

habitat is strongly influenced by the size and shape of the habitat (Galli et al., 1976). For example, populations of forest-dwelling birds plummet when woods are cleared for development. Similarly, native species of cavity nesting birds have suffered greatly from the introduction of aggressive, competing species such as House Sparrows and European Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*; Furness et al. 1993).

The biological invasion of non-native birds is accelerated by land transformation by humans (Vitousek et al. 1996). Native species, then, are forced to compete with non-native species on smaller patches of habitat. We lose native species through such competition as well as predation and disease, which can change the rules for existence by altering an ecosystem's processes. Also unknowingly, we provide adequate if not superb habitats for foreign species encouraging their spread, pushing the ecosystems to a state of homogenization. Furness et al. (1993) state that the success of an introduced species is facilitated by or permitted through human-modified habitats. This can also be true for native species. For example, in the Midwest a

boom in retention ponds surrounded by lawns has created a population explosion in Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*). They are now viewed as a nuisance because of their noise, damage to grass, and droppings. The redistribution of the world's species is proving to be ecologically and economically damaging as it lowers the biodiversity of ecosystems locally and globally.

Because species diversity has risen in this area, it is possible that our study site represents some of the only remaining quality habitat left in the area to support the diversity that sustains itself there. Wiens (1989) supports the idea that the number of species increases in an area when the area surrounding the habitat is disturbed causing a concentration of animals into smaller areas of habitat. The decline of quality habitat elsewhere could cause the concentration of diversity to increase in more pristine areas such as our study site. This increased diversity at this location included two introduced species, namely, the European Starling and the House Sparrow, both which were captured and viewed in great numbers.

Although avian diversity on campus appears to

Four Most Abundant Species Captured at Our Study Site in 1998

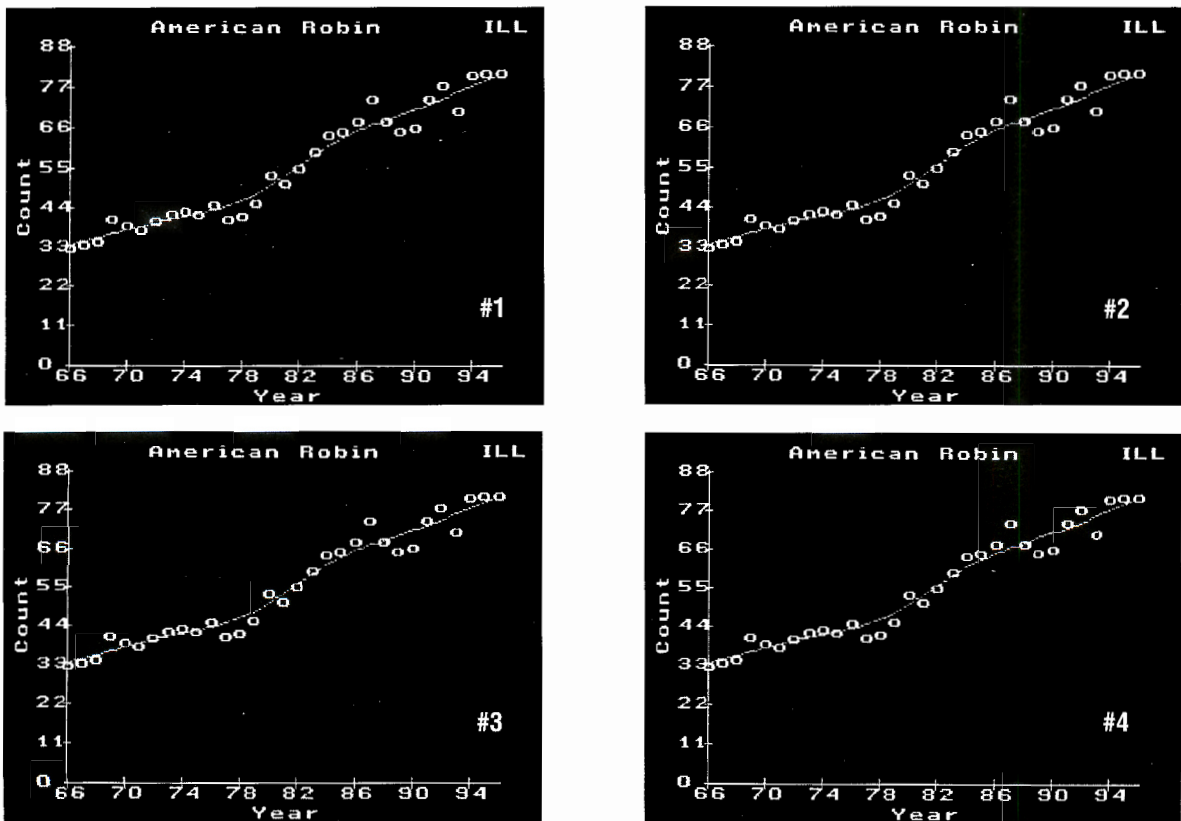


Figure 3. Illinois specific graphs from The North American Breeding Bird Survey Results and Analysis (Saur et al., 1997) web site: <http://www.mbr.nbs.gov/cgi-bin/makeind2.pl>.