

Volunteers Concerned about Nightjars

Citizen scientists that participate in the thousands of programs worldwide are often not professionally trained biologists; however, they possess a desire to contribute their free time to something that they value. Whether uploading species lists into eBird, helping to actively clean and restore wetlands, or venturing into the eve to listen for nightjars, it is understood that a personal sense of fulfillment keeps people engaged in these programs.

In particular, Nightjar Network surveyors deserve an even bigger pat on the back for their efforts. For one, conducting evening work can be a bit of a grind. Additionally, seeing the bird is half the fun; so conducting a bird survey where you will likely never see the bird may not seem as satisfying. We assume you all have your own reasons for embarking on your journey with us: Whether you are the rare night owl, you feel a certain fulfillment in the act of volunteering, or you just can't get enough of birds in the daylight hours that you must grind through the night hours in the hopes of adding one of these awesome birds to your day list! We hope you value your participation and continued support of this program as much as we do.

Eleven years of Nightjar Survey Data and What's to Come

2018 closed out our 11th (!) year conducting nightjar surveys as part of the network. Since its establishment in 2007, over 3,000 survey routes have been conducted by 646 dedicated volunteers throughout the US (Figure 1). Volunteers have included a wide range of concerned citizens from agency biologists to retired school teachers to young students - people who enjoy experiencing the night sounds while contributing to what we know about this unusual group of birds. Across the network, over 27,000 nightjars have been detected including over 10,000 chuck-will's-widows and 8,000 eastern whip-poor-wills (Figures 2 & 3). Composition of the nightjar community varies by region and habitat. North Carolina has consistently won the prize for participation, followed by Florida, Arizona, and Virginia (Figure 4). We are aiming to increase participation through upcoming improvements and the development of applications to simplify data submission so we can collectively bridge information gaps to monitor population trends. The 2019 survey period has begun and we are hopeful for your participation in the coming season!

Thanks again for all you do! As always, feel free to contact us with questions or comments at nightjars@nightjars.org.

The Nightjar Survey Network Team

nightjars.org

Number of Total Survey Routes Conducted per State (2007-2018)

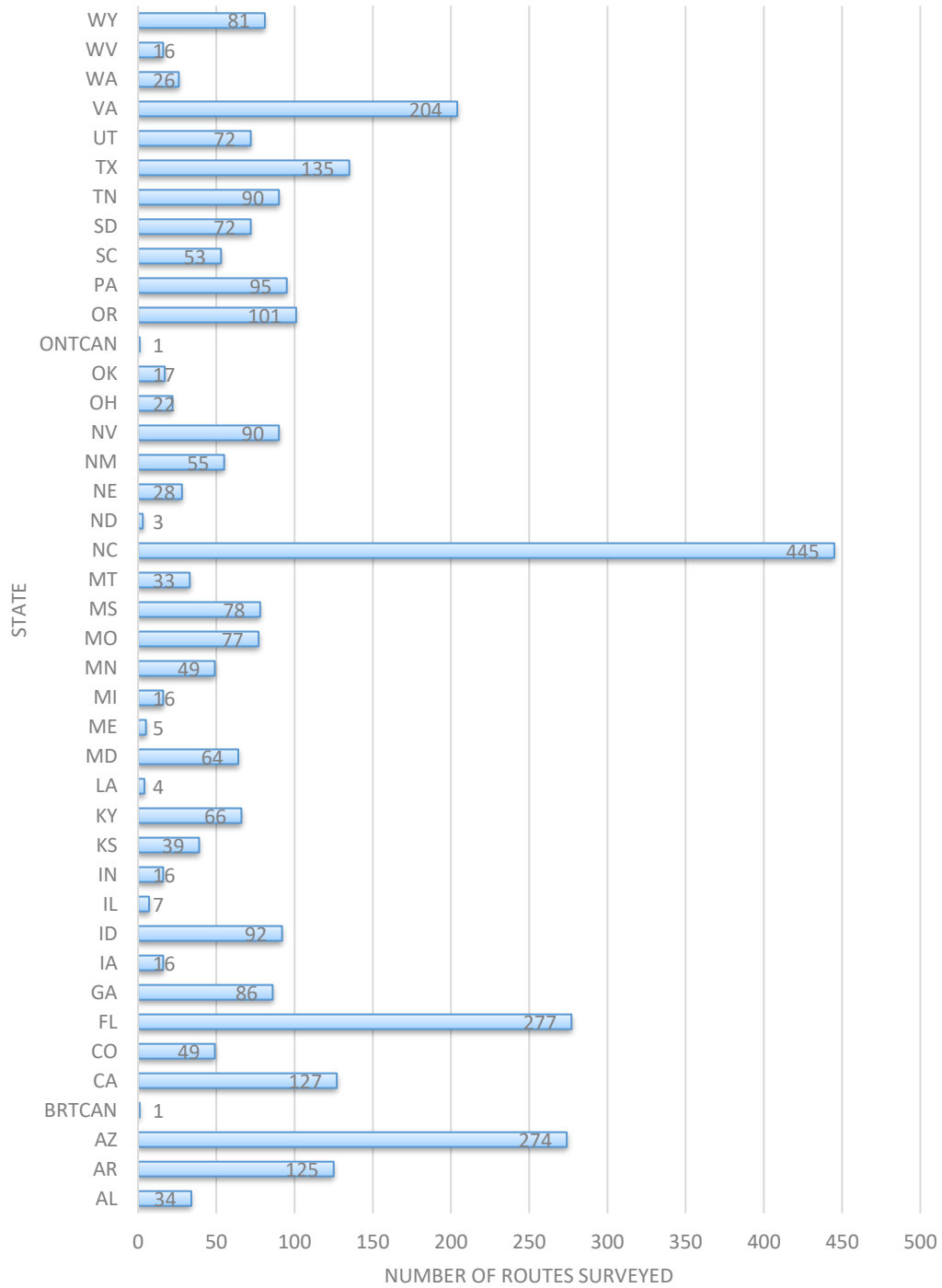


Figure 1. Total number of routes surveyed per state since 2007.

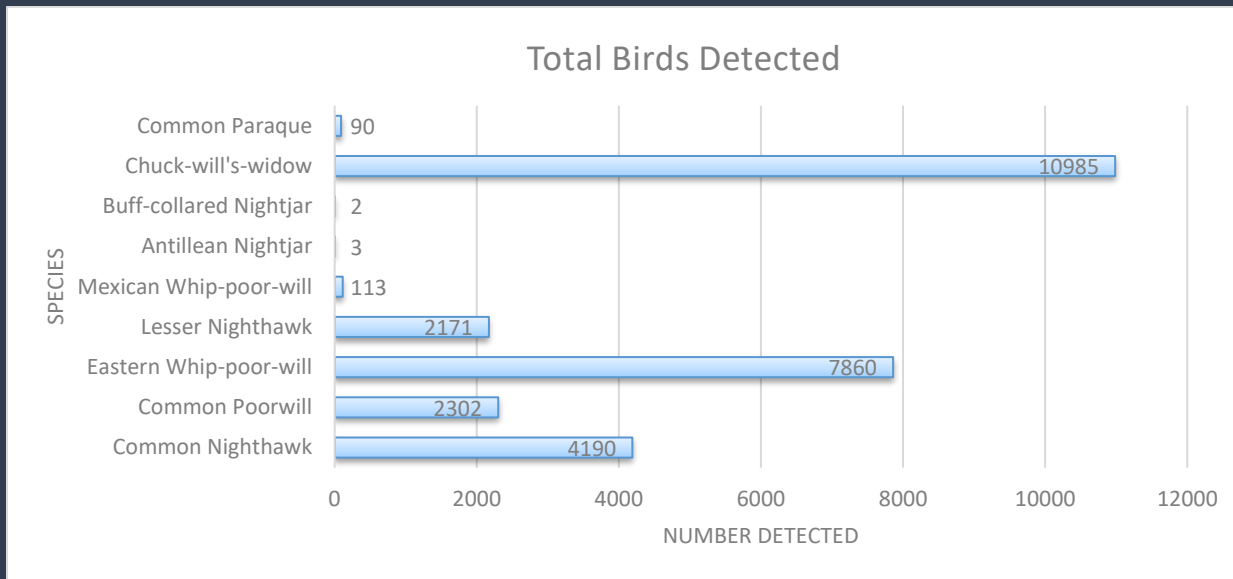


Figure 2. Total number of birds detected by species, all years (2007-2018), including all states.

NUMBER OF EACH SPECIES DETECTED PER STATE (2007-2018)

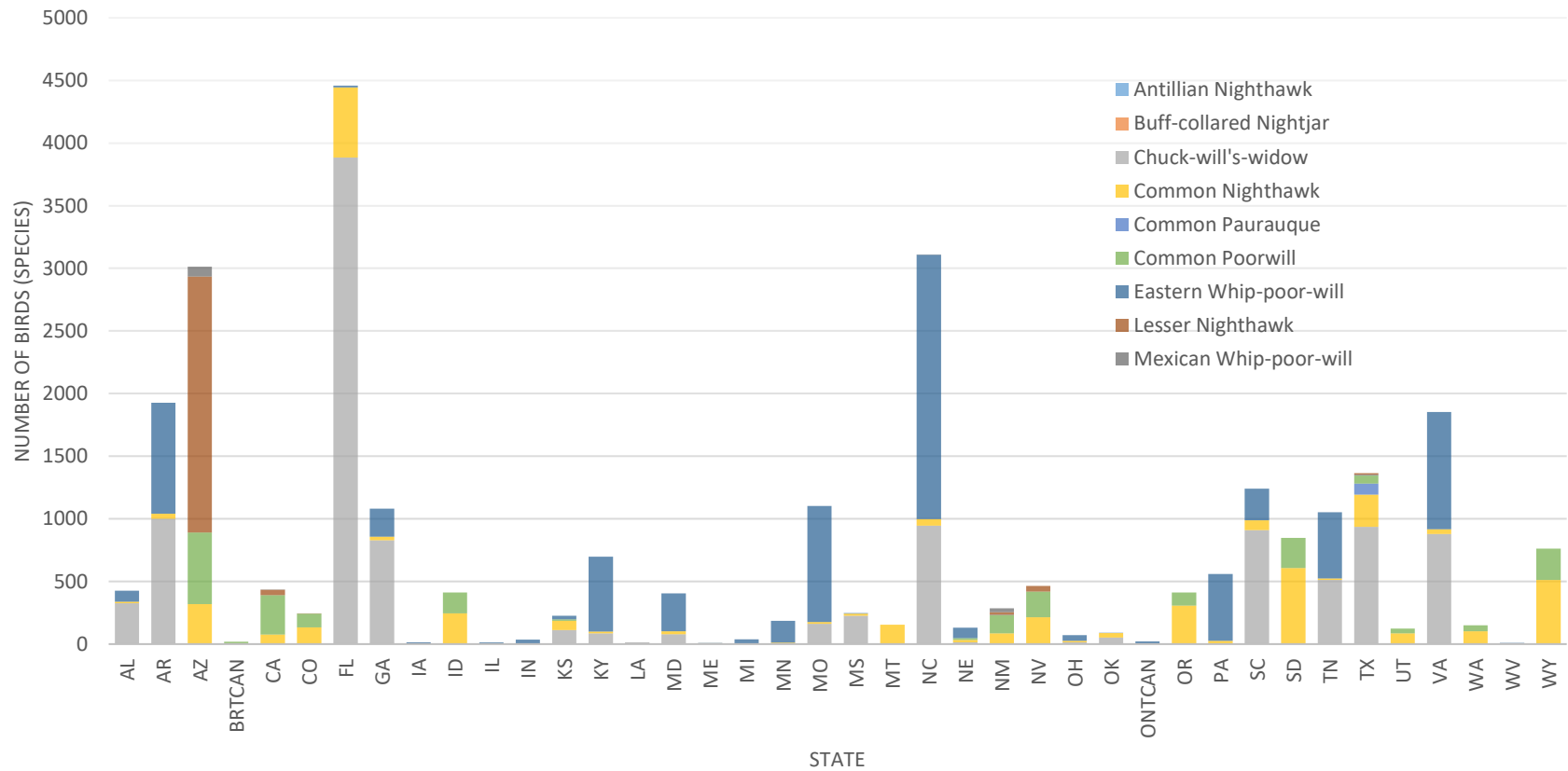


Figure 3. Nightjar species detected per state.

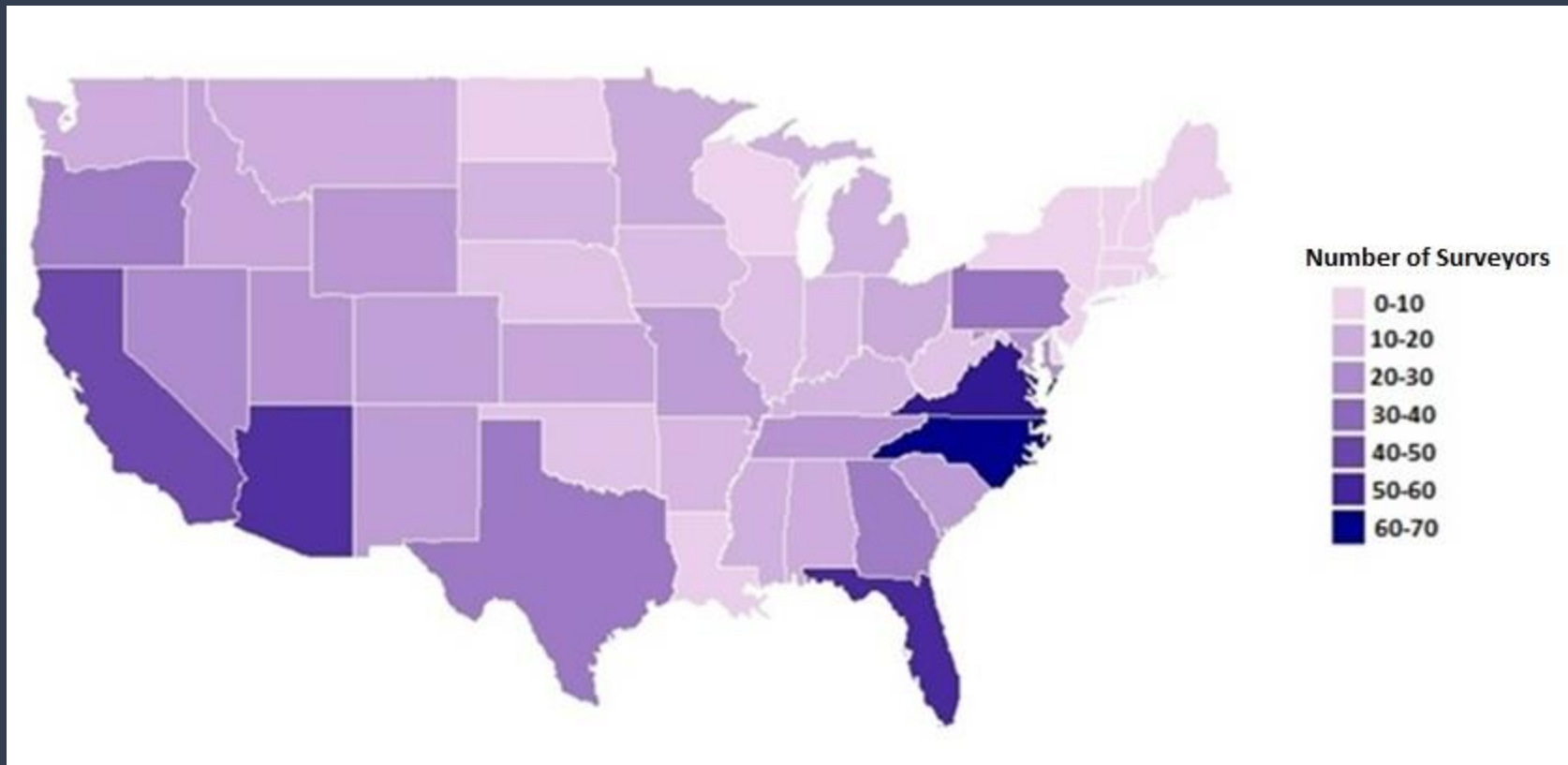


Figure 4. Number of current Nightjar Route Surveyors per State.