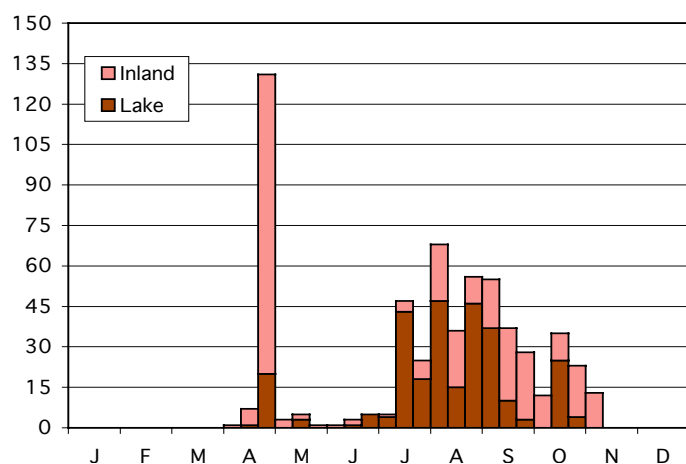


American Avocet

Recurvirostra americana

Historical Information

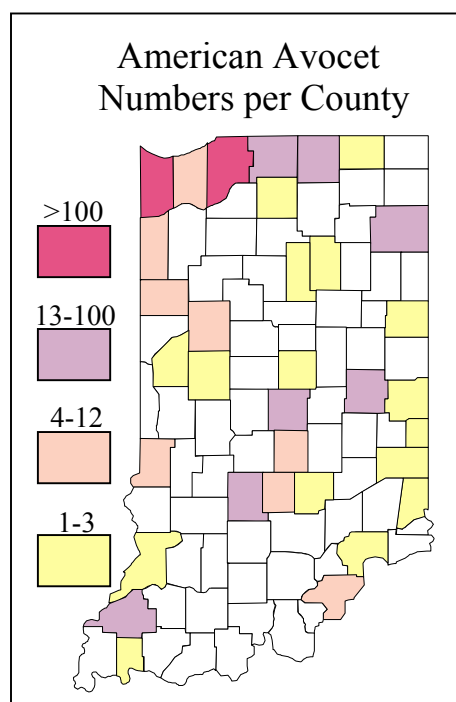
First Published Record: According to Perkins (1936), J.J. Audubon found nesting Avocets (including three nests containing eggs plus an incubating female) two miles south of Vincennes in June 1814. Audubon collected five, which reportedly became the models for the Avocet painting in his elephant folio. Butler (1898) mentioned a specimen taken at “Calumet Lake,” Indiana, but provided no date. Additionally, contemporary Lake Calumet is located in Illinois, raising the possibility that the bird mentioned by Butler was not actually in Indiana. Indeed, Keller (1957) discounted this record. The first fully dated report consisted of six birds reported near Cedar Lake, Lake County on 22 October 1944, five of which remained until 10 November (Ford 1956).



Butler (1890) cited the “Calumet Lake” record and deemed the Avocet a rare migrant. Keller (1957) considered it an accidental fall visitant. Both Keller et al. (1979) and Mumford and Keller (1984) considered it a casual migrant.

Status

Physical Evidence: One specimen is known to exist (S.F. Jackson unpublished list).



Current Status

With reports in the state every year since 1976, the Avocet is now a regular migrant. It is Uncommon (6) in fall and Rare (7) in spring and summer.

Occurrence

Although showing a distinct preference for the lakefront, American Avocets have been recorded in some 33 counties. A majority of the birds appear in fall; indeed it is Rare (7) in spring. Despite this rareness, some the state’s largest counts occur within an extremely narrow window in late April; the state’s largest flocks have been recorded during this period (see maximum count table).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
National Museum of Natural History				1
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	7	7	6
Central Tier	n	7	9	7
Southern Tier	n	7	9	7
Entire State	n	7	7	6

Migration

The migration histogram reveals continuous records throughout the summer. The largest break in reports occurs between 13 May and 10 June; only one report (25 May 1990) appears within this interval.

Breeding

Today the Avocet is not part of Indiana's breeding avifauna, but see Audubon's report in the historical section.

American Avocet Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
32	30-Apr-1989	Lake Gibson	Eugene Muench	IQM
31	26-Apr-1991	Lake Monroe	D.R. Whitehead	IAQ
21	29-Apr-1981	Potato Creek SP	Tom Stankus	IAQ
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
22	16-Sep-2002	Eagle Creek Park	Becky Lomax	IAQ
20	20-Oct-1984	Miller Beach	K.J. Brock	KJB
17	26-Aug-1994	Miller Beach	J.J. McCoy	KJB

Migration Envelopes						
Spring						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	17-Apr-1998	---	29-Apr	---	Sum. Vis.	18
Central	8-Apr-1995	---	---	---	12-May-1971	6
South	18-Apr-1999	---	---	---	12-Jun-1995	6
Fall						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
North	Sum. Vis.	18-Jul	14-Aug	12-Oct	10-Nov-1944	80
Central	23-Jul-2002	---	16-Sep	---	7-Nov-1995	28
South	12-Jul-1980	8-Aug	10-Sep	28-Oct	3-Nov-2000	36

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