



Bird Monitoring at Lincoln Boyhood Home National Memorial

Importance: *An important component of the park ecosystem*

Birds intrigue and excite visitors, having become an important part of park interpretive programs. Bird watching has grown into a popular recreational activity at Lincoln Boyhood Home NM. Beyond the pleasure that birds provide, they are an important component of park ecosystems. Their high metabolism and position in the food web make them indicators of change in an ecosystem – the canary in the mine, so to speak. Preserving habitat for the wellbeing of bird populations preserves entire ecosystems for the benefit of all species.



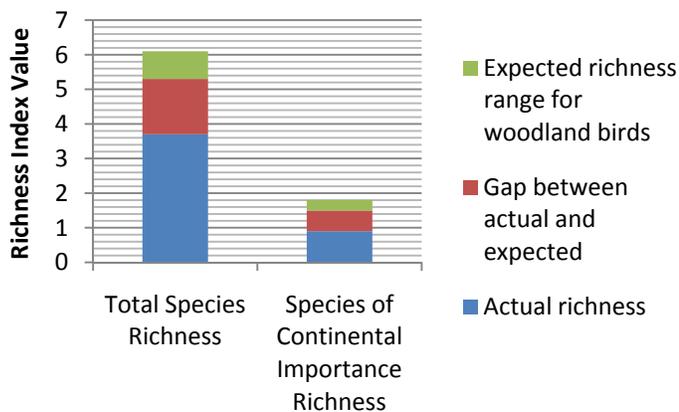
Indigo Bunting – HTLN file

Long Term Monitoring: *Assessing change*¹

The Heartland Network Inventory and Monitoring Program monitors change in bird community composition and bird abundance to determine the health of the community. They accomplish this by surveying seasonal and year round resident birds in the monument during breeding season. These data and an evaluation of habitat structure and composition contribute to assessing responses of bird communities to changes in their habitat. The 2007 survey provides baseline data on populations and breeding habitat of birds in the monument.

Status and Trends: *Baseline data give reference point for evaluating management actions*

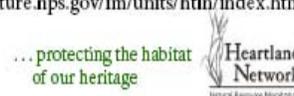
Scientists will use breeding bird surveys to assess the integrity of the woodlands over time. Changes in populations of common and widely distributed species will contribute to assessing woodland conditions. Changes in populations of species that are declining across the continent (*species of continental importance*) will also contribute to assessing the influence of habitat management on the bird community. Additionally, scientists have found that



1. Results of the survey will allow managers to manipulate specific elements in the habitat and to prioritize areas for habitat improvement for the benefit of *species of continental importance*.
2. Species richness values for the breeding bird community were lower than expected in woodland and mixed habitats.
3. Changes in richness, diversity, and evenness over 20, 30 or more years will indicate the impact of management actions at the monument.

Richness index values for Lincoln Boyhood Home NM from 2007 and expected richness for a woodland habitat. Expected values for species of continental importance are an interpolation based on total species richness.

Heartland Network Inventory and Monitoring Program of the National Park Service. Visit www1.nature.nps.gov/im/units/hltl/index.htm.



¹ Peitz, D.G. 2008. *Bird Monitoring at Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Indiana: 2007 Status Report*. Natural Resource Technical Report NPS/HTLN/NRTR—2008/100. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado.