

# KALAMAZOO COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY  
WILLIAM E. PRAEGER  
FRANCES DIEBOLD

FOUNDED 1833  
MICHIGAN

KALAMAZOO

May 28, 1934

Mr. Philip A. DuMont,  
306 Fifty-first Street,  
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Mr. DuMont:-

I was very interested in your letter of recent date. I am pleased to know that you were in Keokuk and saw the collection in the High School. When I was in Keokuk, forty years ago, there were three collections of birds that I know of;- The Shafer, the Davis and the Heiser. Dr. Shafer mounted birds and probably mounted many of the C. F. Davis specimens, he did not know much of the birds and I had to help him to label when he gave his collection to the High School. C. F. Davis was also more of a collector than a student, he had a son in High School at that time, Forbes Davis, who taught himself with some help to mount and I remember him mounting a Swallow-tailed Kite, Forbes Davis went west and I think I heard of his death some years ago but am not sure. Heiser was a druggist and mounted birds as a side line, he knew little about them, it was he who had that Red-throated Diver. It is curious but none of the men who collected birds knew much of the nor were reliable in their identification. Forbes Davis did better and of course Currier was to be trusted.

Regarding the birds you mention;- I have seen the Swallow-tailed Kite soaring overhead and specimens turned up from time to time. Amn. Egrets were occasionally shot. The wild turkey was still not rare within a few miles of the city; it inhabited the rough ground, hard clay soil, towards the Des Moines River, the gullies and bluffs were mostly covered with second growth oak often quite thick. I have tracked flocks of turkeys in the snow but never got one. The mockingbird bred near Keokuk and it was reported quite common around Montrose (twelve miles north) a flat sandy country. I know nothing of the Marbled Godwit

One hundred fifteen species in a Day is a very exceptional record. Well done! I think you wrote me some time ago that you wanted migration notes. This is quite the busiest time of the year in the college; after commencement - June 11 - I will see what I can do.

When I was in Keokuk the best hunting ground was in the wild bottom lands south of the city in Missouri and Illinois. The rapids were used by the market hunters but most men went out of the state when they went shooting. From the point of Iowa records this was unfortunate, strictly speaking I would suspect that a majority of the rarities, especially the larger birds, were got "over the border" tho the record would make them Iowa specimens. I feel in the case of the larger and stronger flying birds that it is quite legitimate to consider them Iowa species unless we know to the contrary. But it is an unfortunate condition.

sincerely

*Wm E Praeger*