

The information presented in this guide reflects the combined knowledge and expertise of thousands of individuals, all with an honorable common goal of a better understanding and appreciation of Ohio's birdlife. Indeed, the existence of this *Checklist* is made possible only through the tens of thousands of bird observations compiled and submitted over the years, in one form or another, since the very earliest days of pioneer exploration in our state. Of course, the vast majority of observations will represent expected and routine occurrences, which nonetheless serve to form the foundation of our understanding. Rarities, although representing but a small fraction of all bird observations, can certainly enliven any day in the field.

DOCUMENTING A RARITY. In bygone days, adequate documentation of an important occurrence of a bird began with a specimen—usually its skin, procured with a shotgun and prepared with a scalpel and chemical preservatives. Many of these specimens, some hundreds of years old, still reside in museums and add immeasurably to our knowledge. Today, nearly all bird species and subspecies have been accounted for by specimens, most of them many times. The collection of bird specimens happens only rarely now, and specimens are no longer required for most purposes, including the verification of unusual state records.

If you happen to encounter a state rarity, it is well worth the effort to document the occurrence for the record by assembling full and well-organized evidence of exactly what you saw and heard at the time. A documentation might contain written details, photographs, field sketches, and audio and video recordings. Write out details in full. Even with superb photos, sharp drawings, and audio or video tapes, written details are essential. Written details will always include the essential data of date, time, weather and light conditions, equipment used, other observers, etc., but they can also convey important information that cannot be expressed in any other way—impressions of shape, behavior, etc., or subtleties of color, tone, and so on that might otherwise be missed by mechanical methods of recording.

The seven-member **Ohio Bird Records Committee** (OBRC) exists to increase knowledge of Ohio's bird life by validating records, maintaining public archives of rare occurrences of birds in the state, and establishing the official list of Ohio bird species. The OBRC also undertakes efforts to help field observers recognize and document significant records, and sponsors publications intended to define the status and distribution of all the state's

birds. Significant records include not only those species considered rare in the state, but also nesting records of species usually viewed only as migrants, and occurrences made significantly out of season.

Advice on documentation standards, and a documentation form, are available on the **Ohio Ornithological Society** (OOS) website at <www.ohiobirds.org>; click on the link for the Ohio Bird Records Committee. While it is not required, use of the OBRC documentation form is an excellent way to verify that all salient information is included. Additional information on Ohio bird species may be found in: Peterjohn, B. P. 2001. *The Birds of Ohio*. The Wooster Book Company, Wooster, OH, and in the quarterly journal *The Ohio Cardinal*, available through the OOS.

The Committee maintains the Review List, which is also available on the Ohio Ornithological Society website; click on the Records Committee link to view the List. The List includes all wild bird species encountered infrequently enough in the state that documentation is required for inclusion in the official record. Only records of rare birds with accepted documentation will be fully treated in *The Ohio Cardinal*, official checklists, and other publications about Ohio birds. A good documentation can elevate an unusual sighting out of the realm of rumor and into the permanent record.

As in all scientific determinations, the observer of a phenomenon must offer acceptable documentation of the observation for peer review. The OBRC reviews documentations of bird sightings, not the sightings themselves. Thus, the Committee's task is not to decide if a given species was seen, but that the documentation provided by observers verifies, for the historical record, the species' occurrence at the time. Even when reviewers do not accept a documented report of a rare species, it is important to remember that it is *the documentation*, not one's actual experience of the bird in question, that falls short of unequivocally verifying the species.

THIS GUIDE covers all 412 bird species accepted by the OBRC as of 1 April 2004 for the official state list. Their typical abundances throughout the year are represented by bar graphs, and brief annotations are supplied.

Relative abundance is based on the likelihood of detecting a species in Ohio during the period indicated under optimal circumstances—that is, by skilled observers in the best habitat under good conditions. For example, the rare Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrow is graphed based on its occurrence in weedy wetlands along Lake Erie and in southwestern Ohio (as indicated in the

annotation); it has been far less often detected elsewhere. Likewise, common tern may be found in many places in Ohio at times, but its graph represents abundances in its Lake Erie strongholds. Always be sure to consult the annotations for further specific information.

In previous editions of the *Checklist*, the method of graphing often had the effect of masking the migration periods of many species, particularly summer and winter residents, and permanent resident species with partially-migratory populations. For example, although Red-tailed Hawk is common throughout the year, it also undertakes pronounced movements in spring and fall. In this new edition, ***periods of peak passage***, or migration, through the state are now included for many *Common* and *Uncommon* species. These periods of northward (spring) and southward (fall) movement are ***depicted with hatching***, or diagonal lines. Generally speaking, species are more likely to be found earlier in their migration periods in southern Ohio in the spring and in northern Ohio in the fall; and later in their migration periods in northern Ohio in the spring and in southern Ohio in the fall. Also note that periods of peak passage do not necessarily coincide with periods of peak abundance, although this is often the case. For a small number of species, generally where Ohio is at the northern edge of their nesting ranges, and for some reclusive species, fall migration is poorly defined and poorly understood; migrants of such species are typically inconspicuous and seem to “melt away” in the fall, rather than exhibiting a noticeable increase in numbers during the fall migration as would be expected of most migrant species. These poorly defined movements are not depicted by hatching. In short, hatched periods will generally indicate when species are most likely to be found away from expected locations and away from typical habitats.

OBRC Review List species are listed in **bold** capital letters and are not bar graphed. Instead, the number of accepted records of each Review species in each quarter-month of the year, from January 1980 through 1 April 2004, is indicated. As is true with every edition of this *Checklist*, many recent records, although very likely correct, cannot be included until they are properly processed by the Committee. Two Review List species, loggerhead shrike and Bewick’s wren, receive special treatment (see the annotations for details). Species recorded only prior to 1980 have *blank graphs*, but the year in which each was last recorded is provided when known.

Each month is divided into quarters by days: 1-7, 8-15, 16-23, 24-31. Blank spaces do not necessarily mean there are no records for the quarter-month, only that there are too few records to qualify the species in question as *Rare*.

 = *Common*: to be expected, often in large numbers.

 = *Uncommon*: observed infrequently and usually in small numbers, even in appropriate habitat. This designation indicates that although there is a reasonable chance to detect the species, it should not usually be expected.

• • • • = *Rare*: normally occurs annually, but with only a few records on average.

A fourth term of abundance often used in the annotations, but not graphed, is *Casual*: not observed annually, but with a recognized pattern of occurrence.

Based on these levels of abundance, we depict peak migration periods as:

 = *Common, period of peak passage*.

 = *Uncommon, period of peak passage*.

Several other symbols are used in the annotations immediately following the species' names. These are:

* = confirmed as nesting in Ohio.

** = single Ohio nesting records.

*** = presumably nested in historic times prior to 1900, but confirmation is lacking.

E = extirpated from Ohio.

X = extinct species.

1 = species with existing specimens from Ohio.

2 = species for which diagnostic photographs exist, but which lack a specimen record.

3 = species for which only documented sight records exist, lacking photographs and specimens.

Regions of the state are indicated in the annotations by combining the four compass points (N, E, S, W) and C for central. The term *unglaciated* refers to the southeast portion of the state occupying the unglaciated Allegheny Plateau.

Avian population levels are a steady source of interest for many birders. The bar graphs in this checklist reflect current relative population levels. Of course, populations of all species are subject to change. One of the most highly regarded tools for measuring population fluctuations is the USGS's North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). Since 1966, the BBS has been keeping tabs on North American nesting species by surveying a vast array of roadside routes liberally scattered across the U. S. and Canada, including many routes in Ohio. Species boasting substantial nesting populations, and those readily detectable during the roadside surveys, provide the bulk of data suitable for statistical analysis. Species marked with an upwards arrow (↑) represent species whose population levels have increased by at least 50% from 1966 through 2001 according to BBS trend estimates; likewise, those marked with a downwards arrow (↓) have decreased their population levels by at least 50% over the same period, according to BBS trend estimates.

Nomenclature and order of species in this list follow that of the 7th edition of the AOU *Check-list of North American Birds* (1998), including the 42nd (July 2000), 43rd (July 2002), and 44th (July 2003) Supplements.

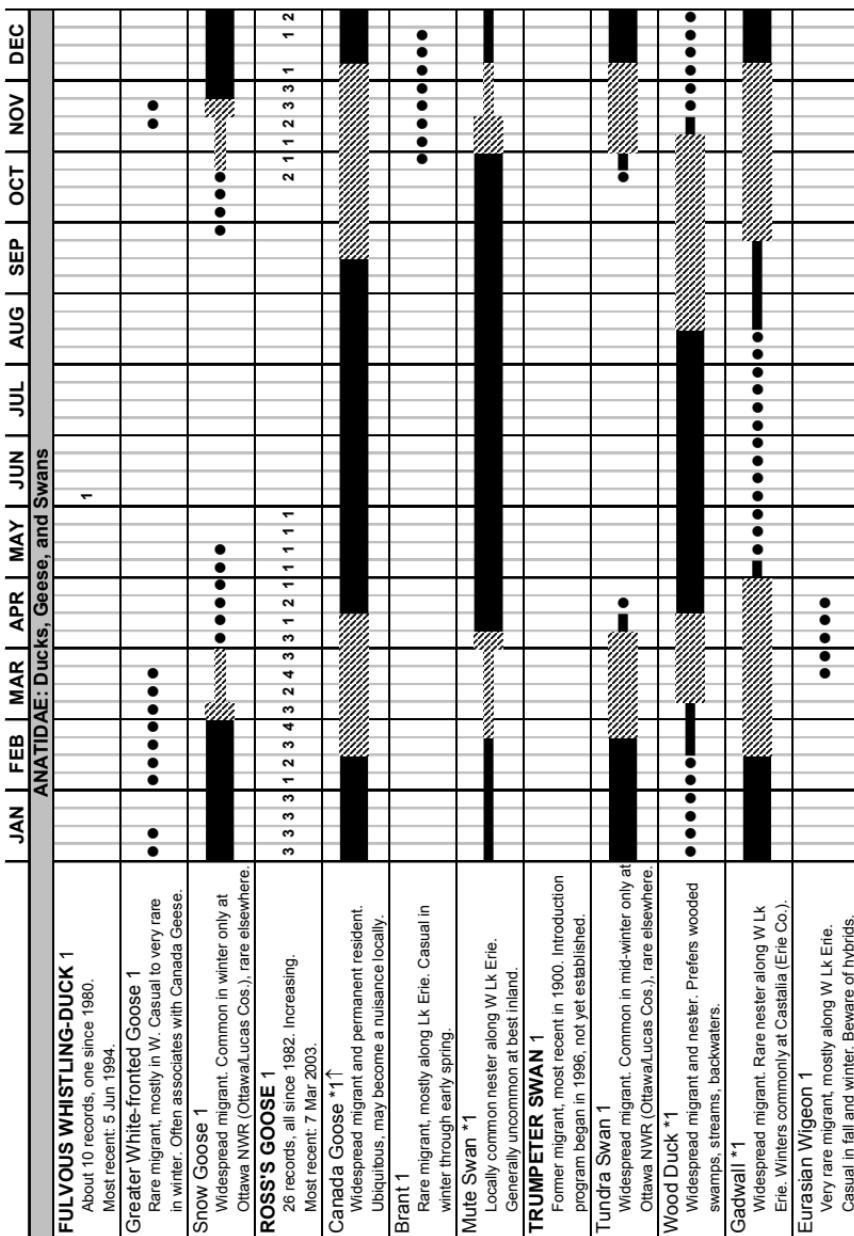
The **Ohio Bird Records Committee** is an independent panel whose primary function is to validate records of rare bird species reported in Ohio.

The **Division of Natural Areas and Preserves of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources** is responsible for managing the statewide system of nature preserves and scenic rivers, funding research of non-game animals and rare plants, and maintaining a comprehensive database of rare plants, animals, and other significant features of natural history. Welcoming backyard birdwatchers and researchers in the field alike, the **Ohio Ornithological Society** is the only statewide organization specifically devoted to fostering a deeper appreciation of wild birds, fellowship and collaboration in advancing our collective knowledge about them, and our ability to speak with one voice to preserve Ohio's bird habitats. The **Ohio Cardinal** is Ohio's quarterly publication devoted to the study and appreciation of Ohio's birdlife. It exists to provide a permanent and timely record of the abundance and distribution of birds in Ohio; to help document the occurrence of rare species in the state; to provide information on identification of birds; and to provide information on birding areas within Ohio.

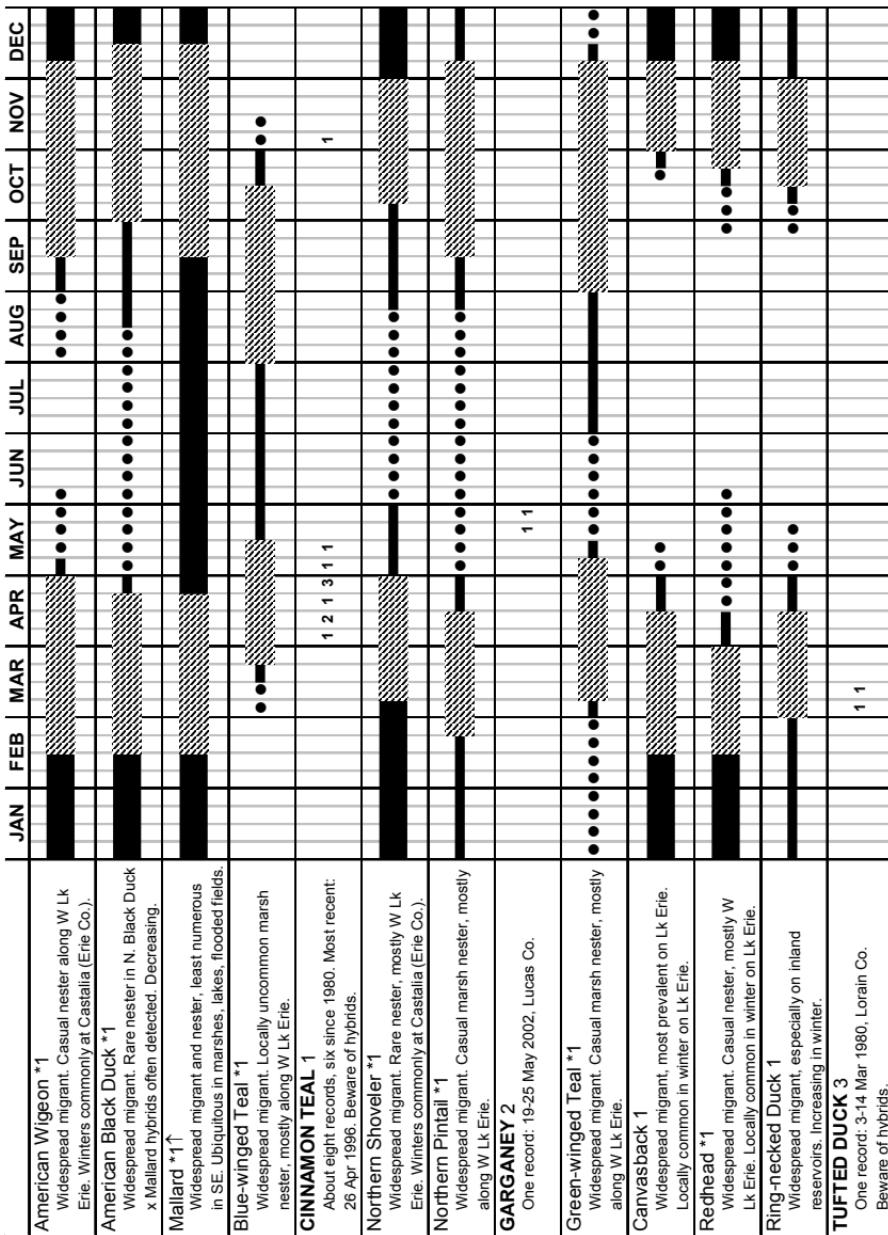
CONTACTS: All documentations, inquiries, etc. for the OBRC should go to the Secretary: Jim McCormac, ODNR-DNAP, 1889 Fountain Square Ct., Columbus, OH 43224-1388; phone number (614) 265-6440, email jim.mccormac@dnr.state.oh.us. The OBRC always welcomes suggestions for improvements of this *Checklist*. We wish to thank all those interested in Ohio's birdlife, and hope that this guide will add to their enjoyment.

— Bill Whan and Rob Harlan, for the OBRC, April 2004

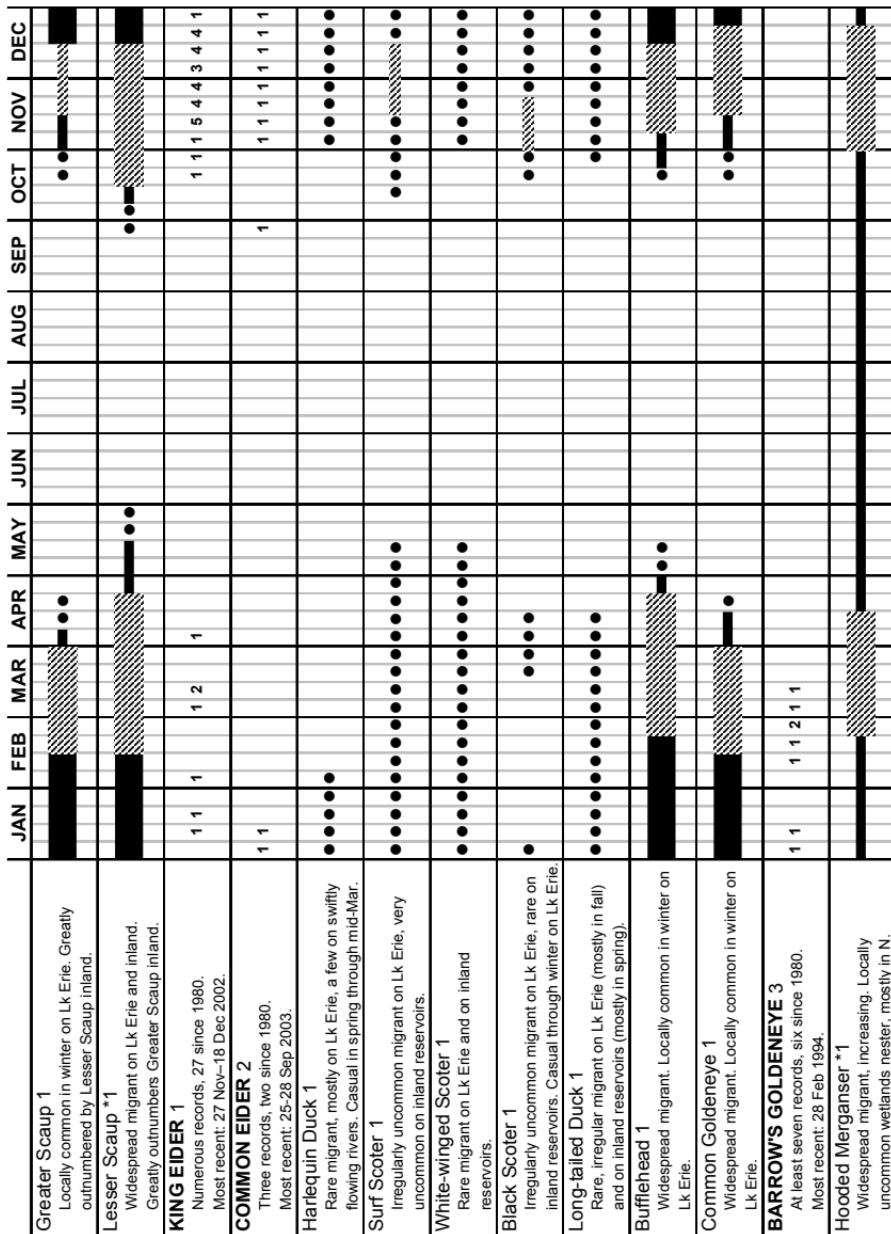




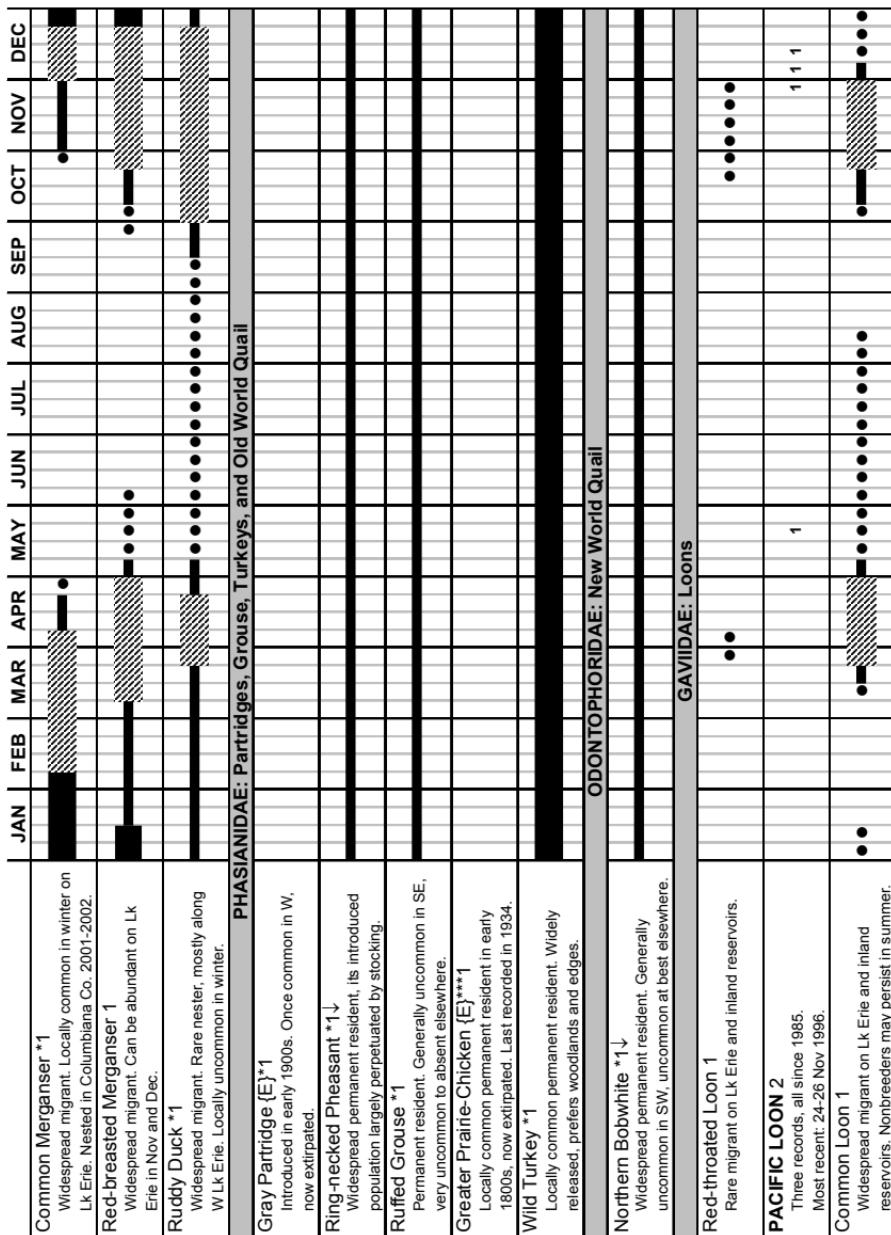
Graphs indicate abundances for each species at their optimal locations within the state.



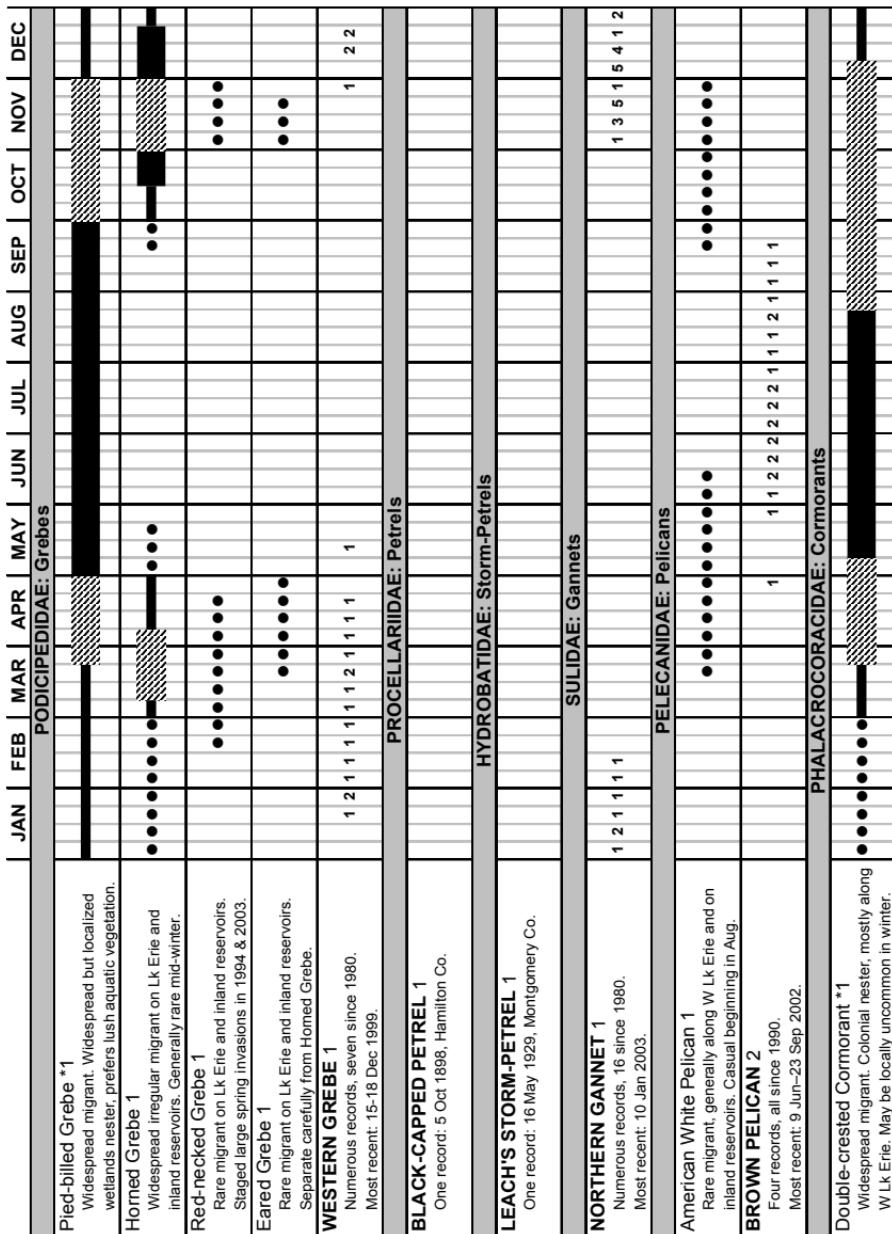
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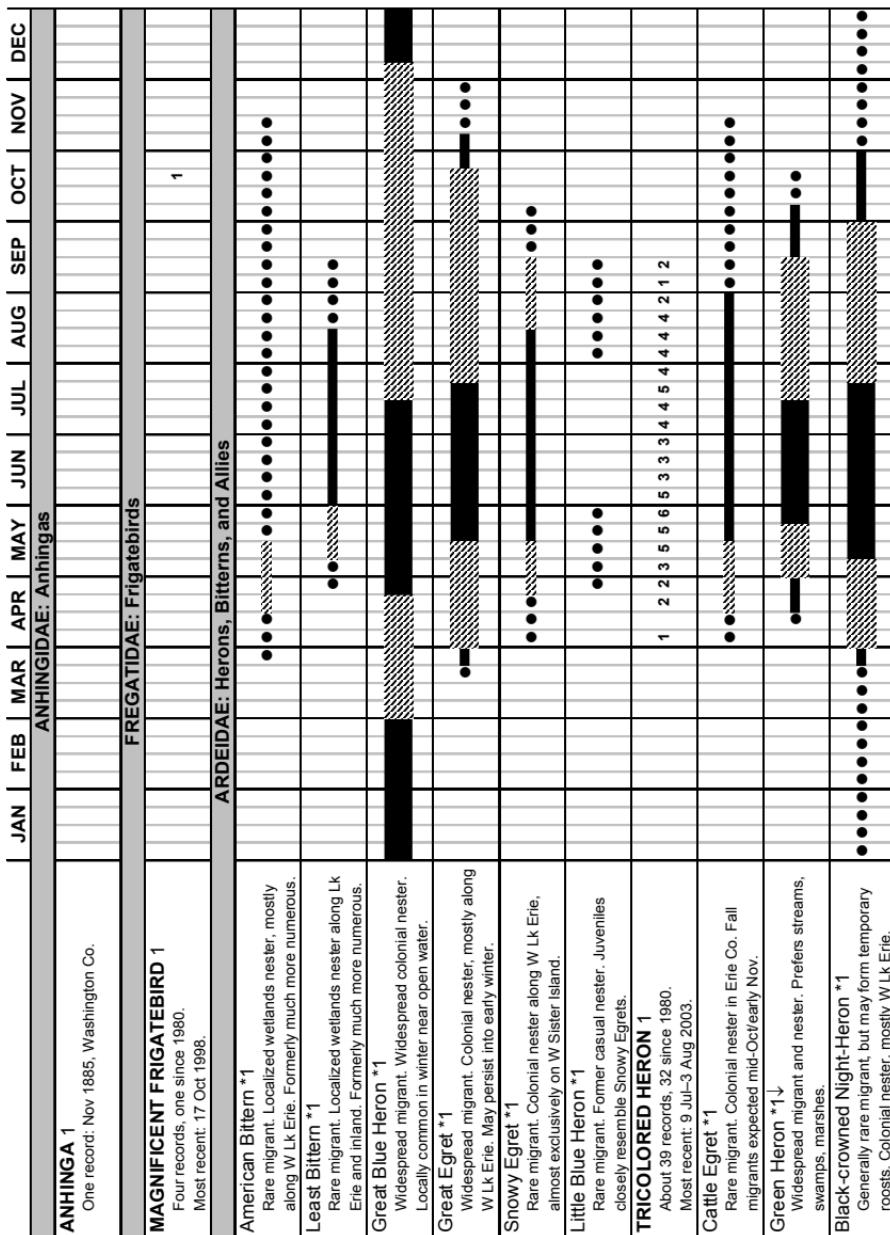
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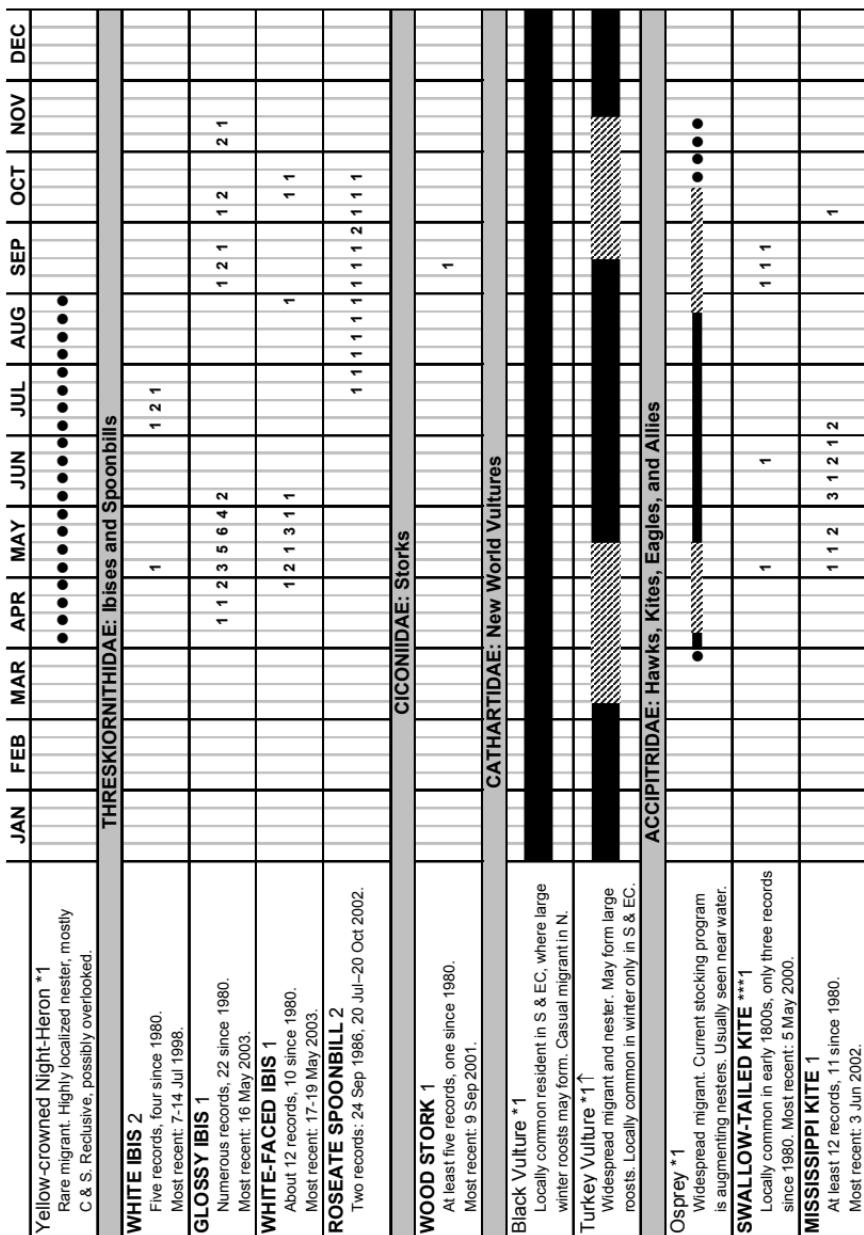
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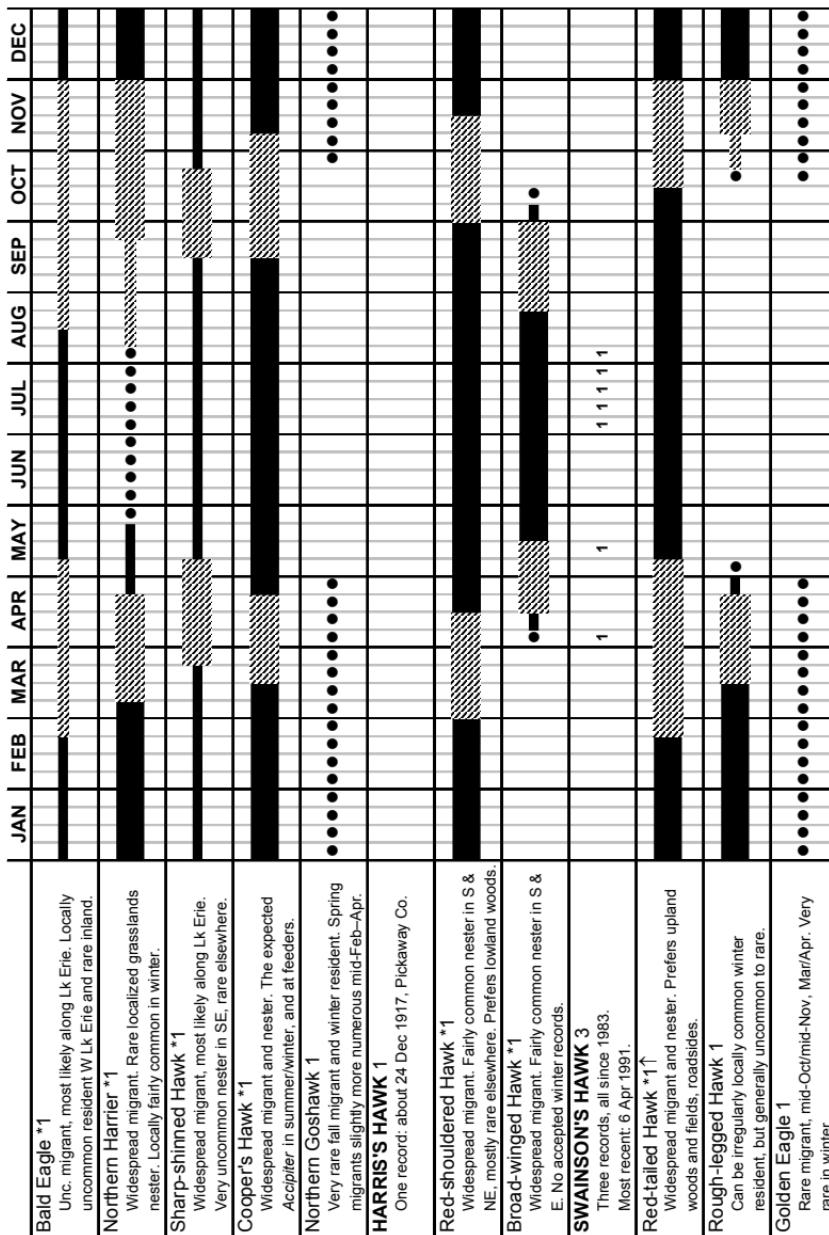
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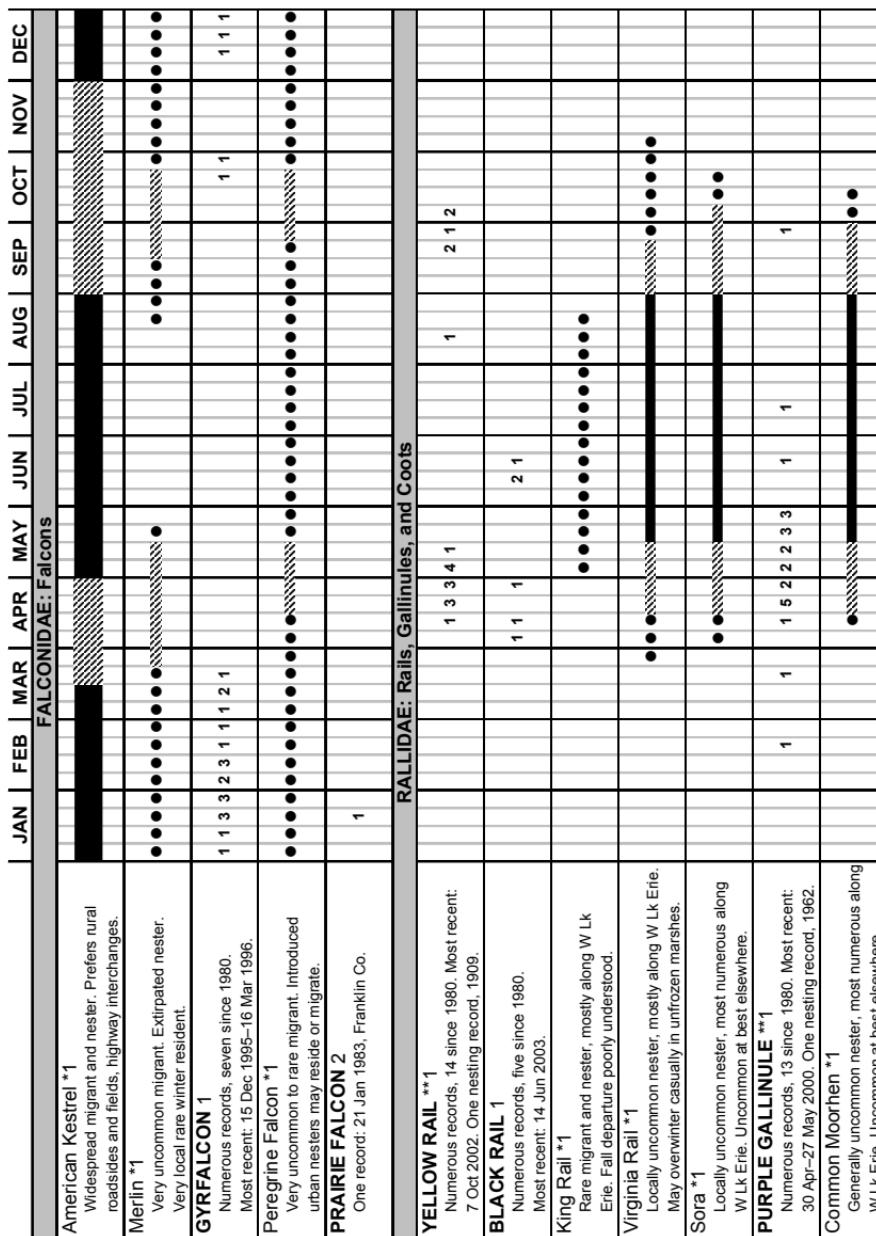
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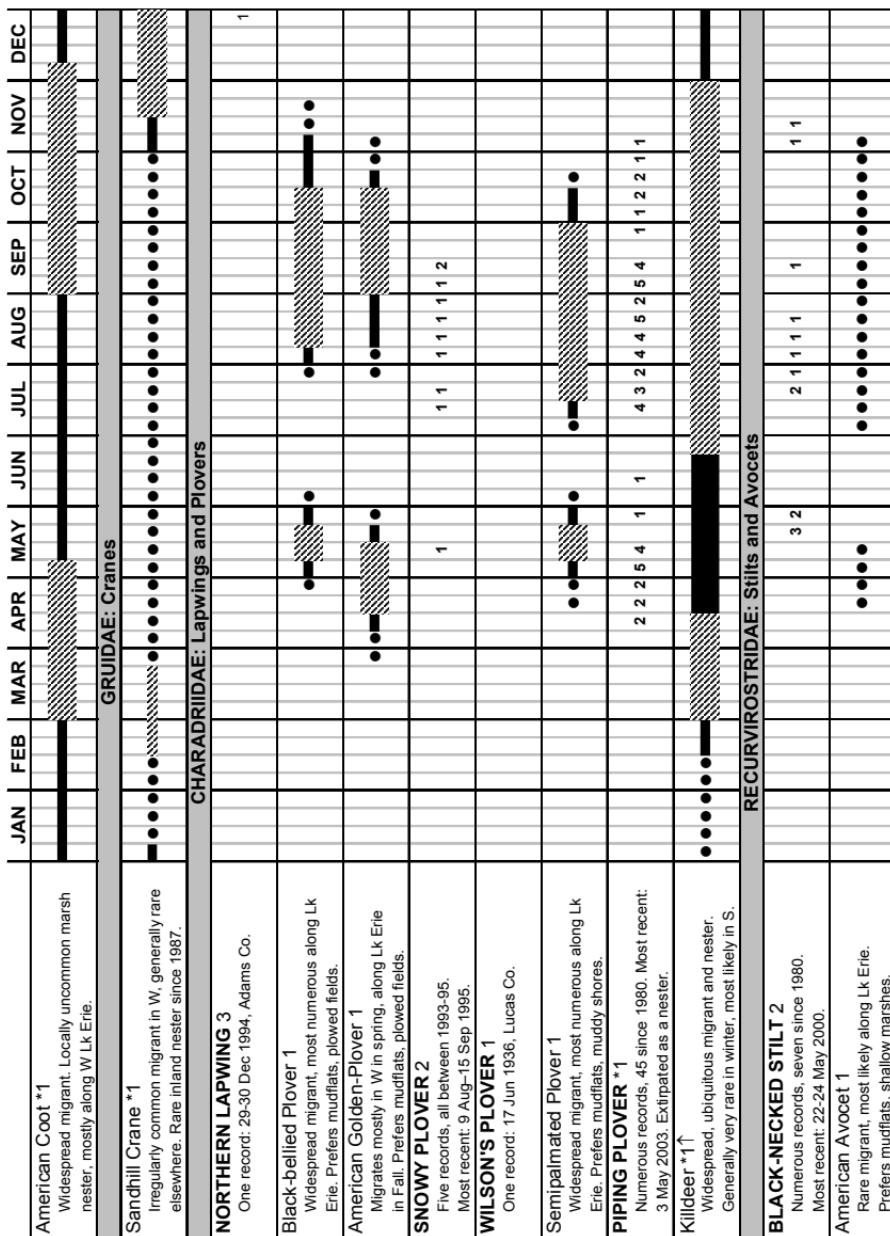
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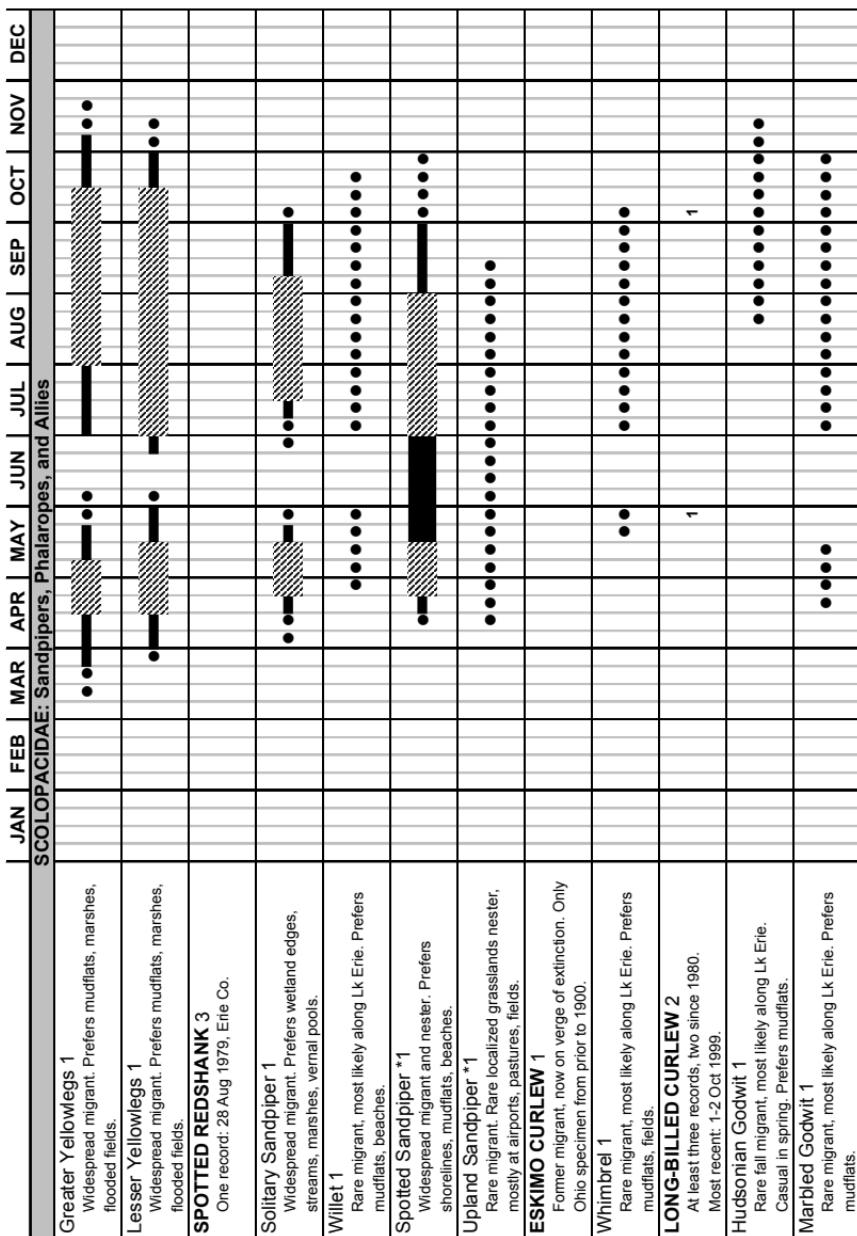
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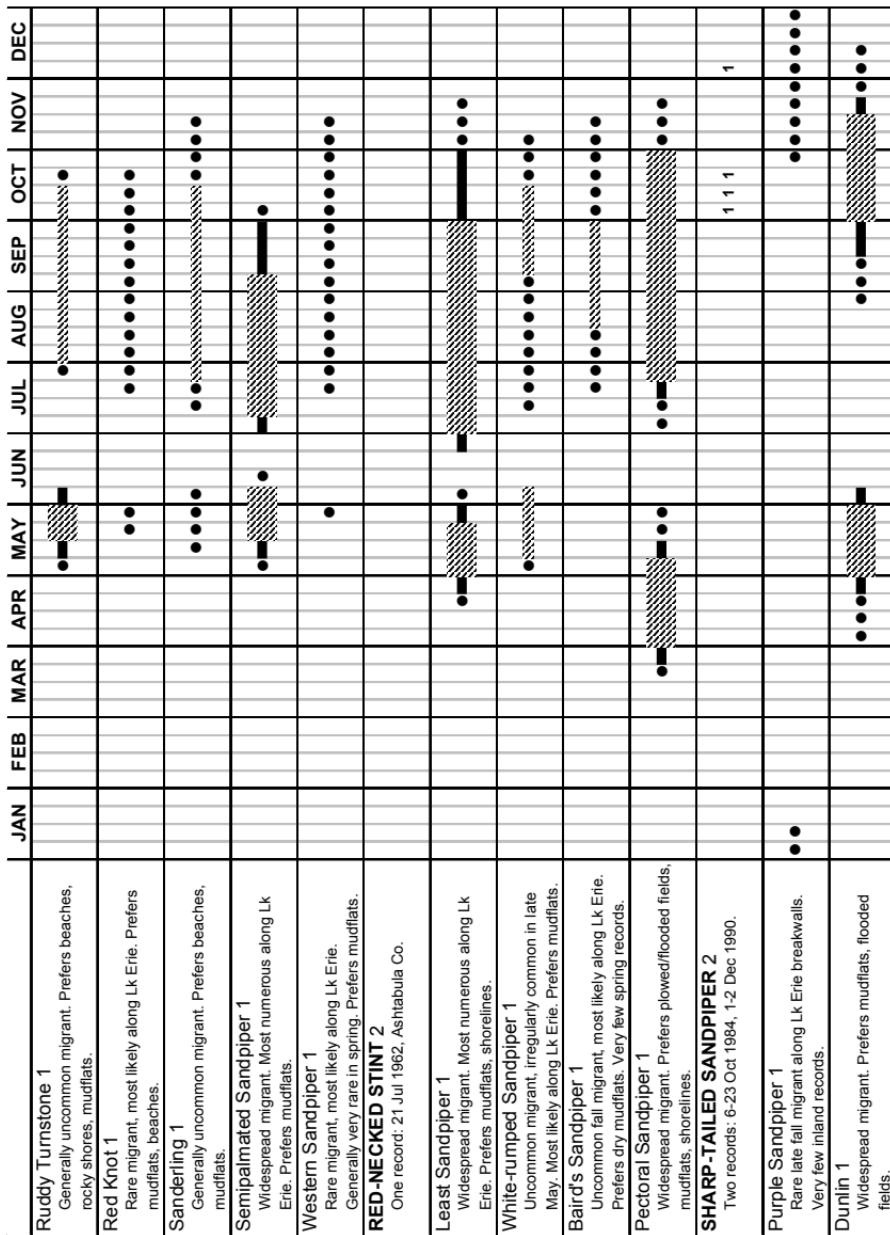
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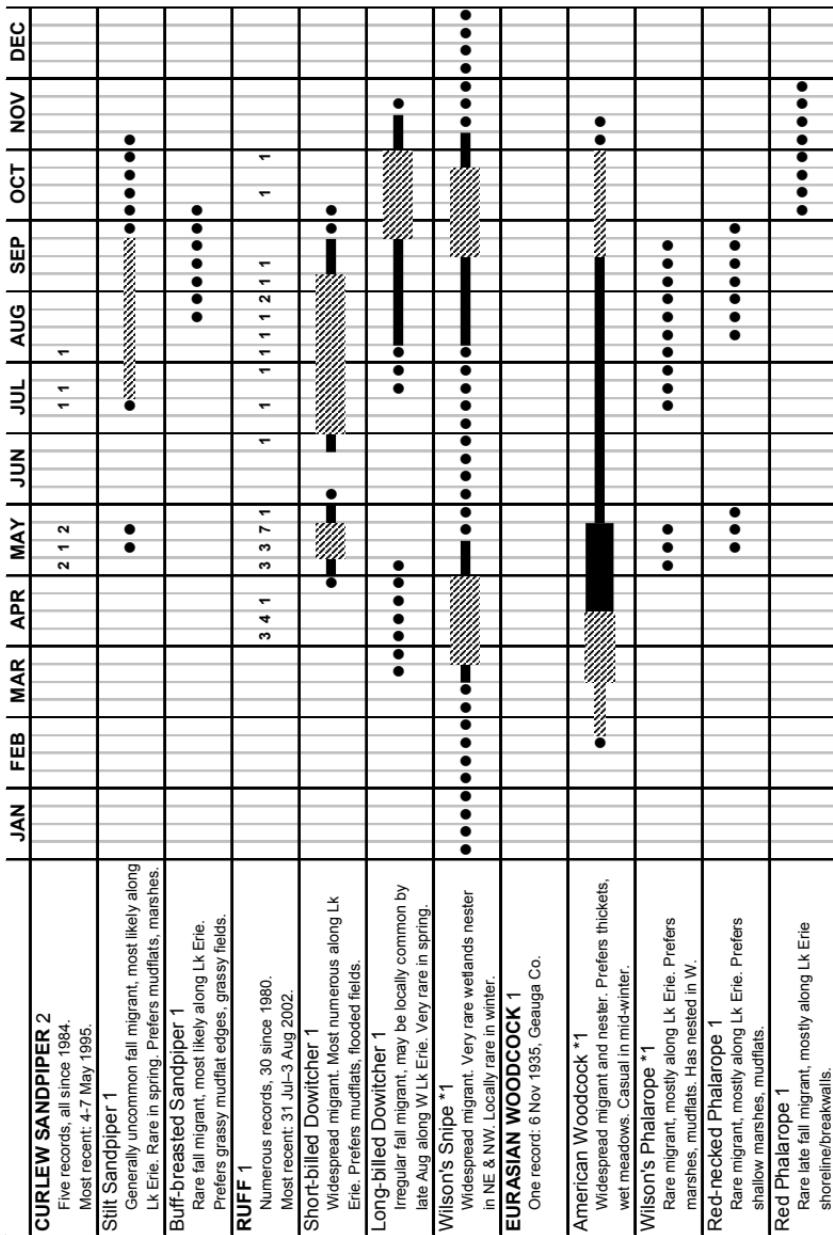
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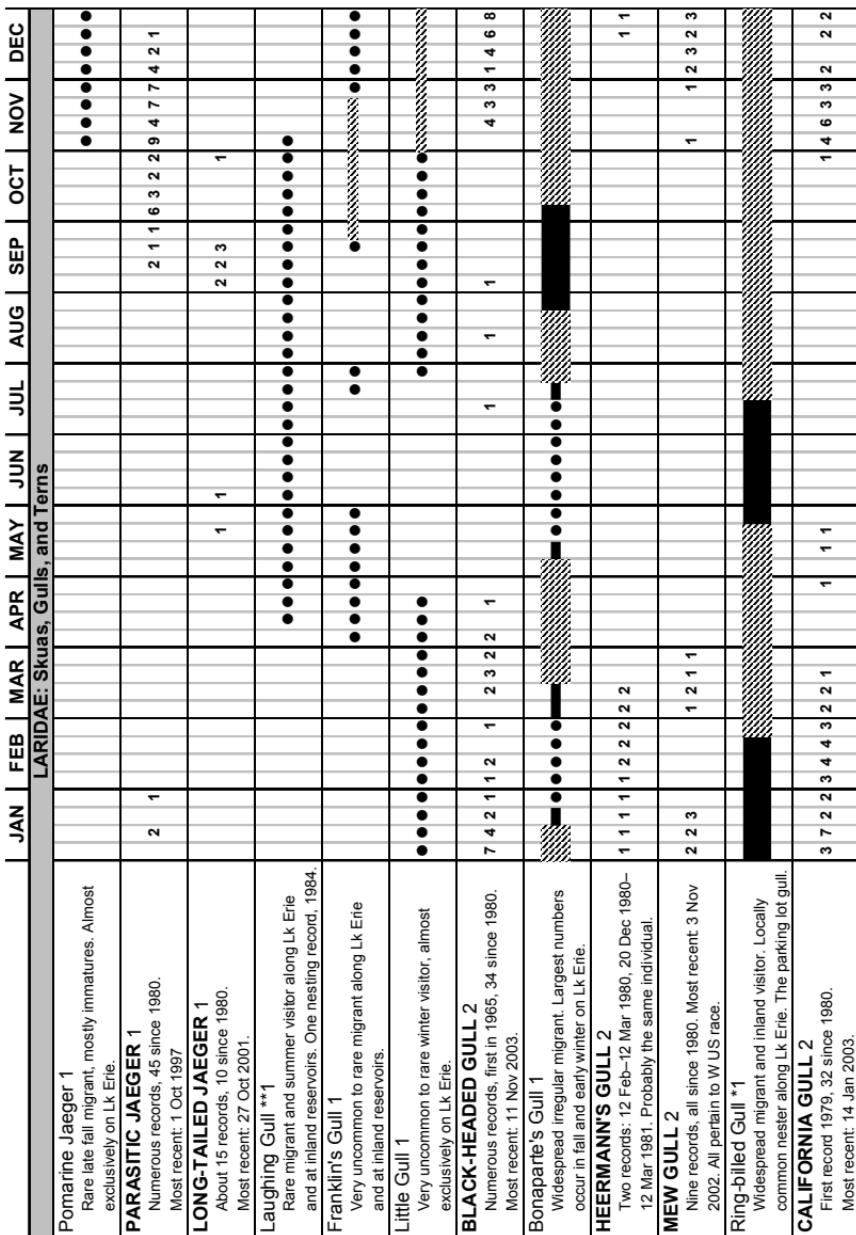
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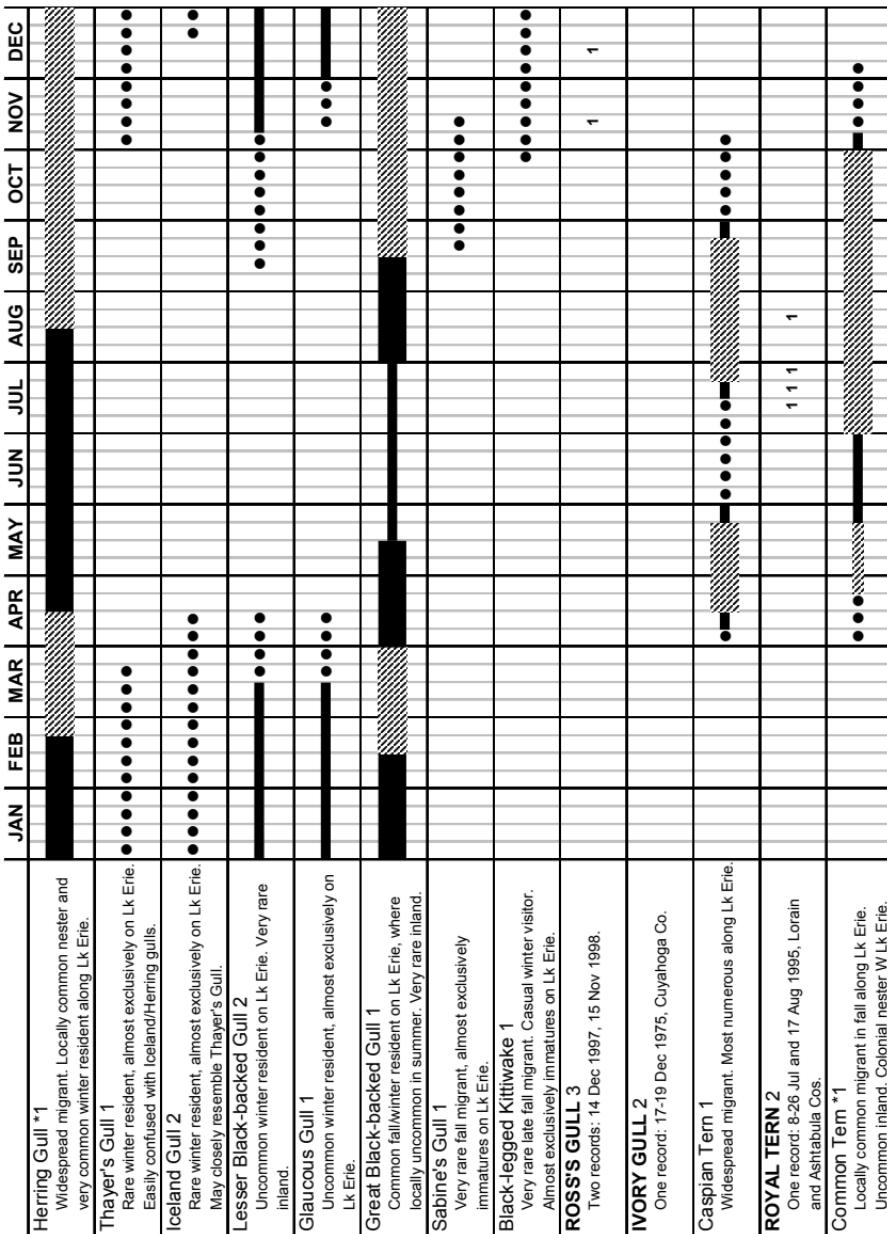
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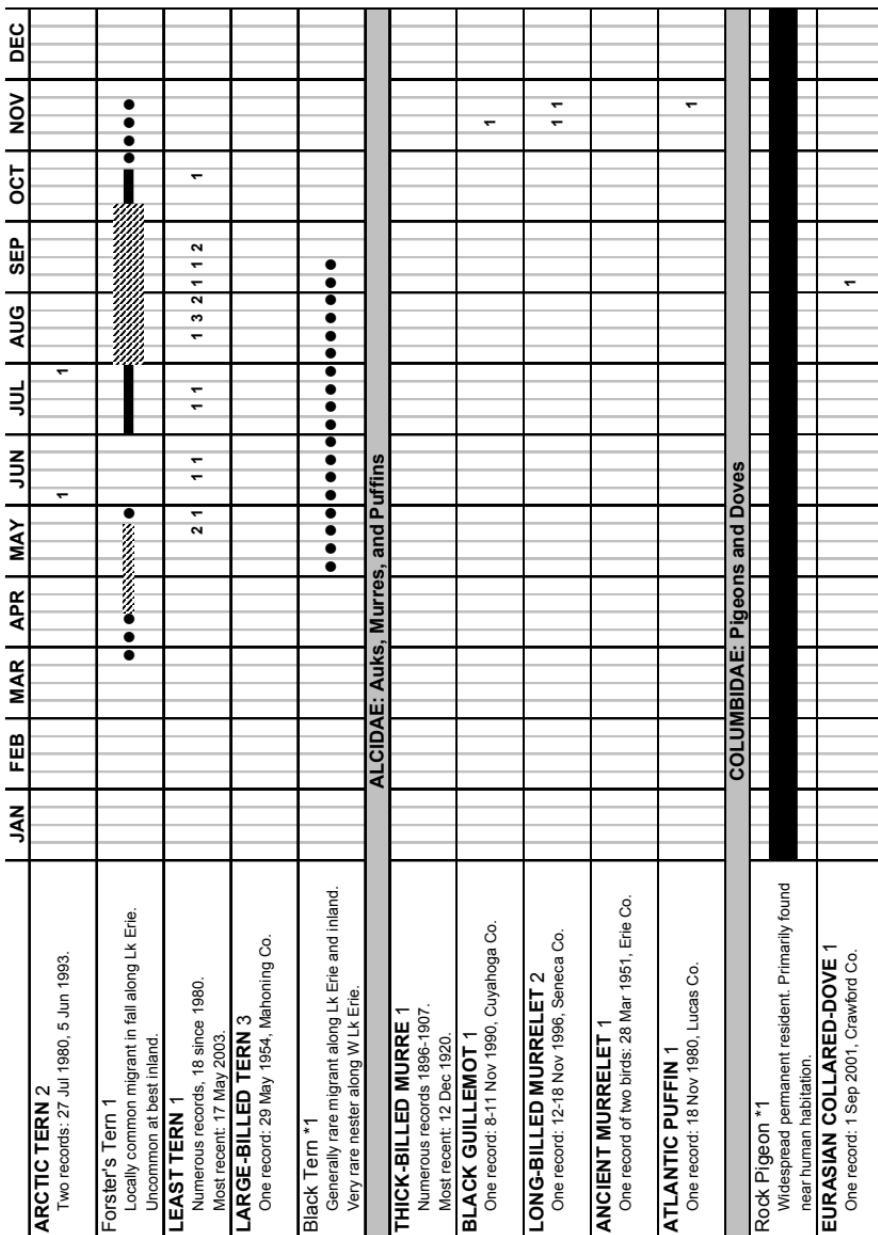
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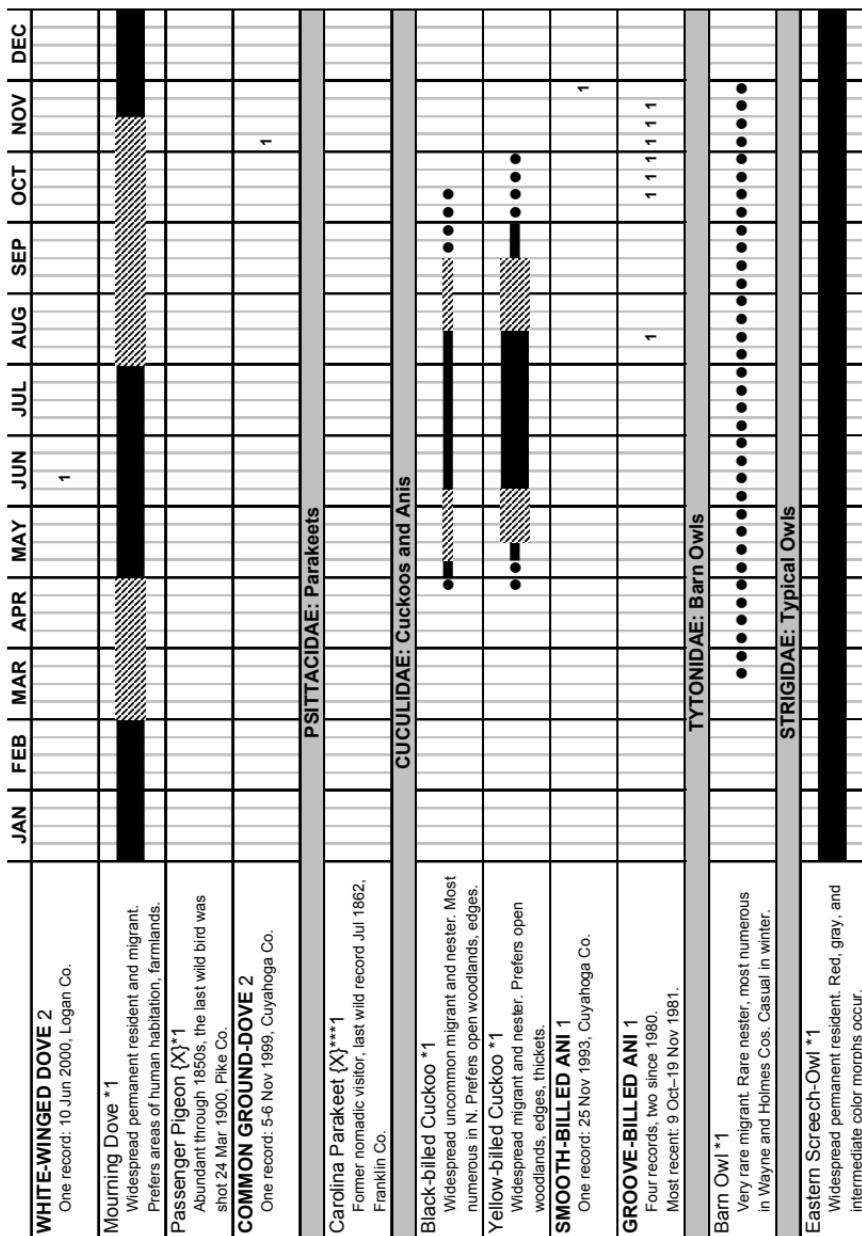
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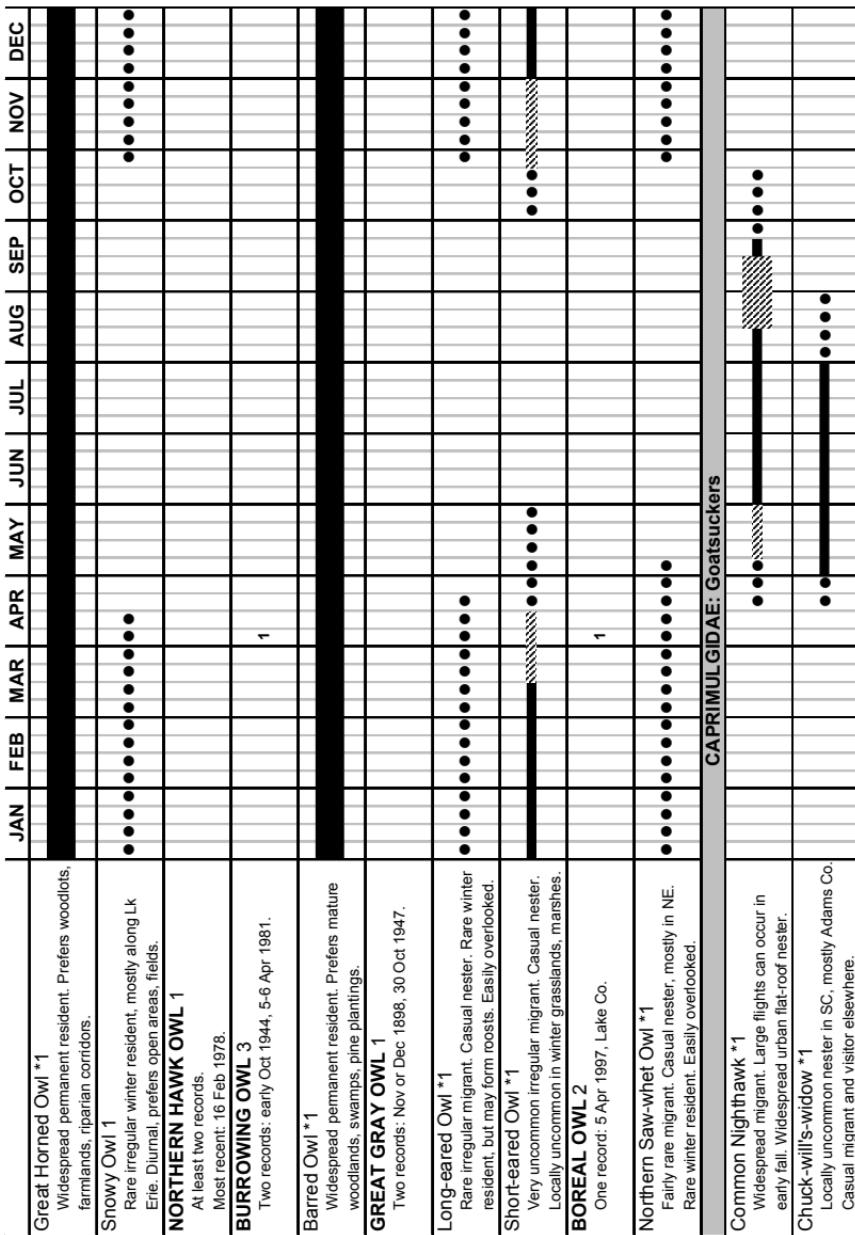
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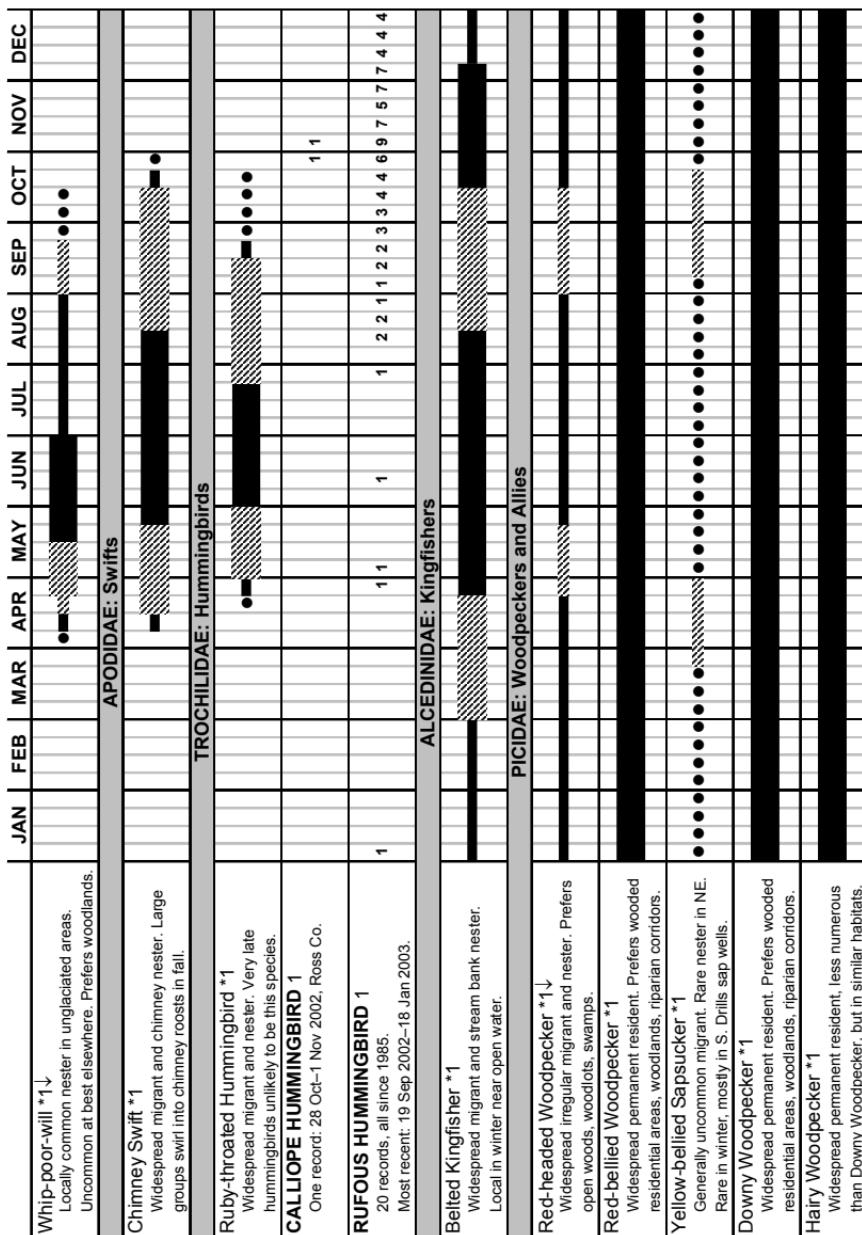
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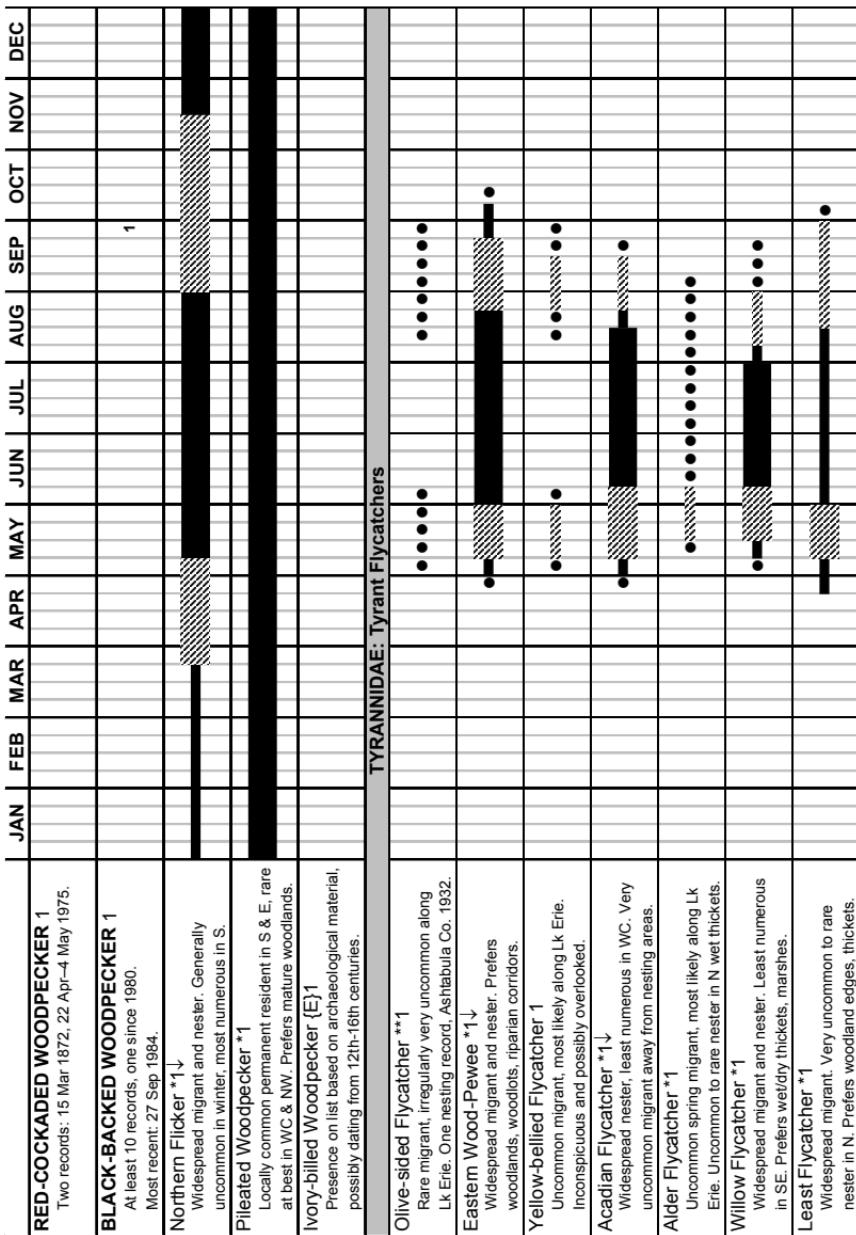
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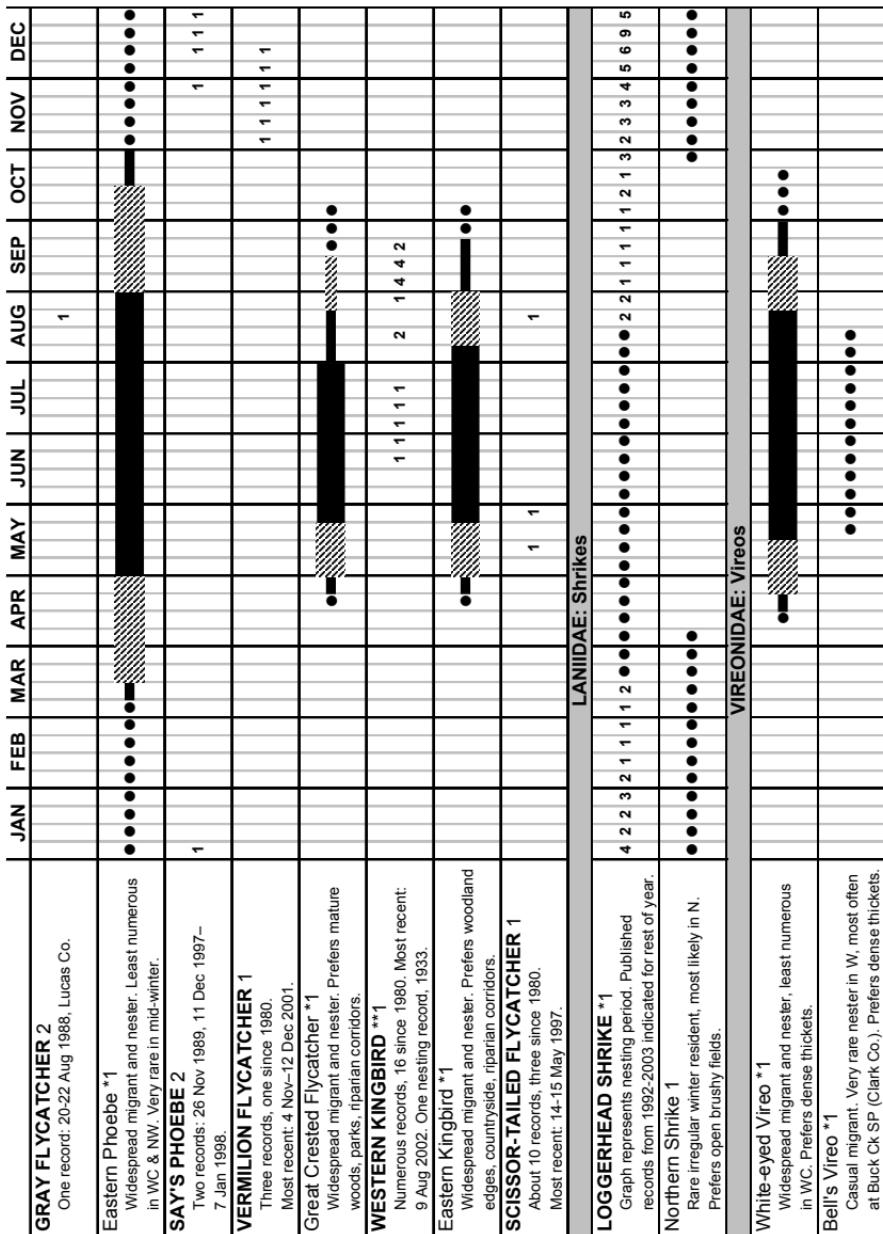
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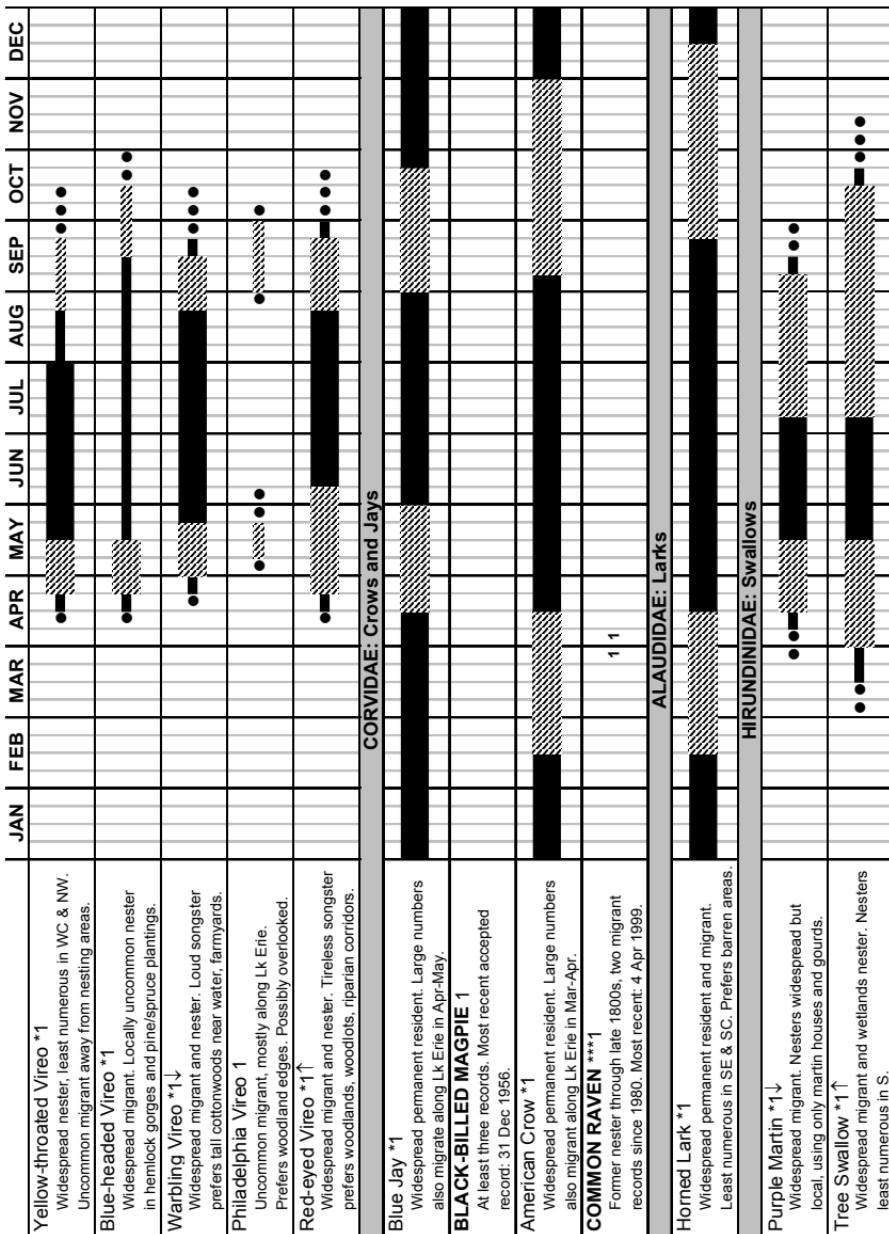
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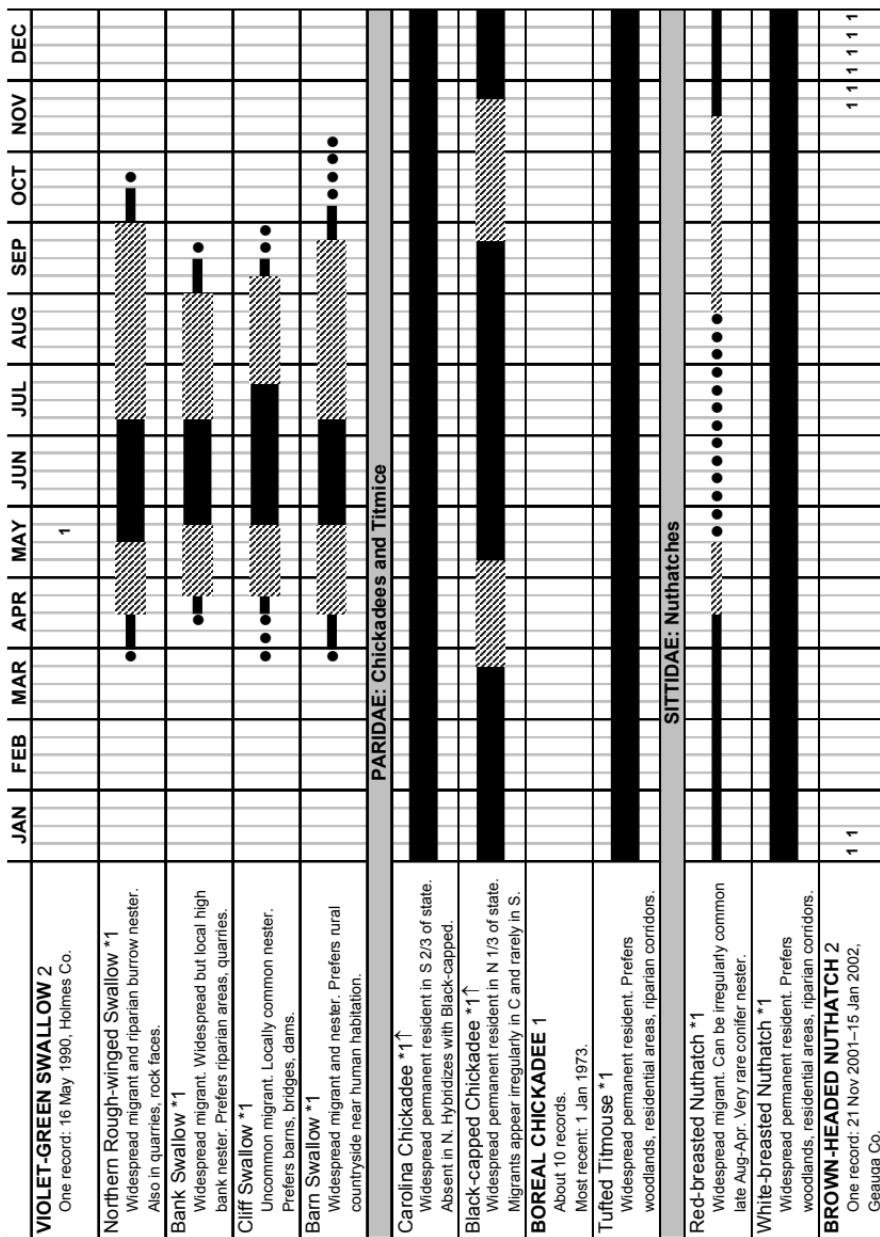
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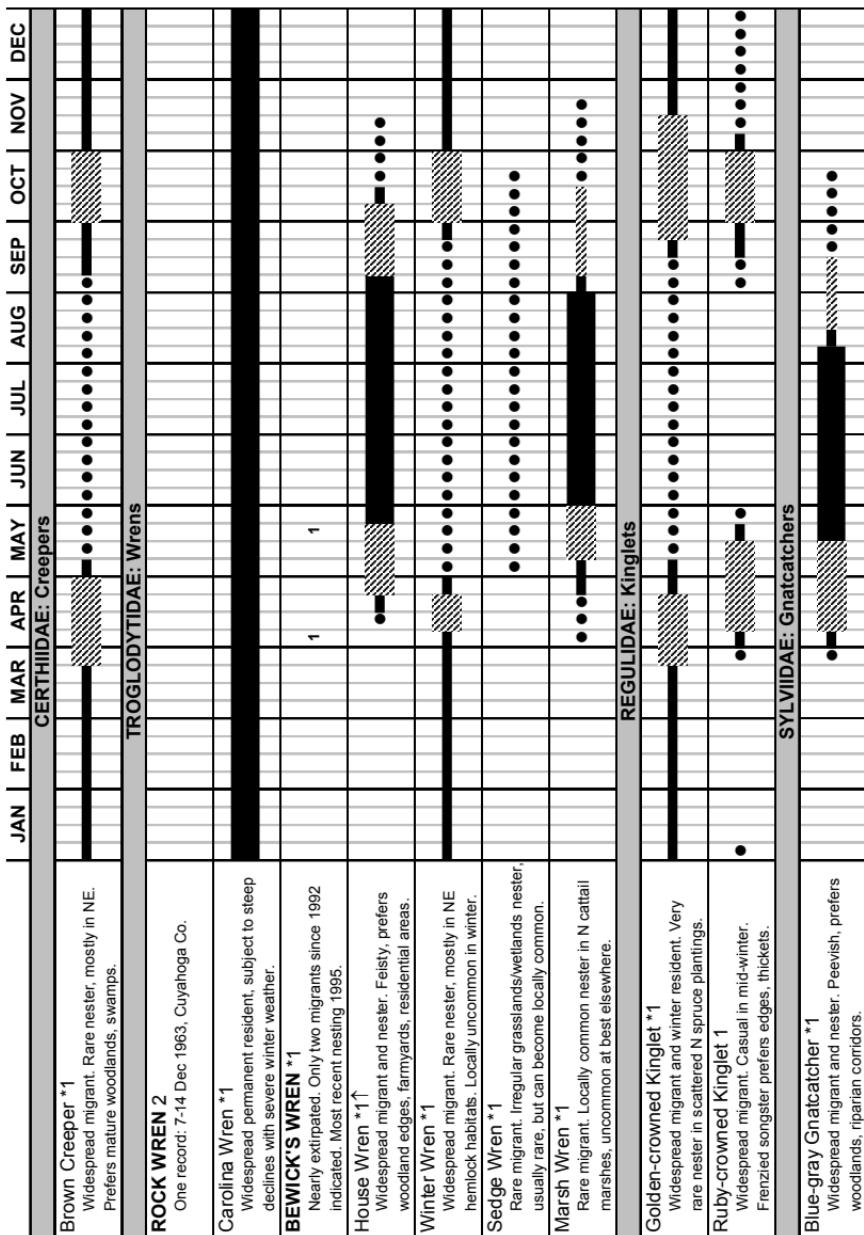
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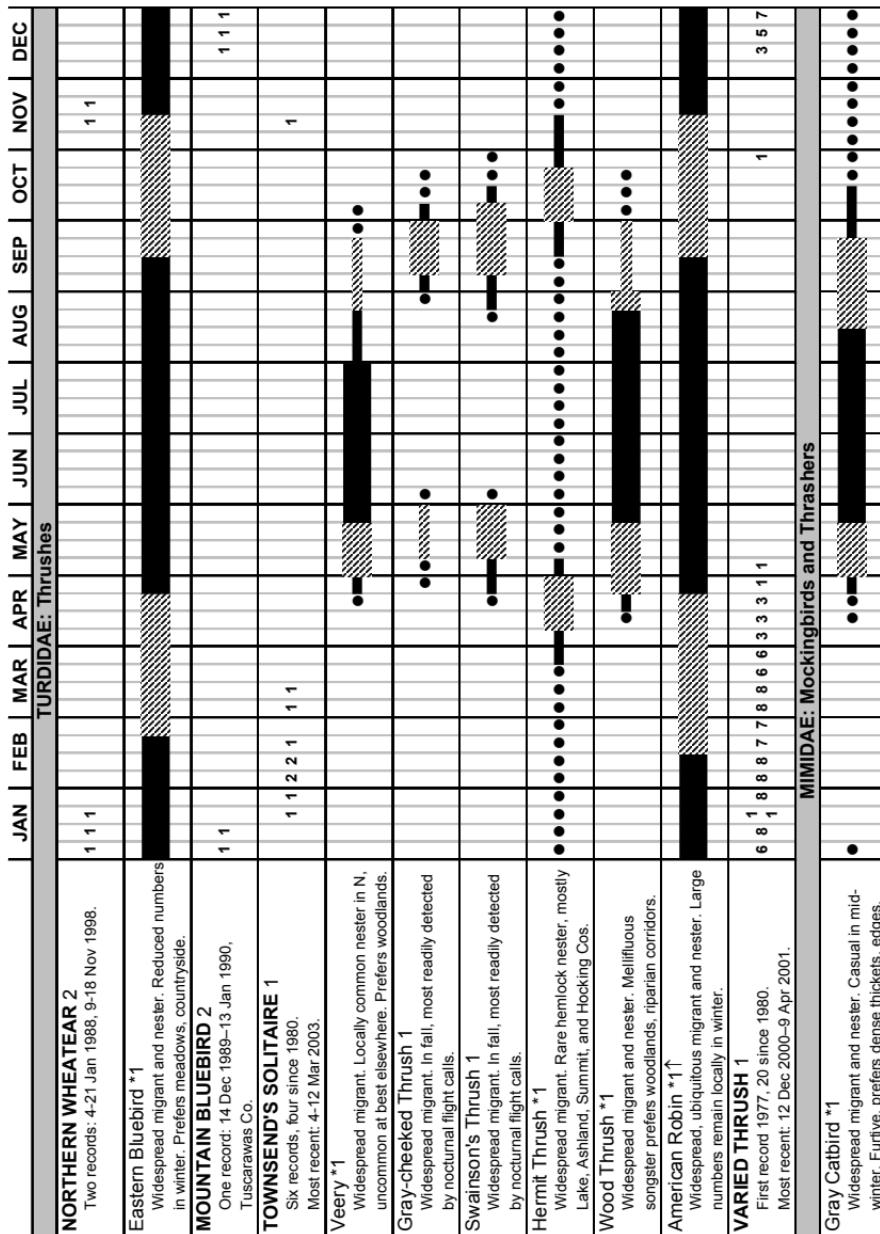
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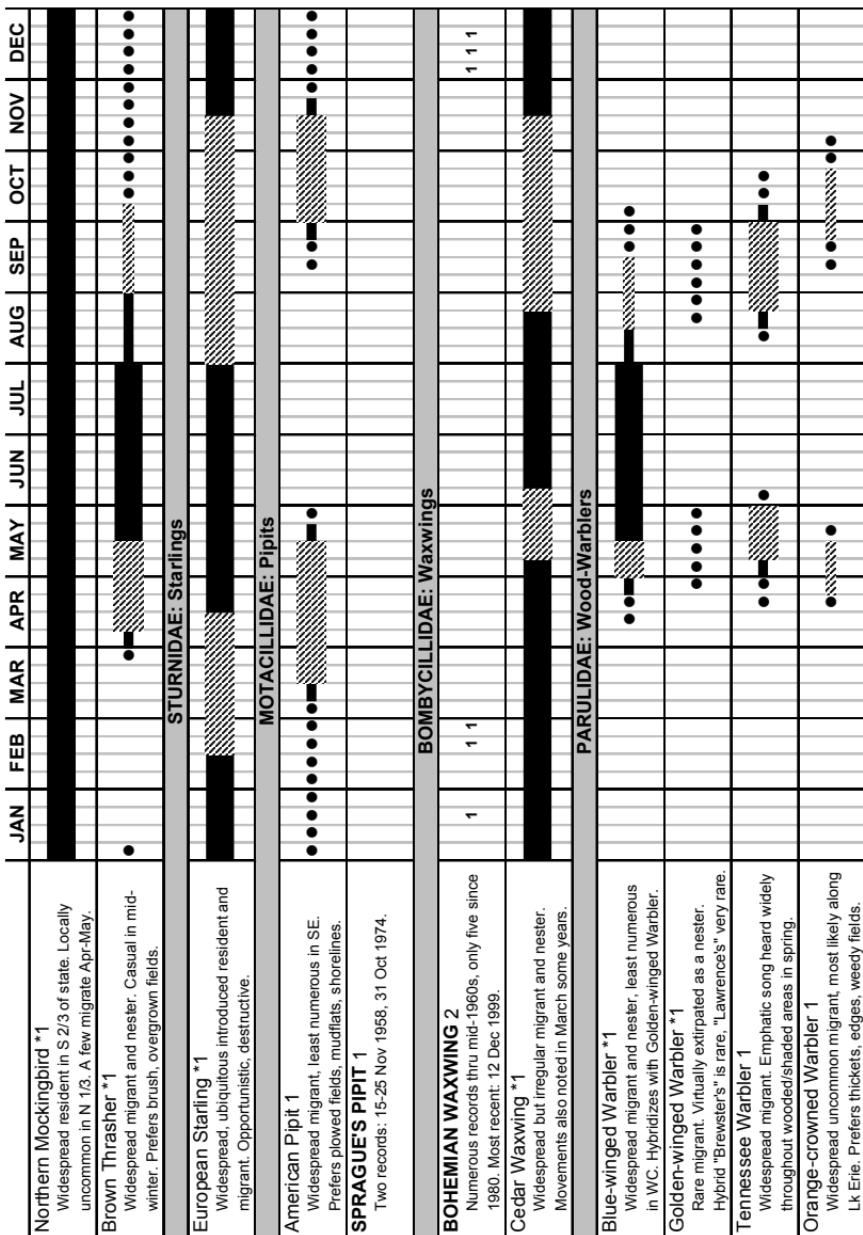
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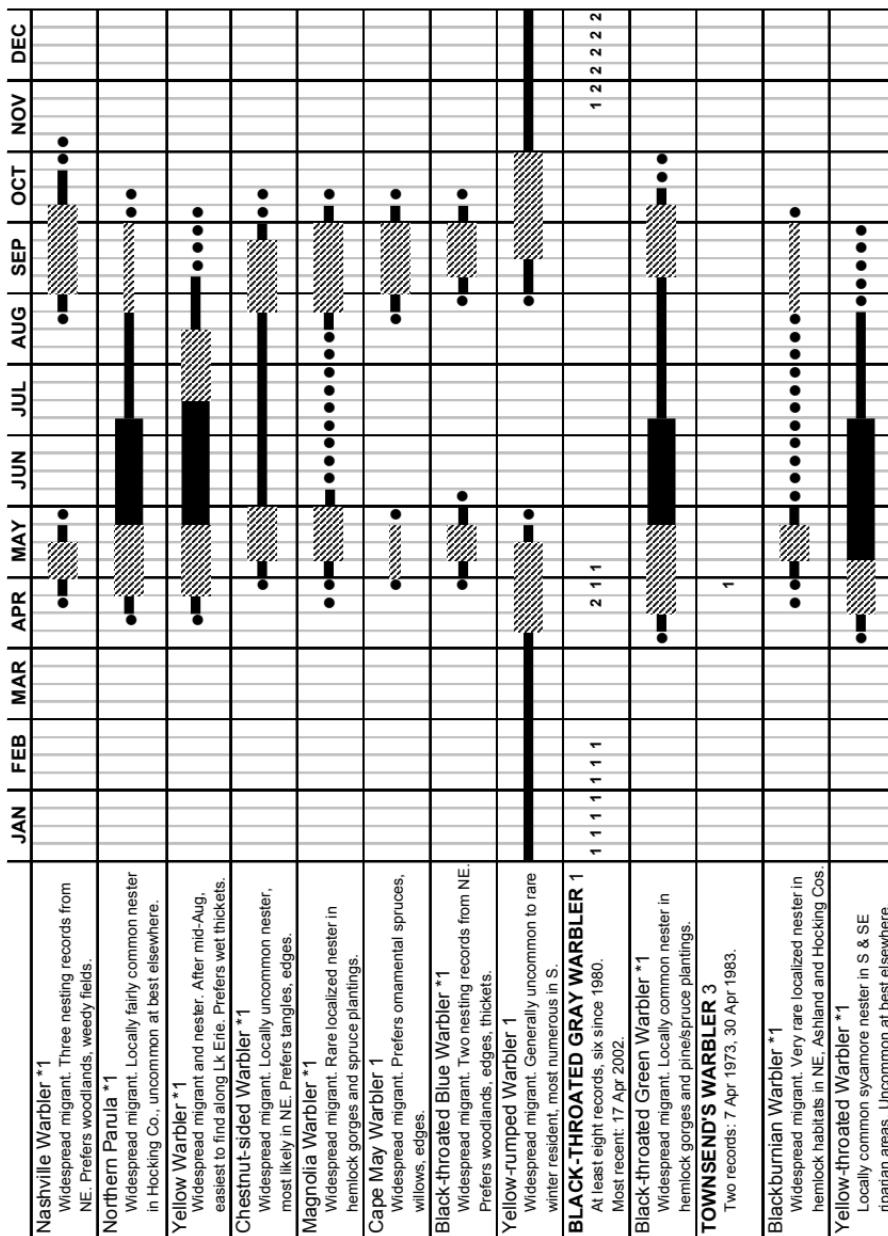
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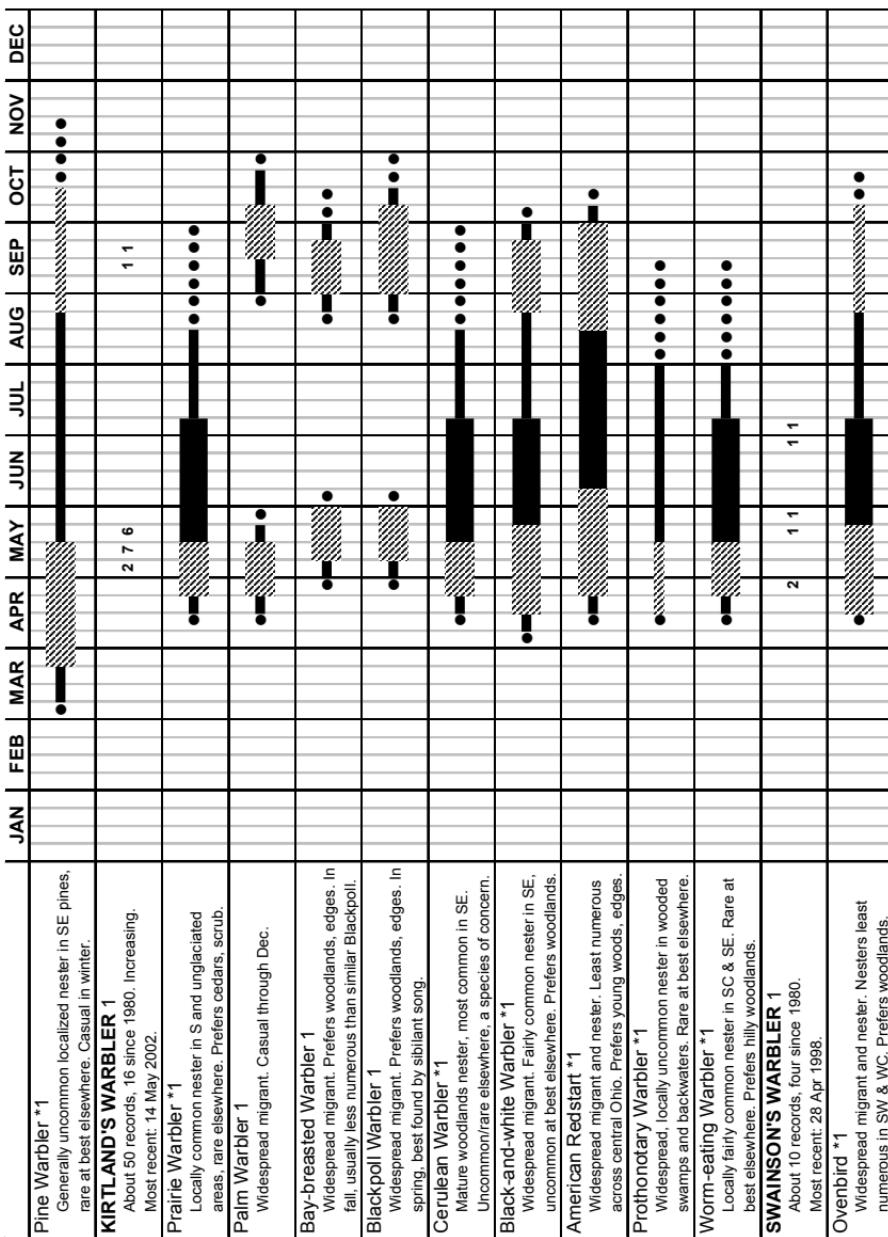
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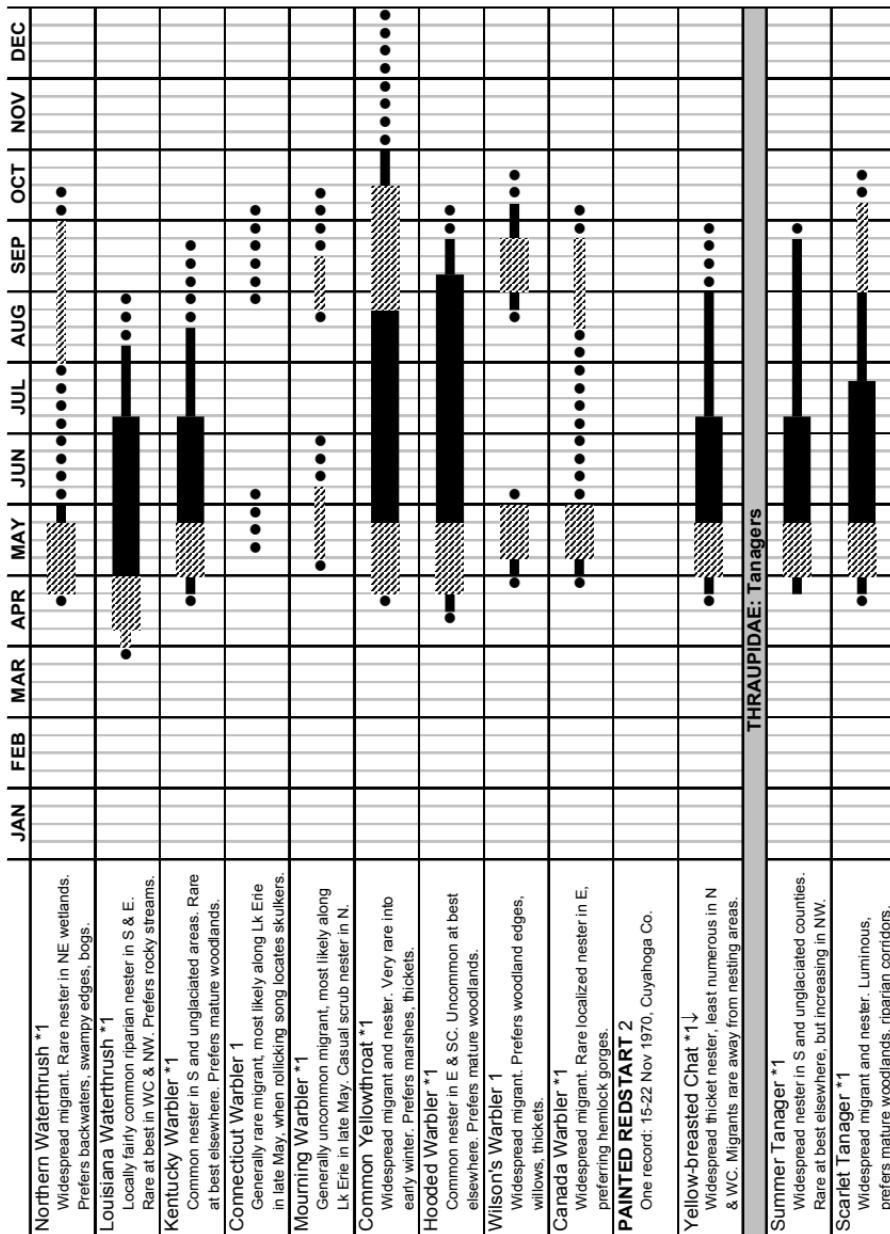
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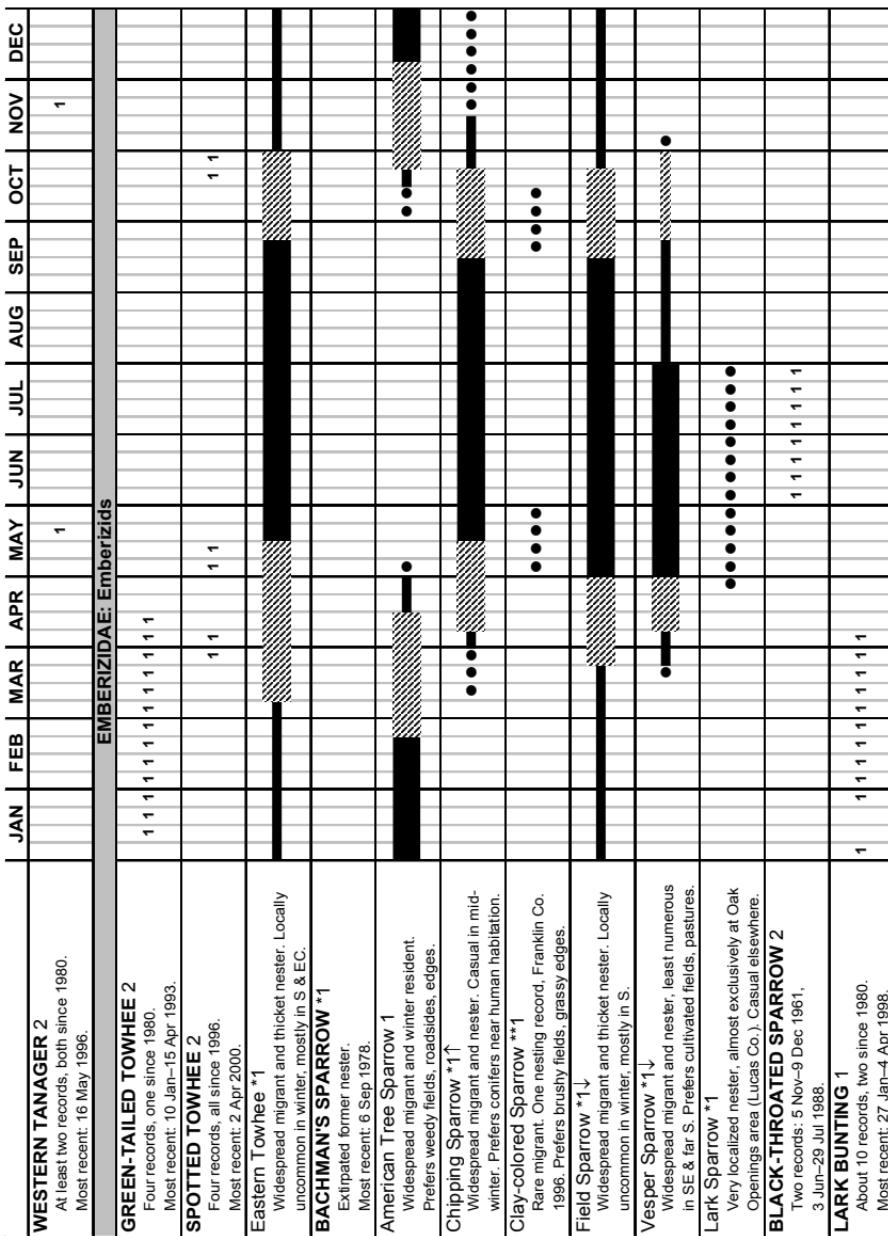
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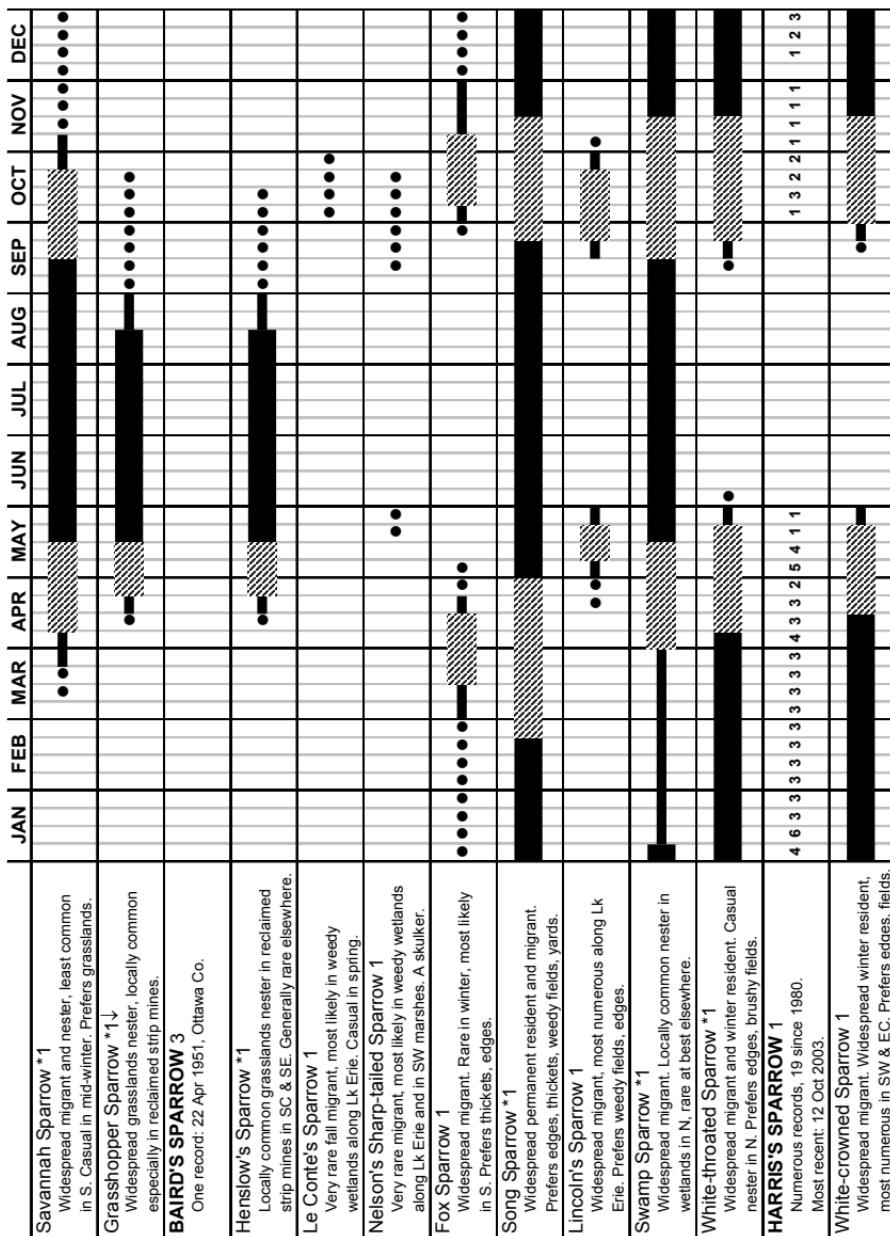
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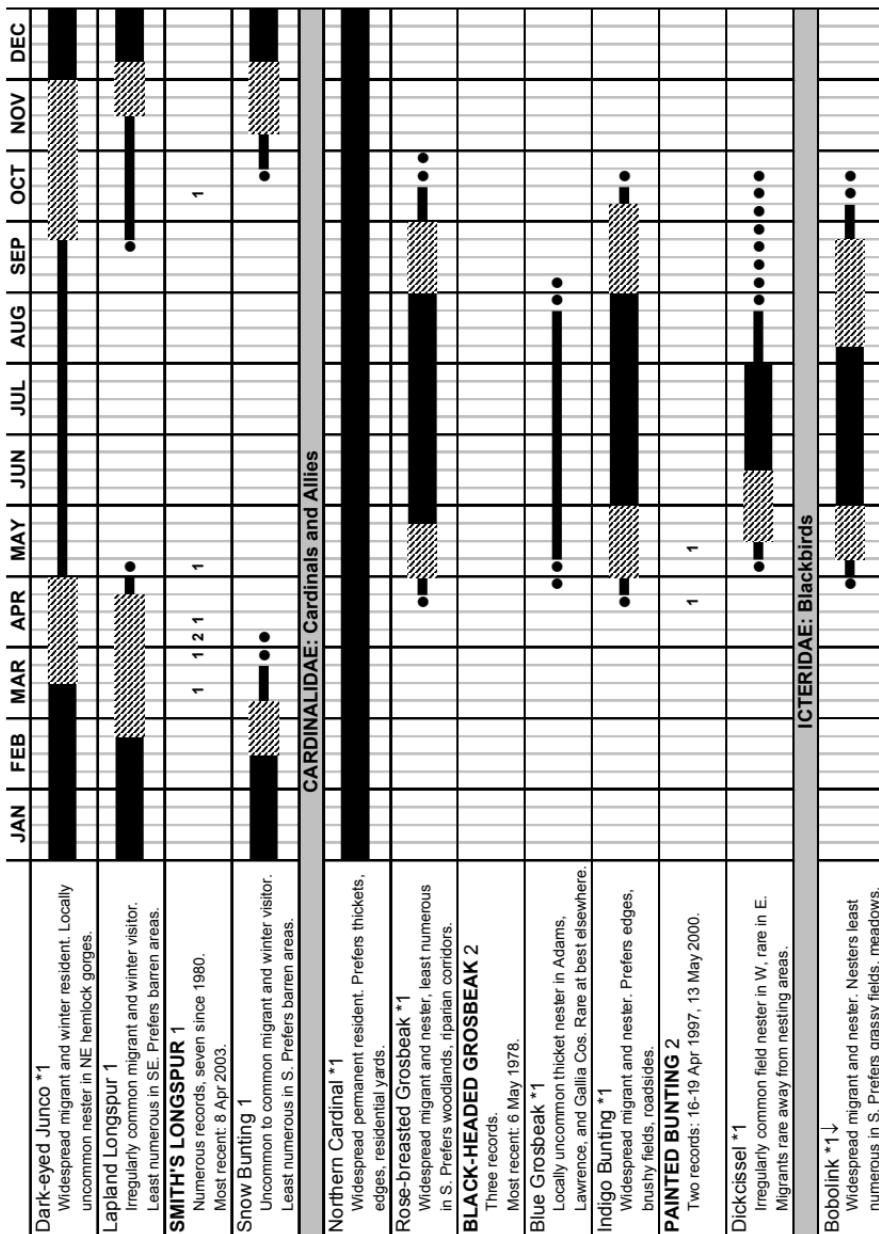
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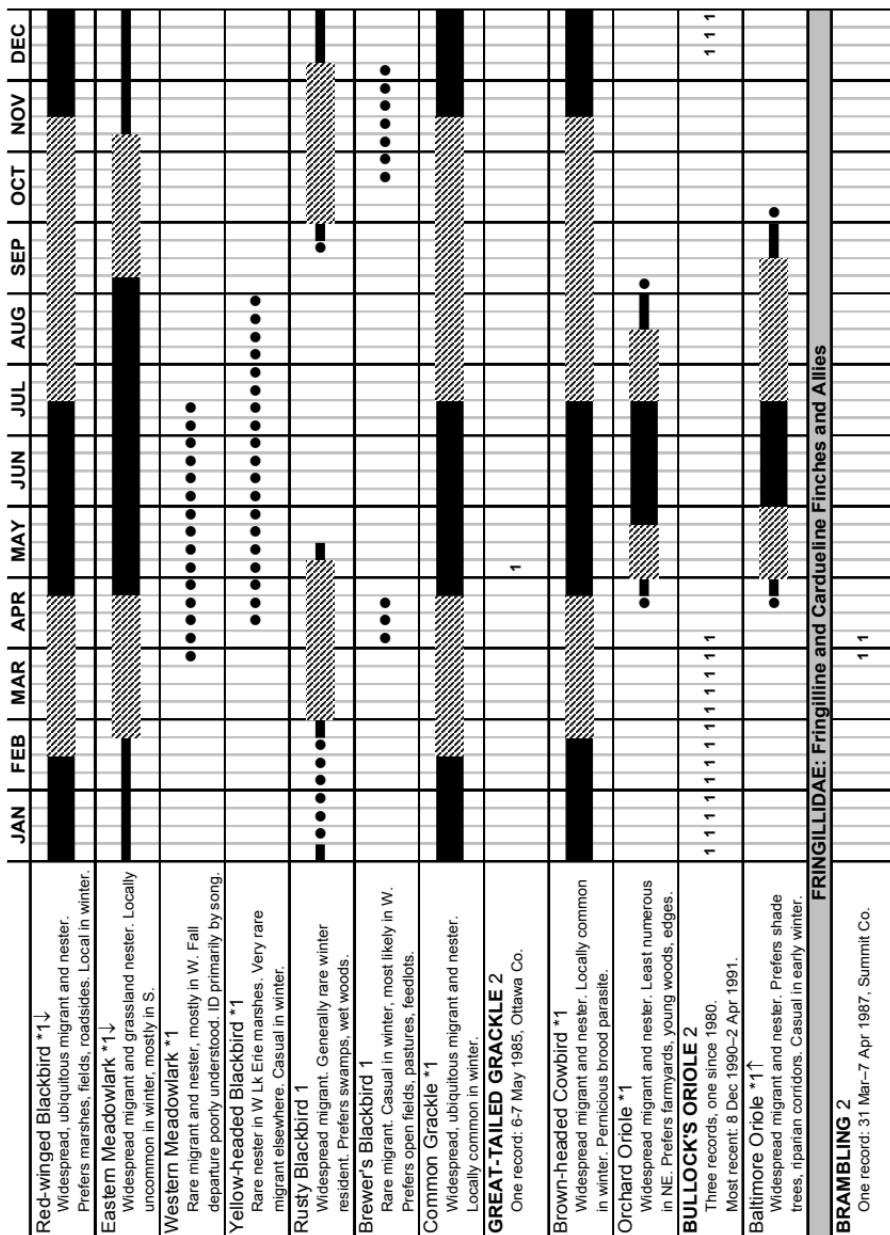
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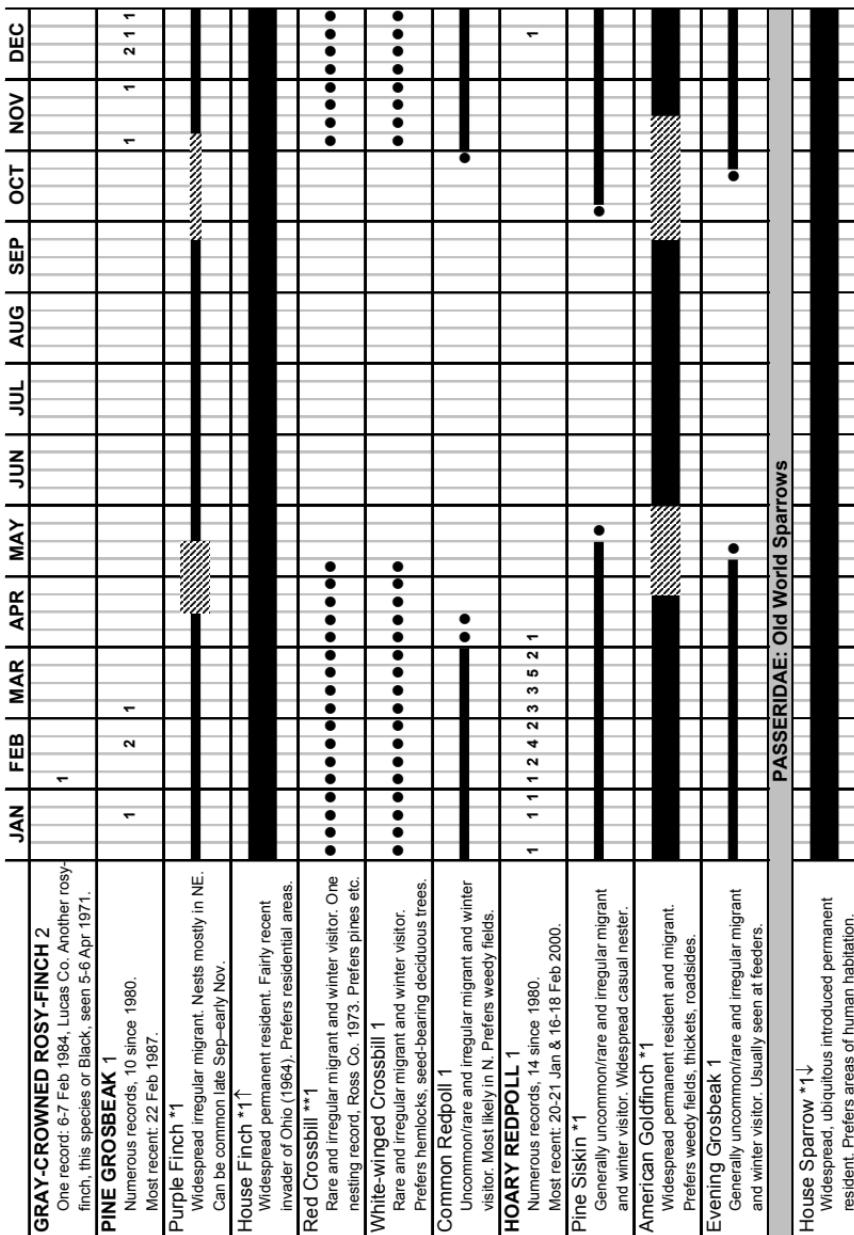
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