

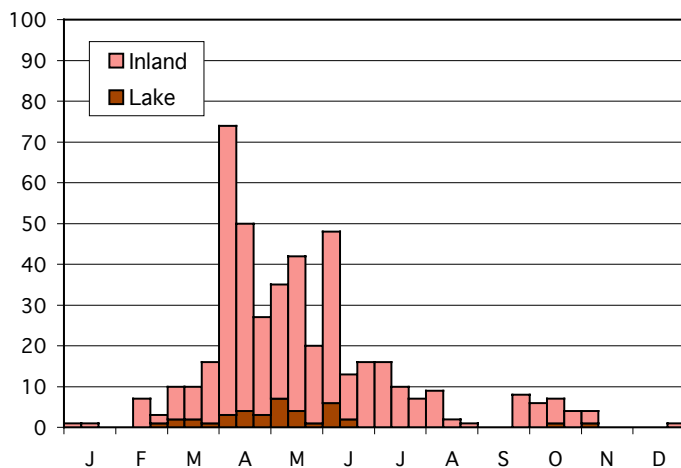
Western Meadowlark

Sturnella neglecta

Historical Information

First Published Record: Indiana's first Western Meadowlark report involved a singing bird that W.B. Van Gorder found near Albion, Noble County on 7 April 1924; the state's first specimen was taken in Posey County 17 February 1950 (Mumford and Keller 1984).

Butler (1898) listed this meadowlark as hypothetical. Keller et al. (1979) deemed it a locally uncommon to very rare summer resident. Upon learning that some individuals sing the songs of both species, Mumford and Keller (1984) expressed uncertainty about the Western Meadowlark's status.



Status

Physical Evidence: Five specimens from Indiana are housed in the National Museum (S.F. Jackson unpublished list).

STATUS TABLE				
Specimens				
Museum				No.
National Museum of Natural History				5
20-Year Abundance Table				
	Win	Spr	Sum	Fall
Northern Tier	n	6	7	7
Central Tier	n	8	8	10
Southern Tier	n	10	n	n
Entire State	n	6	7	7

Current Status

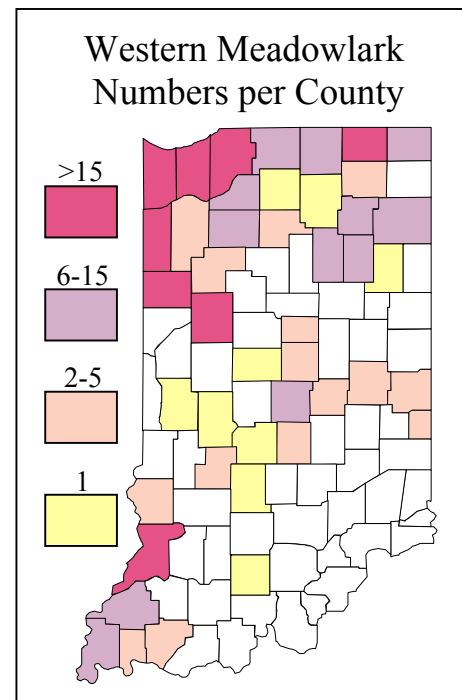
The Western Meadowlark is an Uncommon (6) spring migrant, which is Rare (7) in summer and fall.

Occurrence

Western Meadowlarks have been reported in at least 44 Indiana counties and are most frequently encountered in northern and western reaches of the state (see distribution map).

Identification by Song

Although Mumford and Keller (1984) expressed concern about identification by song, Lanyon (1994) reported that individuals giving the song of the other species was quite rare. He further noted that the Western's "chupp" call note was not known to ever be given by the Eastern Meadowlark.

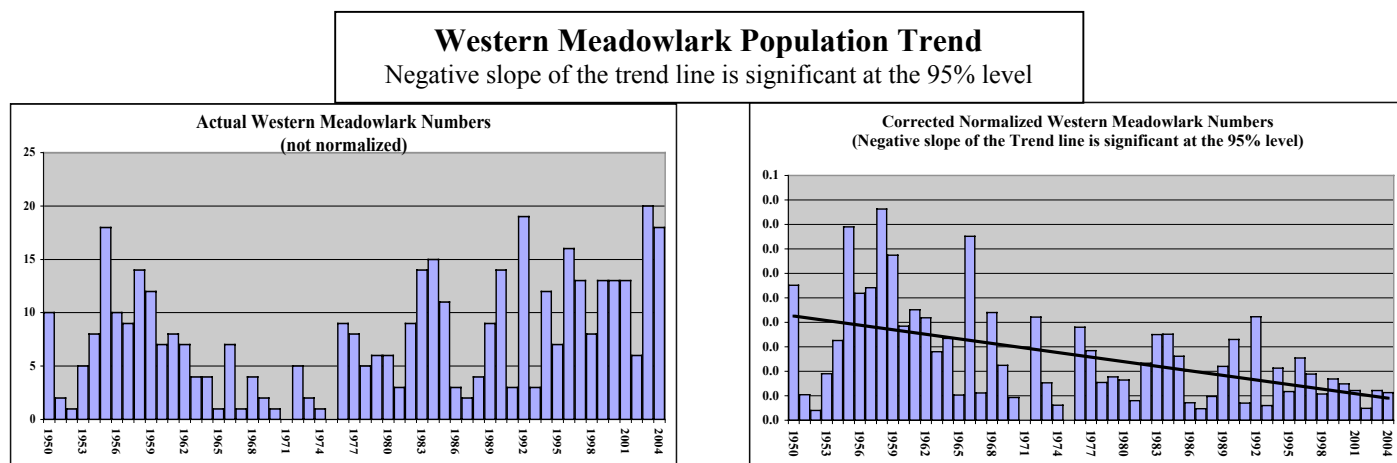


Winter Records

One December, two January, and six February records were all recorded during the winter period. However, the February records might well represent early migrants (see migration histogram).

Population Trend

Negative slope of the trend line is statistically significant at the 95 percent level. This is in agreement with Breeding Bird Survey data, which show a non-significant decrease of 1.2 percent between 1966 and 2004 (North American Breeding Bird Survey web page).



Breeding

Indiana's Atlas project reported breeding evidence in 3 percent of the state's 647 priority blocks; all evidence came from the northern half of the state (Castrale et al. 1998). Based on the absence of known nests, Mumford and Keller (1984) excluded Western Meadowlark from Indiana's list of breeding species. Helen Dancy discovered the state's first nest in Hanna Township, LaPorte County 9 June 1989; a second nest was found at this location 21 July 1989 (Dancy 1990).

Western Meadowlark Data

Maximum Single Party Counts				
Spring/Early Summer				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
9	07-Jun-1992	LaPorte Co	R.S. Plank	IAQ
8	04-Apr-1955	Newton Co	R.E. Mumford	REM
7	03-Apr-2004	Benton Co	E.M. Hopkins	INB
Fall				
Number	Date	Location	Observer	Ref.
7	05-Aug-1989	LaPorte Co	A.W. Bruner	IAQ
5	20-Oct-1984	Gibson Co	C.E. Mills	IAQ
2*	30-Oct-1983	Southwest Ind.	Denny Jones	REM
*2 were reported on two additional occasions				

Migration Envelopes						
Entire State						
	Earliest	Arrive	Peak	Depart	Latest	Records
Spring	1-Mar-1957	27-Mar	23-Apr	2-Jun	Sum. Res.	252
Fall	Sum. Res.	---	12- Oct	---	7-Nov-1982	21

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.

Dancey, H.E. (1990) Western Meadowlark Nest in Indiana. *Indiana Audubon Quarterly*, 68:118-126.

Keller, C.E., S.A. Keller, and T.C. Keller (1979) *Indiana Birds and Their Haunts*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 214 pp.

Lanyon, W.E. (1994) Western Meadowlark, *The Birds of North America*, No. 104.

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