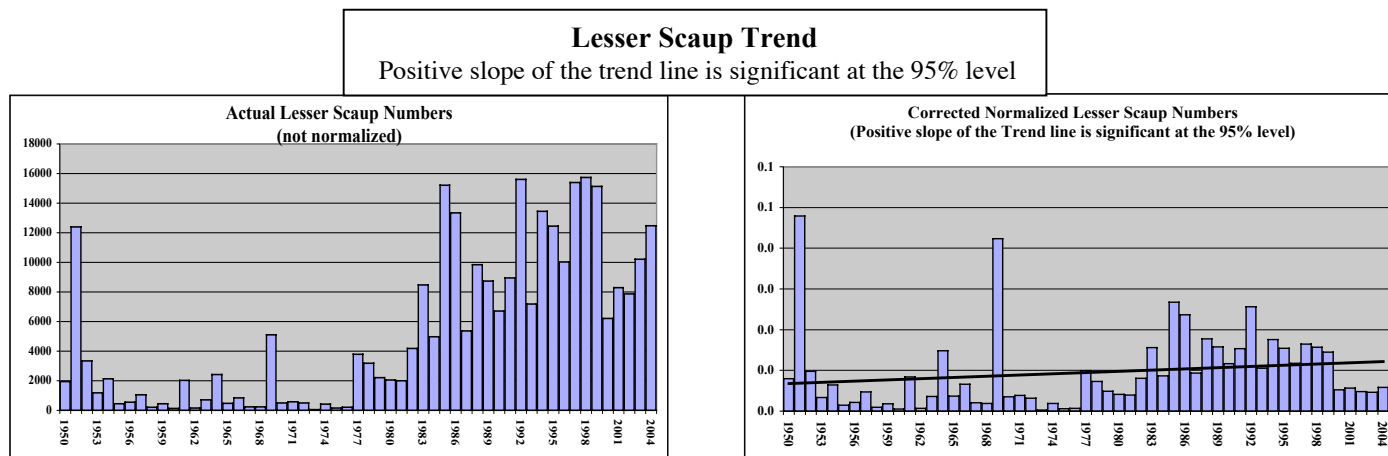
### Status

Physical Evidence: Thirteen skins are archived as indicated in the Status Table (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).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				2
National Museum of Natural History				1
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				10
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	2	2	7	1
Central Tier	3	3	10	3
Southern Tier	5	2	10	3
Entire State	2	2	7	1

## Population Trend

The plots suggest that Lesser Scaup numbers have increased slightly over the last 50 years. Positive slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level. Note however, that counts appear to have declined after 1999.



## Breeding

Butler (1890) stated, “Mr. Ruthven Deane informs me that he has reliable authority for saying a pair bred at English Lake in 1886, where they were seen with their young. They were supposed to be ‘cripples.’ He also informs me of a flock of thirteen seen there June 5, 1888. Mr. J. G. Parker says ‘they are the most common of all the ducks’ during migrations, and afford the main duck shooting in the vicinity of Chicago.” According to the Mumford files J.D. McCall observed a female with at least six young (about three weeks old) near Whiting on 25 June 1952. This duck was not reported in the Indiana Atlas project (Castrale et al. 1998).

## Lesser Scaup Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
5000	3-Apr-1969	Marion Co	C.E. Keller	IAQ
5000	13-Mar-1988	Gibson Co	Denny Jones	IQM
4000	17-Feb-1949	Hovey Lake	R.E. Mumford	REM
Fall/Winter				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
5270	30-Oct-1994	Miller Beach	J.K. Cassady	KJB
5000	2-Nov-1986	Mich. City Harb	K.J. Brock	KJB
4400	7-Nov-1948	Geist Reservoir	???	REM

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Win. Res.	10-Mar	30-Mar	25-Apr	7-Jun-1998	703
Central	Win. Res.	10-Mar	30-Mar	30-Apr	9-Jun-1949	183
South	Win. Res.	5-Mar	25-Mar	20-Apr	3-Jun-1986	200

<b>Fall</b>						
	<b>Earliest</b>	<b>Arrive</b>	<b>Peak</b>	<b>Depart</b>	<b>Latest</b>	<b>Records</b>
<b>North</b>	20-Jul-1991	16-Oct	1-Nov	21-Nov	Win. Res.	521
<b>Central</b>	17-Aug-1998	19-Oct	10-Nov	26-Nov	Win. Res.	65
<b>South</b>	5-Oct-1988	22-Oct	8-Nov	17-Nov	Win. Res.	84

### 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.

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.

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.