

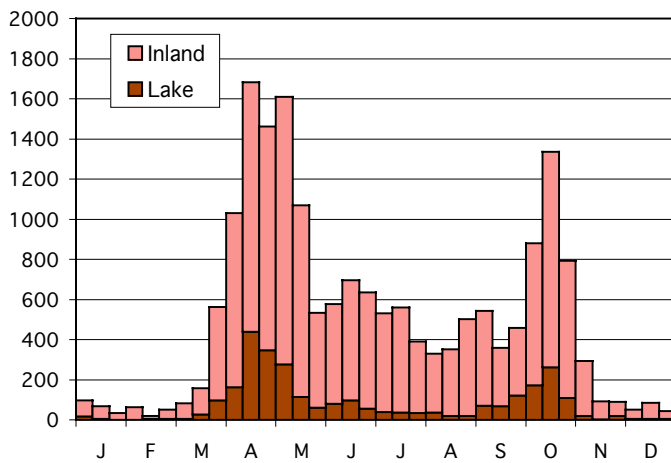
Field Sparrow

Spizella pusilla

Historical Information

First Published Record: A Field Sparrow nest discovered near Brookville on 11 May 1881 (Butler 1898) appears to constitute the state's earliest formal record.

Butler (1898) noted that the Field Sparrow was much more numerous than the Chipping Sparrow. Both Keller et al. (1979) and Mumford and Keller (1984) considered the Field Sparrow an abundant migrant throughout Indiana.



Current Status

The Field Sparrow is a Common (4) migrant and summer resident. It is Uncommon (6) in winter.

Occurrence

This widespread *Spizella* sparrow has been reported in every Indiana county. As was the case in Butler's day, based on all-time numbers the Field Sparrow remains more common than the Chipping Sparrow; *Spizella pusilla* ranks 7th whereas *Spizella passerina* is 9th. Over the past 20 years, however, the rankings have reversed with the Chippy moving up to 7th and the Field Sparrow sliding to 8th (see Sparrow Overview). Unlike the Chipping Sparrow this species eschews residential areas and public parks, preferring instead abandoned fields. The larger Field Sparrow counts occur away from the lakefront (see maximum count table).

Winter Records

Over the past two decades Field Sparrows have been reported every year except one (1986), with an average of 8.1 winter birds recorded in the state annually. By a wide margin, the largest winter count consisted of 50 birds observed by Denny Jones and Leroy Harrison in Pike County on 6 January 1980 (Mumford files).

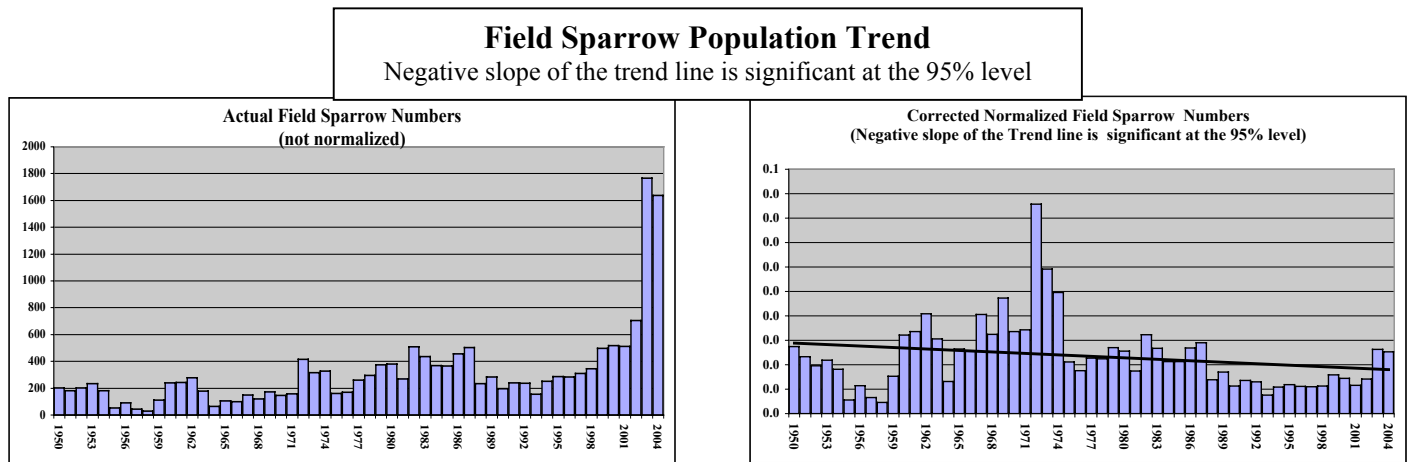
Status

Physical Evidence: Some 17 specimens, plus eggs and nests, are housed in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
Carnegie Museum of Natural History				3
Chicago Academy of Sciences				2
Chicago Field Museum				4
National Museum of Natural History				15*
Univ. of Michigan Museum				11*
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory				5
*Includes eggs 7 nests in Nat. Museum				
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	7	4	4	4
Central Tier	7	4	4	4
Southern Tier	6	4	4	4
Entire State	6	4	4	4

Population Trend

The 50-year population data suggest a decline in Field Sparrows. This is in general agreement with Breeding Bird Survey results, which show a non-significant annual decline of 3.5 percent over the interval 1966- 2004 (North American Breeding Bird Survey web page). Negative slope of the trend line, shown below, is statistically significant at the 95 percent level.



Breeding

The Indiana Atlas project reported breeding evidence in 98 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks (Castrale et al. 1998). Mumford and Keller (1984) reported a full clutch of eggs 25 April and fledglings as late as 18 September.

Field Sparrow Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
95	08-May-1982	Atterbury FWA	Boyd Gill	IAQ
83	10-Apr-2005	Brookville Res	W.H. Buskirk	INB
80	14-May-1983	Pulaski Co	Geoff Keller	IAQ
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
65	15-Oct-2003	Boot L. Preserve	J.K. Cassady	INB
55	18-Oct-1997	Eagle Creek Park	R.F. Buskirk	IQM
50	03-Oct-1998	West Beach	K.J. Brock	KJB

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Win. Vis.	2-Apr	26-Apr	30-May	Sum. Res.	1170
Central	Win. Res.	5-Apr	30-Apr	24-May	Sum. Res.	676
South	Win. Res.	20-Mar	16-Apr	15-May	Sum. Res.	467

Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Res.	21-Sep	12-Oct	30-Oct	Win. Vis.	495
Central	Sum. Res.	24-Sep	16-Oct	5-Nov	Win. Res.	335
South	Sum. Res.	28-Sep	21-Oct	15-Nov	Win. Res.	215

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.

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.