

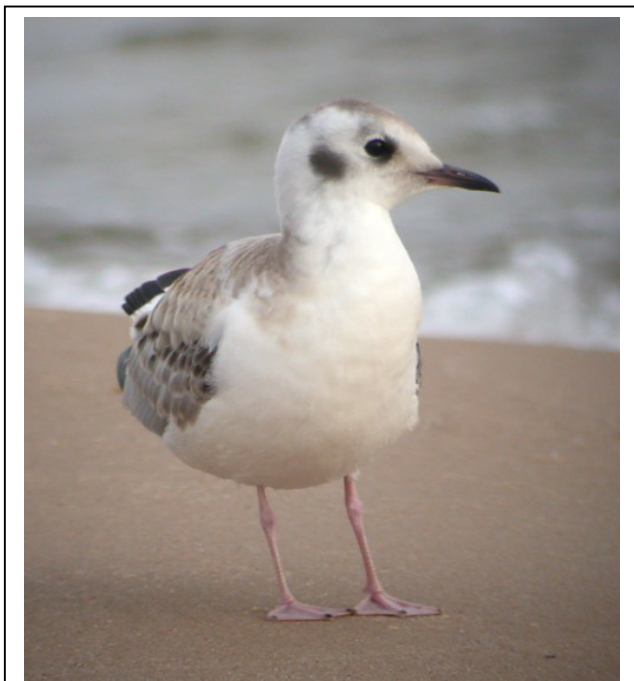
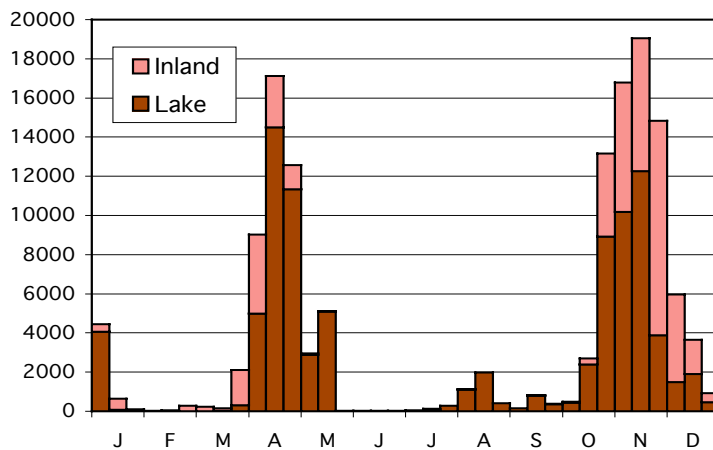
Bonaparte's Gull

Larus philadelphia

Historical Information

First Published Record: According to Butler (1898), J.L. Hancock observed three Bonaparte's Gulls at Wolf Lake, Lake County, on 20 May 1882, providing Indiana's earliest published report.

Butler (1898) considered this buoyant gull a common migrant and rare winter visitor. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it an uncommon to fairly common migrant, which was locally abundant on Lake Michigan. Mumford and Keller (1984) basically concurred with the Keller et al. assessment.



Juvenile Bonaparte's Gull at Miller Beach 11 August 2005. Photo by J.K. Cassady

Status

Physical Evidence: Some ten specimens are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).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				3
Milwaukee Public Museum				2
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				3
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	4	3	6	2
Central Tier	6	5	9	4
Southern Tier	3	3	n	2
Entire State	3	3	6	2

Current Status

The Bonaparte's Gull is Indiana's third most common gull (behind Ring-billed and Herring). It is Abundant (2) in fall, Very Common (3) in spring and winter, and Uncommon (6) in summer.

Occurrence

Records for this widespread gull exist for 56 counties and it no doubt occurs in many more. As shown in the maximum count table, the largest numbers have occurred on Lake Michigan. However, the enormous spring counts of the 1950s have not been duplicated in recent decades; indeed, the largest post 1950s spring tally was 2000 at Michigan City Harbor 18 April 1996 (Lomax 1997).

Fall Migration

The migration histogram reveals a split fall flight on the lakefront. A small movement peaks about mid-August and the main flight crests in November. The majority of gulls in the August migration are young birds, including many individuals in fresh juvenile plumage (see above photo).

Winter Records

Bonaparte's Gulls have been reported in every week of the winter period; an average of 417 winter birds per annum has been tallied over the past two decades. Single party winter counts of 1000 or more have been reported on four occasions.

Bonaparte's Gull Data				
Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
8000	26-Apr-1955	Gary Harbor	John Louis	JLo
5000	19-May-1957	Mich. City Harbor	J.E. Landing	JEL
4000	19-Apr-1956	Gary Harbor	John Louis	JLo
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
5000	14-Nov-1995	Mich. City Harbor	K.J. Brock	KJB
2300	9-Nov-2005	Brookville Res	W.H. Buskirk	INB
2000	28-Nov-1954	Mich. City Harbor	L.C. Binford	REM

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Win. Res.	28-Mar	15-Apr	4-May	Sum. Res.	419
Central	Win. Res.	31-Mar	9-Apr	29-Apr	6-Jun-2000	53
South	Win. Res.	21-Mar	7-Apr	22-Apr	29-May-1994	154
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Res.	15-Aug	31-Oct	28-Nov	Win. Res.	1128
Central	2-Jul-2001	12-Oct	14-Nov	9-Dec	Win. Res.	62
South	19-Aug-2002	25-Oct	13-Nov	8-Dec	Win. Res.	238

References Cited

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.

Lomax, B. (1997) Field Notes Spring 1996, *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 75:77-117.

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