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Cover photo: Kirtland's Warbler in West Lafayette, 19 September 2019. Photo by Ryan Sanderson.

Back cover photo: American Avocet posing at Michigan City Harbor 12 July 2019. Photo by Mike Bourdon.

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Letter from the Editor

Brad Bumgardner, Chesterton, IN

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Doom and gloom! That's the recent bird news if you've been following any of the recent reports. It's hard not to, as a seemingly well conceived social media and marketing campaign has accompanied a powerful piece of research science on birds. Similar reports appear from time to time, but none have had the long lasting impact that this most recent report of 3 billion birds gone. One quote with the recent articles said, "our results signal an urgent need... to avert continued biodiversity loss and potential collapse of the continental avifauna."



That's serious stuff. In lehmans terms, I read that if we don't do something know we're looking at a largescale bird extinction. Again, doom and gloom.

The report, with major coverage by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and American Bird Conservancy, included one major headline number. Three billion! Three billion birds lost. That's the average of all losses, balanced by all gains. You can't fixate on that number though. American Robins number around 300 million alone. Of that three billion, 300 million of them have been House Sparrow declines. Instead, look at the declines in each species group. More then 90% of the losses have come from just 12 avian families. Those included in that decline include sparrows, blackbirds, and finches. But even with common birds such as robins and Red-winged Blackbirds, it's not a trend you want to see happen. Look how easily the Passenger Pigeon loss happended. First slowly, and largely unnoticed until it was too late. In some cases, the losses are drastic. Grassland birds have lost over 50% in the last few decades. Shorebirds too have been hit particularly hard. Boreal forest birds come next.

The good news though? Some groups are faring well. Waterfowl, raptors, and turkeys are all up. Legislations, protections, and education have helped many bird famillies over the last few decades. It shows what is possible when we put our efforts towards bird protection and conservation. Efforts will continue at national, state, and local levels to save birds. There are things we can do at home to prevent more birds from declining. Supporting legislation, such as the "Recovering America's Wildlife Act" in letters and emails to our congressmen, building bird safe buildings, planting native plants, removing feral cats from our wildlands, and shopping more environmentally conscoius are small ways. Indiana Audubon will continue to advocate, take a stand, and conduct research on the state level to support our amazing birds. It's the end of the year, and I hope you'll consider IAS in your year-end giving as well. Every dollar is leveraged with grants and awards that we use to further the birds both here and abroad. Consider giving at indianaaudubon.org/donate.

So, while this complicated study had a simplified marketing campaign with well made graphs, and dramatic charts, the reality is our work is not done. But the first step is awareness. If only every major bird science story received this much attention.

Indiana Audubon Speaks out Against Indy 500 Balloon Release

Philip English, Richmond, IN

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Every year, thousands of multicolored balloons are released over the Indianapolis Motor Speedway to kick off the Indy 500. While this fan favorite might be considered the “Greatest Spectacle in Racing,” it is a deadly tradition that needs to end.



Balloon debris entangles birds, fish, and several other animals, strangling them or damaging their limbs. In addition, animals commonly mistake balloons for food and ingest them, which harms or even kills them. These massive balloon releases result in thousands of pieces of trash eventually falling to the ground and into waterways. At best, the debris becomes unsightly pollution.

Frequently, however, this tradition poses a dangerous threat to wildlife and domestic animals. The garbage can easily make its way through air currents and rivers to the ocean, where it contributes to massive trash islands and the death of sea turtles, whales, and other marine life.

While the US Fish and Wildlife Service is opposed to balloon releases and has warned people of the damage they cause, it is up to us to end the outdated and dangerous spectacle. As result, Indiana Audubon has issued the following official statement regarding this and all intentional balloon releases

Indiana Audubon Society holds the position that intentional helium balloon releases should NOT be held due to their injurious effects upon wildlife, especially birds. We are committed to promoting and protecting bird-friendly communities by helping to end balloon releases in Indiana.

Scientific research conducted by and reported by NOAA Marine Debris Program, Scientific Reports, Phys.org, and the Ocean Conservancy, points to the littering of latex, Mylar, and composite material balloons as being mistaken for food by wildlife and causing loss of nutrition, intestinal injury and obstruction, and death. Balloon strings and ribbons have caused entanglement, injury, infection, and death in birds and other wildlife.

A current petition is circulating to help stand up against the Indy 500 balloon release. To sign the petition, visit bit.do/indyballoonrelease.

Philip Clay English
Stewardship Committee Chair
Indiana Audubon Society

Summer Indiana Field Notes 2019

Ken Brock, Chesterton, IN

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Rainfall was ample in June, as was the heat in July. July was what can be called a typical warm summer month in the Midwest, with plenty of heat and not as much rain as some previous spots for most areas. All locations were a few degrees warmer than average. Although rarities were scarce, a few noteworthy breeding records occurred. In addition, there were also several large counts and early records reported.

Temperature & Precipitation at Indianapolis: Departure from Normal		
	Temp (°F)	Rainfall (in.)
Jun	-0.8	+3.26
Jul	+2.8	-0.69

Season Highlights

A number of rarities occurred during the summer of 2019, including nesting Trumpeter Swan, Piping Plover, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and a probable nesting Blackburnian Warbler.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Black-bellied Whistling Duck:- Duane A. Englert photographed (2) in a pond near Owensville (Gibson Co) on 9 June.

Trumpeter Swan:- Jared Emmack found a pair with two cygnets on Willow Slough's Murphy Lake on 31 July. This constitutes Indiana's second breeding record.

Blue-winged Teal:- On 27 May Walter J. Marcisz flushed a female from a nest containing 10 eggs at the DuPont site. This is the lakefront's 16th confirmed breeding record.

Canvasback:- Trinity Ever found a male in South Bend on 25 July, which provided Indiana's third July (and 4th summer) record.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo:- The summer of 2019 delivered a record 789 birds to Indiana (STYM=283). John Meredig logged the season's maximum count, of 14, at Lincoln S.P. on 1 June.



King Rail at Cane Ridge WMA 12 June 2019. Photo by Heath Harlan.

King Rail:- On 11 June Richard Garrett observed two adults and 11 downy chicks at Cane Ridge. This count ties Indiana's maximum daily count.

SHOREBIRDS

Piping Plover:- Two banded adults were observed at Michigan City Harbor in late July. Bob Huguenard found the first on the 26th and John K. Cassady spotted the second on the 29th.

American Avocet:- Some 27 were reported across the state (STYM=19.2). The peak count was (5) that William Sharkey found at Goose Pond FWA on 23 July.

Upland Sandpiper:- The six birds reported this summer marks Indiana's lowest summer total since 1985 (STYM=18.3). The 30-year plot below illustrates the Upland's decline.

Whimbrel:- The season's only report consisted of (2) that William Sharkey found on the Michigan City outer breakwall on 11 July (TYM=4.35).

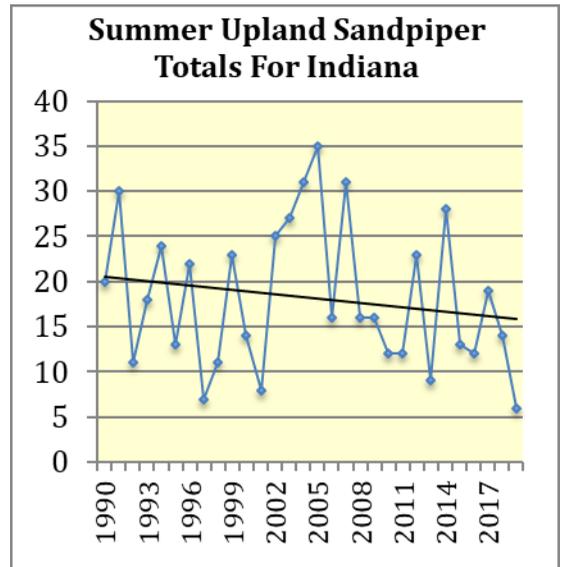
Marbled Godwit:- William Sharkey found (1) in western Gibson Co on 11 June. This bird is likely the first fall shorebird migrant of 2019. All remaining birds were reported on the lakefront.

Solitary Sandpiper:- One found at Kankakee Sands (unit L) on 22 June (Randall J. Pals et al.) tied Indiana's third earliest fall arrival date. A juvenile, also found by Randall J. Pals at Carlson Oxbow Park (Hammond) on 8 July 2019, provided Indiana's earliest fall arrival date for that age group.

Willet:- The season total was 235 (TYM=116). The (25) that Matt S. Kalwasinski tallied at Michigan City Harbor on the 26th constitute Indiana's largest count for the month of June. In addition, Indiana's earliest juvenile was recorded on 15 July when John K. Cassady, Randall J. Pals, & KJB logged two juvs on the Michigan City Harbor outer Breakwall.

Wilson's Snipe:- On 30 July KJB birded the Pierce Road Wetland (St. Joseph Co). A single bird was initially present, but later a tight flock of (8) flew in and joined the singleton, providing Indiana's second largest summer count.

Wilson's Phalarope:- Two were reported this season (STYM=10.1). William Sharkey documented the first in Newton Co on 12 July and Eric Michael found the second atop the Michigan City Harbor outer breakwall on 25 July.



Willetts at Michigan City Harbor, LaPorte County, 29 July 2019. Photo by John Cassady.

Least Tern:- On 23 June Heath Harlan discovered a territorial bird south of Evansville on the Ohio River Bottoms (also known as the Dog Town Bottoms). On 28 June he observed an adult at a nest there. Chuck Mills visited the site on 12 July and observed two adults feeding two young, one of which was three-quarters grown. This constitutes Vanderburgh County's first breeding record.



Osprey on nest at Patoka Lake causeway (Orange Co.) on 9 July, 2019. Photo by Amy Kearns.

Osprey:- The adult that Tom Becker observed perched on a nest in Clark Co on 22 June provided a first breeding record for the county.

Swallow-tailed Kite:- David Kingen observed a flyby at Prophetstown S.P. on 25 July.

Monk Parakeet:- The one that landed on Susan R. Bagby's balcony on 15 July provided a first record for Michigan City. This was also the second record for LaPorte County.

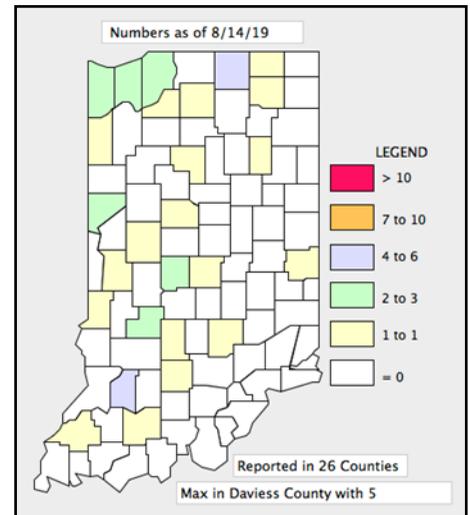
Alder Flycatcher:- Seventy-four percent of the 19 birds reported this summer appeared to be late spring migrants (STYM=17.8). Most of the remaining birds appeared in the last half of July and were likely fall migrants.

Willow Flycatcher:- The summer of 2019 proved quite favorable for this Empid with 681 reported (TYM=332). The peak summer tally was (15) that John T. Caruso logged at Beverly Shores on 1 June.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:- Amy and Noah Kearns observed one near Bedford on 19 July, providing a first record for Lawrence Co (STYM=0.25). This highly sought species has now been reported in 26 counties (see map to right).

Marsh Wren:- It was a record season for this wren with 479 birds reported (STYM=173). As expected the vast majority were in the northern tier, but an impressive 32 were reported at Goose Pond FWA, which is located in the southern tier. The season's peak count was (31) that Matt S. Kalwasinski tallied at the Grant Street Wetland, Lake County, on 2 July.

Baltimore Oriole:- A record summer was logged this year with 847 birds recorded (STYM=290).



All Scissor-tailed Flycatcher records in Indiana.

WARBLERS

Blackburnian Warbler:- On 13 June Brad Bumgardner discovered an apparently territorial bird at the Brincka-Cross Gardens, Porter County. This provided the first evidence of breeding away from Indiana Dunes State Park. The female that Lisa Judge photographed in Tippecanoe Co on 27 July was most interesting, as it provided that county's first July record.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak:- Most unexpected were the two that Sean Verkamp reported in Dubois Co on 16 June, as they provided a first June record for the southern county.

Indigo Bunting:- On 27 July a team led by Alan W. Bruner tallied (659), a new Indiana high-count record, in Parke Co. High counts could no doubt be found if others performed similar summer censuses of this common roadside early successional species.



After a couple year summer absence, Blackburnian Warbler was confirmed again as a probable breeding species in the dunes at Brincka-Cross Gardens, Porter Co. Photo taken by Brad Bumgardner 16 June 2019.

Conventions: Summer totals are frequently compared to average seasonal counts in the over the past 20 years, including the present year. This value is abbreviated "TYM" for Twenty Year Mean. The term "STYM" refers to the twenty-year mean for the entire state. Species marked by "" were observed outside the lakefront area.*

Banded Bald Eagle Recovered near Vincennes

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A banded bald eagle recovered near Vincennes gave DNR personnel a chance to measure the success of bald eagle reintroduction in Indiana over the past 20 years.

On Sept. 30, a wild bird rehabilitator responding to a call about an injured bald eagle arrived to find the bird deceased. A closer look revealed that the eagle wore two bands – one on each leg – inscribed with numbers and a letter. After the bands were reported to ReportBand.gov and DNR state ornithologist Allisyn Gillet was contacted, parts of the eagle’s history were revealed.



Bald eagle H81 was banded as a nestling at Hovey Lake Fish & Wildlife Area on April 20, 1998. That year, DNR biologists were closely tracking nesting eagles to monitor how the population was growing after the successful bald eagle reintroduction program.

Bald eagles were listed as endangered when Indiana began its reintroduction program in 1985. The program took place over five years, when 73 young eagles were released at Monroe Lake to form the base of a new population of nesting eagles. After these birds grew up and returned to nest in Indiana, biologists kept track of the number of nests and the number of young in each nest. Nestling eagles were given a set of leg bands so they could be identified in the future.

The year H81 was born, Indiana had 11 successful eagle nests, and 20 eaglets survived long enough to leave the nest. Indiana’s eagle population has been steadily growing, and in 2019, over 300 bald eagle nests were reported.

Bald eagles were removed from the federal list of endangered species in 2007 and from the state list in 2008. Although this was the first time that H81 was reported since she was banded 21 years ago, it is likely that she was nesting in this area for years, possibly on the Wabash or the White River south of Vincennes. The clean water and healthy numbers of fish in these rivers provide a home to many pairs of nesting eagles each year.

The bald eagle reintroduction program was the first endangered species restoration project initiated by DNR Nongame and Endangered Wildlife staff. This project and ongoing research would not be possible without donations to the Indiana Nongame Wildlife Fund, the main funding source of all nongame and endangered species research and management. Those interested in donating to the Indiana Nongame Wildlife Fund can donate online at on.IN.gov/nongamewildlifefund. For more information about bald eagles, see wildlife.IN.gov/3383.htm.

Year	Nesting Territories	Attempts	Successful Nests	23 Young Fledged
1989	2	1	0	0
1990	2	1	0	0
1991	5	3	2	3
1992	10	5	3	5
1993	12	9	4	7
1994	12	11	4	7
1995	15	13	11	17
1996	17	14	11	15
1997	18	15	9	13
1998	19	15	11	20
1999	21	20	12	19
2000	23	23	16	35
2001	27	27	20	27
2002	38	38	26	45
2003	47	45	33	63
2004	57	50	44	85
2005	63	62	47	87
2006	76	69	51	95
2007	84	78	64	121
2008	101	90		
2009	94	90		
2010	120	98	Last comprehensive eagle survey	
2011	140			
2012	160-180			
2013	200			
2014	200-250			
2015	200-250			
2016	300			

Figure 1: Indiana DNR Bald Eagle nesting attempts and successes through 2016.



Figure 2: Known bald eagles nests (green) and most recent nests discovered (red) in Indiana.

From the Archives: 1938 Indiana Audubon Yearbook
Searching for Interesting Bird Records

Dr. Amos W. Butler
Indianapolis, IN

It has been my good fortune from time to time to find interesting and valuable specimens of Indiana birds in museums and in the hands of individuals. Unfortunately accurate records have not always been preserved. Some of those early collectors were as indifferent or careless as are some of us nature students of today. There are two things that should be impressed upon the minds of all students of animal and plant life. These are positive identification of the specimen, if possible, and accurate record of the date, place found and other important items. Much valuable material and many notes are practically worthless because one or both of these essentials is lacking.

Many strange specimens may be found in libraries, museums, stores and homes. In a grocery store in a small town in the Whitewater Valley I saw on a top shelf a part of a bird exposed. Upon asking to examine it the storekeeper kindly removed it and placed in my hands a strange duck—an Old Squaw—the first record for the southern part of the state. I was introduced to the man who shot it and he gave me the particulars of its capture. At Michigan City I found an immature Gannet which was killed near that city. The only Indiana record. It was in a repair shop. A correspondent in Toronto, Canada wrote me he had in his collection an Eskimo Curlew taken at Chalmers, Indiana, near forty years ago. A Roseate Spoonbill, one of the rarest Indiana birds, was killed in Jay County in 1889. It is, if in existence, probably in possession of some one in that part of the state. It will be a valuable piece of work if our bird students would hunt out such specimens and report them.

No doubt in all the neighboring large cities where there are collections there are Indiana specimens perhaps some of them quite valuable.

Not long since I visited and examined specimens in three important collections of birds in Cincinnati. Those were the Cincinnati Society of Natural History containing Dr. Frank W. Langdon's carefully prepared collection including many Indiana specimens; the Cuvier Club, originally composed of enthusiastic sportsmen who brought many of their trophies home and had them mounted. These came from many parts of North America and some from tropical countries. A large number are from Indiana. Most of them were collected over fifty years ago. They represent our vanishing birds. Some of them are now extinct at least in our region. The third is the collection of Charles Dury which is quite extensive and contains much Indiana material. Mr. Dury has also been the curator of the Cuvier Club for over half a century and still is. Through his kindness and with him as a guide I was able to examine all three of these collections. The following are some of the observations made:

Some Birds in Charles Dury's Collection

Kirtland's Warbler. *Dendroica kirtlandii* Baird. Male, May 4, 1872; Avondale, Hamilton County, Ohio. Charles Dury, collector. "Two birds seen; thicket of low bushes." This is one of the early records of this rare and interesting bird which has more recently been taken in Indiana.

Prothonotary Warbler. *Protonotaria citrea* (Bodd). English Lake, Ind., July 28, 1891, "Swamp". R. Hazen, collector. Breeding abundantly at English Lake in woodpecker holes in willow trees. Birds had an appreciation of beauty. They used bright colored feathers of Wood Duck in their nests. (Dury). There are four other specimens of this warbler in this collection from the same locality by the same person on the same trip.

White-winged Crossbill. *Loxia leucoptera* Gmel. One specimen Michigan City, Indiana, March 28, 1883; J. W. Byrkit. There are two specimens of this species in the Cuvier Club collection from same person, same place and date, donated by Charles Dury.

American Crossbill. *Loxia americana curvirostra*. Two specimens Michigan City, Indiana, March 28, 1883, J. W. Byrkit. There is a specimen in Cuvier Club from Mr. Byrkit taken at the same time.

Both species of Crossbills were found in great numbers at Michigan City, Indiana, in the spring of 1883. The latter was much the more common. Many specimens were sent by Mr. Byrkit to Mr. Dury, who prepared them and supplied the Cincinnati Society of Natural History, the Cuvier Club and Dr. Frank W. Largent with specimens. The same year Redpolls and Pine Siskins were common there.

Baird's Sandpiper. *Pisobia bairdii* (Coues). Female. Vicinity of Cincinnati, mouth of Little Miami River (Dury), October 27, 1873.

Black-bellied Plover. *Squatarola squatarola* (L.). Male. Hamilton County, Ohio, September 21, 1879. Killed near mouth of Little Miami River by Charles Dury. In Mr. Dury's collection.

Wilson's Phalarope. *Phalaropus tricolor* Vieill. Male. No. 776. Lake County, Indiana, May 23, 1871. "Not abundant." C. E. Aiker. A specimen, female, in the Cuvier Club collection, No. 1288, Kents, Indiana, April 30, 1890. J. W. Gano.

Eskimo Curlew. *Numenius borealis* (Forst.). March 15, 1879. Indiana. Mr. Dury says: "A party of Cincinnati shooters brought it back from near Chalmers, Indiana. It was tied in a bunch of Wilson's Snipe. I recognized it and mounted it." There are two specimens, Nos. 346 and 347, in the collection of the Cuvier Club, labeled "Indiana." It is now almost if not entirely extinct.

Evening Grosbeak. *Hesperiphora vespertina* (W. Coop.). Male. March 6, 1911, Glendale, Hamilton County, Ohio. Mr. Dury says: "A flock of twenty-two came in March 1911 and stayed until early summer. They remained in one place until breeding time and suddenly left. Only about eight specimens were taken." He has two other specimens from the same flock a male and female; from C. Allen, Hamilton County, Ohio, June 8, 1911.

In Cuvier Club Collection

Wild Pigeon. *Ectopistes migratorius* (L.) Male. Indiana. From Charles Dury, February 1879 No. 127). Mr. Dury has two in his collection, a male and a female, both from Avondale, O., March 7, 1878. "Birds very abundant in spring and fall. Shot in beech woods on Mitchell Avenue." Mr. Dury says "Wild Pigeons nested once in scattered pairs in tall trees in Estes Woods five miles from Avondale, Hamilton County, Ohio. I saw the young birds which were scarcely able to fly in August in the early '70's."

Snowy Owl. *Nyctea nyctea* (L.) Female. (No. 242.) English Lake, Indiana, 1877, L. A. Harris.

Double-crested Cormorant. *P. auritus auritus* (Sw.) Male. English Lake, Indiana. J. W. Beezley.

Snow Goose. *Chen hyperborea nivalis* (Forst). juv. Indiana near Chalmers.

Trumpeter Swan. *Olor buccinator* (Rich.) Taken twelve miles below Cincinnati on the Ohio River, in December 1876. Three seen. Max Woche. Now almost extinct.

Long-billed Gull. *Numenius americanus*, Bechstein. Male. A specimen in the collection from Indiana, marked English Lake. Cuvier Club 351.

Marbled Godwit. *Limosa fedoa* (L.) Four specimens marked "Indiana." Mr. Dury says it was formerly abundant at Chalmers.

Redbreasted Snipe: Long-billed Dowitcher; *Macrorhamphus sciopaceus* (Say). Female. April 30, 1890, Kouts, Indiana, No. 1278. J. W. Cano. There are two other specimens of this species in the collection marked "Indiana."

Upland Plover: Bartramian Sandpiper, *Bartramia longicauda* (Bechst). The collection contains three Upland Plover marked "Indiana". Mr. Dury understands they were taken near Chalmers. He has in his collection skins and eggs of this species taken at that place.

Swallow-tail Kite. *Elanoides forficatus* (L.) Male. Price Hill, Hamilton County, Ohio.

Red-throated Loon. *Gavia stellata* (Pont.). Mouth Little Miami River, Hamilton County, Ohio. No. 1337. Cuvier Club.

Horned Grebe. *C. auritus* C. Two specimens, 28 and 29, Cuvier Club. English Lake (Indiana). J. W. Boozley.

American Golden Plover. *C. dominicus* Mull. Three specimens, (389, 400, 401), two of them nearly full plumaged. Cuvier Club. "Indiana". Boozley and Carlisle.

Blue Goose. *Chen caerulescens* (Linn). "Indiana." J. W. Boozley. Cuvier Club, 299.

Sandhill Crane. *Grus mexicana* (Mull). Male. Indiana. L. A. Harris. Cuvier Club, 438.

White Pelican. *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* Gmel. Sternum. Aurora, Indiana. About September 20, 1877. J. W. Shorten). Dr. F. W. Langdon collection. Possibly Mr. Shorten, who was a well known taxidermist, mounted the bird for some customer and it is still preserved.

Caspian Tern. *Sterna caspia*. Pallas. While it has been reported in Indiana and verified by specimens from the vicinity of Lake Michigan—one of which I have, Miller's, Ind. September 27, 1893, F. M. Woodruff—records from the interior of the states between the Great Lakes and the Ohio River, are of interest. There are two of these birds in the Cuvier Collection; 113, Female, Ross Lake, Ohio, October 9, 1883, from Mr. Rosa; 114, Little Miami River, Hamilton County, Ohio, October 16, 1883. A. Starbuck. Cuvier Club.

Whooping Crane, *Grus americana* (Linn). A specimen in the Cuvier Club marked North Indiana, also one from near Bloomington, (Dury). Now almost if not wholly extinct.

In the Cuvier Club collection are also specimens of Carolina Parakeets and of Ivory-billed Woodpecker from Florida. These represent birds that were formerly found in this state. The first is probably wholly exterminated and the last is on the verge of extinction.

Doubtless there are other specimens in these collections of special interest to Indiana students of birds that would be disclosed by a more extensive search.

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Indiana Audubon Society Board of Directors

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