

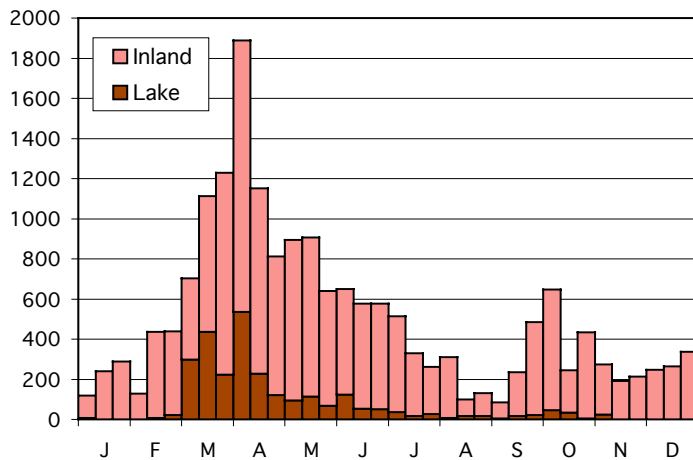
Eastern Meadowlark

Sturnella magna

Historical Information

First Published Record: The earliest record located involved a set of fresh eggs collected in Franklin County by E.R. Quick on 15 July 1879 (Butler 1898).

Butler (1898) described the “Meadow Lark” as an abundant summer resident and permanent resident in the south. Keller et al. (1979) considered it a common to fairly common summer resident; sometimes abundant in the south. Mumford and Keller (1984) deemed it a common to fairly common summer resident, but locally common or absent in winter.



Status

Physical Evidence: At least 25 specimens, plus eggs, are preserved in museums (S.F. Jackson unpublished list and J.B. Dunning unpublished computer list).

| STATUS TABLE | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Specimens | | | | |
| Museum | | | | No. |
| Chicago Academy of Sciences | | | | 1 |
| Chicago Field Museum | | | | 8 |
| National Museum of Natural History | | | | 8 |
| Purdue Univ. Wildlife Laboratory | | | | 6 |
| Univ. of Michigan Museum | | | | 10* |
| *Includes eggs | | | | |
| 20-Year Abundance Table | | | | |
| | Win | Spr | Sum | Fall |
| Northern Tier | 6 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Central Tier | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Southern Tier | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Entire State | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 |



Alternate-plumed Eastern Meadowlark at Boot Lake Preserve, Elkhart County, April 2004. Photo by J.K. Cassady.

Current Status

The Eastern Meadowlark is Common (4) in spring and Fairly Common (5) at all other seasons.

Occurrence

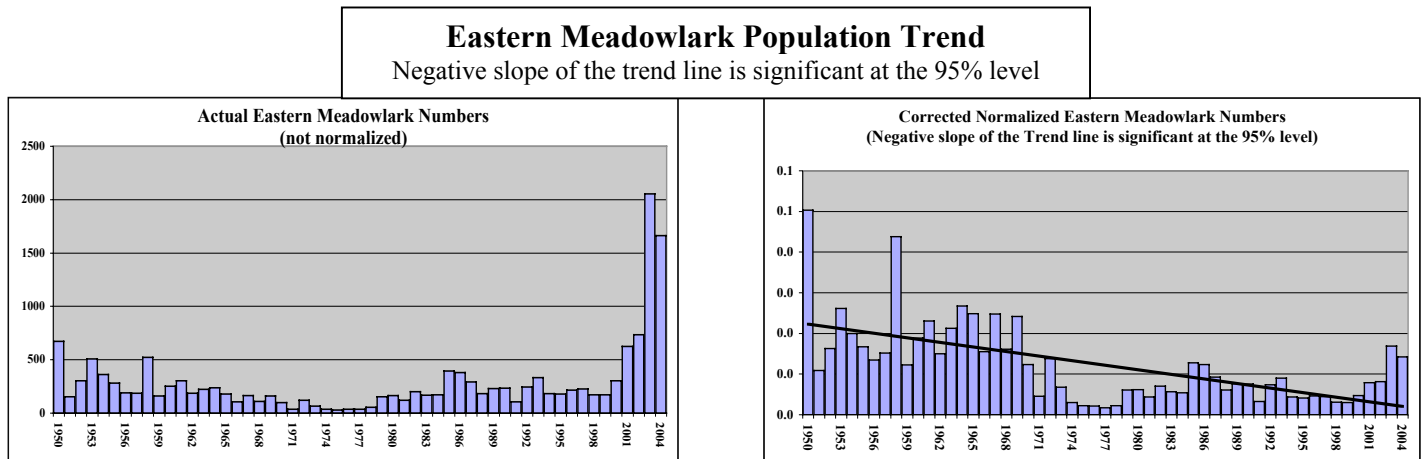
This open country bird has been recorded in all 92 Indiana counties. It is a permanent resident in the state, but numbers in the northern tier decrease substantially in winter.

Migration

The spring migration, which dominates the migration histogram, begins in February. The fall flight, however, is obscure and poorly defined.

Population Trend

The 50-year population data suggest a decline in Eastern Meadowlark numbers; indeed, negative slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level. This result is consistent with Breeding Bird Survey data, which show statistically non-significant decline of 1.4 percent annually during the years 1966 through 2004 (North American Breeding Bird Survey web page).



Breeding

Castrale et al. (1998) reported breeding evidence in 97 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks, with evidence in every Indiana county. Mumford and Keller (1984) listed egg dates from 11 April through 17 July.

Eastern Meadowlark Data Maximum Single Party Counts

| Spring | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------------|------------------|------|
| Number | Date | Location | Observer | Ref. |
| 400 | 06-Apr-1958 | Lakefront | J.E. Landing | JEL |
| 200 | 04-Apr-1964 | Willow Slough FWA | C.E. Keller | REM |
| 169 | 15-Apr-2005 | Multiple Sites* | L.W. Sterrenburg | INB |
| Fall | | | | |
| Number | Date | Location | Observer | Ref. |
| 161 | 03-Aug-2003 | Multiple Sites* | L.W. Sterrenburg | INB |
| 150 | 10-Oct-1993 | Universal Mine | A.W. Bruner | IAQ |
| 133 | 23-Sep-2001 | Hawthorn Mine | L.W. Sterrenburg | INB |
| *Mainly at the Universal Mine, Vermillion County | | | | |

Migration Envelopes

| Entire State | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|---------|
| | Earliest | Arrive | Peak | Depart | Latest | Records |
| Spring | Win. Vis. | 13-Mar | 16-Apr | 28-May | Sum. Res. | 1374 |
| Fall | Win. Res. | 20-Sep | 12-Oct | 7-Nov | Sum. Res. | 345 |

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