

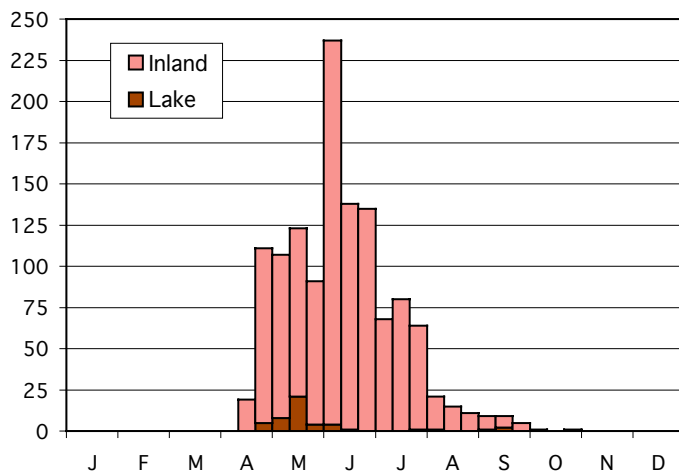
## Worm-eating Warbler

## *Helmitheros vermivorus*

### Historical Information

**First Published Record:** According to Ford (1956) E.W. Nelson collected a Worm-eating Warbler in northern Lake County in May 1871. However, the earliest fully dated report involved a specimen collected in Franklin County 18 May 1879 (Mumford files).

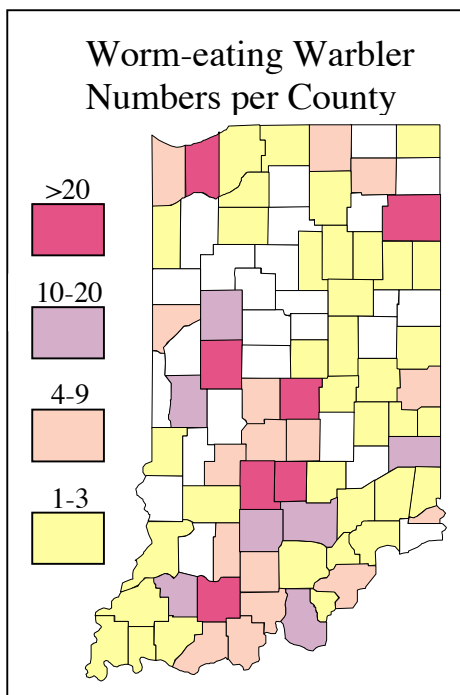
Butler (1890) deemed this species a “common resident in the southern half of the State, varying somewhat in localities,” and he also noted young in Franklin County by July 1. Keller et al. (1979) considered it a very rare migrant and local summer resident in central Indiana. In 1984 Mumford and Keller described this species as a locally common summer resident and a rare migrant.



### Status

**Physical Evidence:** At least 19 Worm-eating Warbler specimens are distributed throughout the North American Museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum	No.			
Carnegie Museum of Natural History	4			
Chicago Field Museum	1			
National Museum of Natural History	8			
Milwaukee Public Museum	2			
Univ. of Michigan Museum	2			
Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory	1			
Philadelphia Academy of Sciences	1			
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	7	8	9
Central Tier	n	6	7	7
Southern Tier	n	5	5	6
Entire State	n	5	5	6



### Current Status

The Worm-eating Warbler is Fairly Common (5) both as a spring migrant and summer resident in the southern tier.

### Occurrence

The distribution map reveals a widely dispersed pattern across the state (66 counties) with the greatest concentration of records in central and south-central Indiana. Based on abundance rankings in both the spring and fall migrations, the Worm-eating Warbler is Indiana’s rarest regularly occurring warbler, ranking dead last (36<sup>th</sup>) in both flights.



Worm-eating Warbler on the Whiting Park lawn 23 April 1985. Photo by K.J. Brock

### Fall Migration

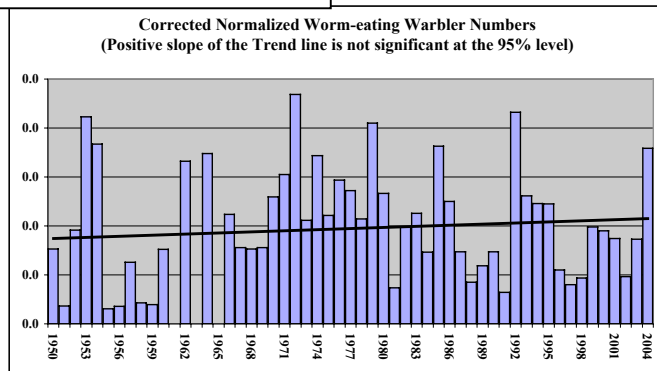
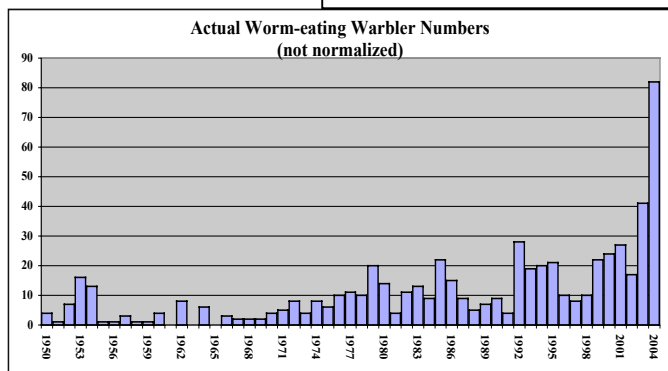
The fall flight is weak and poorly delineated; the peak is likely in late August. A 5 November 1979 record published in the *Indiana Audubon Quarterly* Field Notes and in Mumford and Keller (1984) is now believed to be incorrect.

### Population Trend

The slightly positive slope of the trend line is not statistically significant at the 95 percent level.

## Worm-eating Warbler Population Trend

Positive slope of the trend line is not significant at the 95% level



### Breeding

Indiana's breeding bird atlas (Castrale et al. 1998) revealed that Butler's characterization still aptly summarized the distribution of summer Worm-eating Warblers in the state. They also obtained breeding evidence in nine percent of the state's 647 priority blocks. These sites were distributed across three counties in the central tier and six counties in the southern tier. Nests have been observed from 12 May through 11 July, with the majority in July. A notable exception to the normal breeding pattern occurred 4 July 1904 when a nest, containing three eggs that hatched 11 July, was found in Noble County (DNR files). According to Butler (1898) W.S. Blatchley found a nest containing six Worm-eating Warbler eggs and one Cowbird egg in Monroe County 12 May 1886. The Worm-eating Warbler is listed as a species of special concern by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

### Worm-eating Warbler Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring/Early Summer				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
16	28-May-2005	Monroe Co	Dan Leach	INB
13	19-May-2004	Jackson Co	Mike Clark	INB
10	2-Jun-1992	Lawrence Co	Dan Leach	IAQ

Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
2	31-Aug-1952	Brown Co	R.E. Mumford	REM
2	16-Aug-1953	Vigo Co	R.E. Mumford	REM
2*	06-Aug-1985	Johnson Co	Boyd Gill	IAQ
*2 were recorded on five additional occasions				

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	18-Apr-2004	26-Apr	10-May	22-May	Sum. Res.	96
Central	17-Apr-1947	25-Apr	8-May	27-May	Sum. Res.	99
South	15-Apr-1976	22-Apr	9-May	4-Jun	Sum. Res.	168
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Res.	---	20-Aug	---	19-Sep-1992	13
Central	Sum. Res.	---	25-Aug	---	25-Oct-1985	17
South	Sum. Res.	26-Jul	23-Aug	20-Sep	7-Oct-1950	38

## 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.

Castrale, J.S., E.M. Hopkins, and C.E. Keller (1998) Atlas of breeding Birds of Indiana, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, 388 pp.

DNR files, A collection of data compiled on computer disks for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources by C.E. Keller.

Ford, E.R. (1956) *Birds of the Chicago Region*, Special Publ. No. 12 Chicago Acad. Sci, 117 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.

Last modified: 12 Oct 2005