

May 4, 1933

Mr. Frank T. Stare,
124 W. Washington Street,
Wausau, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Stare:

I have just returned from a trip in your state and found your letter of April 21 awaiting me. I am sending you some reprints of some papers written up from the results of the 3-year Wisconsin Quail Investigation of which I had charge. You may find something in them which you can use.

My experience has not been with raising quail. All my work has been of an ecological nature, that is, studying the species in the wild; but for that reason perhaps my findings may be even more of the kind to interest you.

I am not at all sure you can expect any appreciable success in managing bobwhites in the vicinity of Wausau. That is just about on the extreme northern fringe of the species range, and while there are irregular and scattered quail populations in this part of the state, the country can hardly be considered very promising to them. However, by paying proper attention to food and cover requirements it is probable that you may be able to maintain a covey or so -- or perhaps more -- on your property. At any rate you could try it.

I would not suggest the importation of quail if you already have anything of a seed stock. If there are birds present, ~~by~~ the proper manipulation of environment, you should be able to attract them. If there are no birds at all within miles, I suppose you would have to introduce some, but in that event be very careful that you get native Wisconsin bobwhites and not birds from the South, or birds of doubtful origin from some commercial game farm. You might make arrangements with Mr. Grimmer to secure planting stock.

I have no figures on the relative survival of quail planted in the spring or in the fall; theoretically, planting each season has advantages and disadvantages. Quail released in early summer would probably stand, by all odds, the best chance of survival, but they may do more wandering. Quail released in the fall find

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themselves in a strange environment just before a critical period -- winter, and while these fall released birds might have access to a perfectly good food supply at your feeding stations they might be sufficiently bewildered to wander off anyway. All in all, I would think that the spring release of birds should be most satisfactory.

If you expect this ^{planting} ~~plan~~ to be anything of a success you should plan to release at least six pair of birds, if not more. Possibly the state might consider this planting in the light of and experiment and might be prevailed upon to provide the birds.

As to competition of ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed grouse with quail, I think you have nothing to fear unless you get a heavy influx of the sharp-tails to feed at the stations used by the quail. Bobwhites ^{competable} will not tolerate concentrations of either their own or other species. The best way to avoid any possible difficulty in this respect would be to have a number of stations so that the birds would have alternative courses of action in case they needed them.

Altogether I would look upon the presence of the ruffed grouse and the sharp-tails with certain doubts, not so much because of any possible competition between the species, but because their presence indicates rather strongly that your land is primarily ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed country rather than quail country, which distinction you have already pointed out in your letter.

For your further information may I refer you to a paper by myself, "The Wintering of The Wisconsin Bobwhite", which is coming out in the Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, volume 28, pages 1 to 35.

Very truly yours,

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Paul L. Errington,
Asst. Prof. Wild
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