

May 10, 1933

Mr. Herbert L. Stoddard,
Sherwood Plantation,
Thomasville, Georgia

Dear Herb:

The past few months I have been increasingly aware of the emergence of what appears to be an entirely new biological principle dealing with the behavior and reproduction resilience of quail populations at different density levels. I haven't time to discuss this now, but will give you a shot at it, when and if, I eventually get my data organized to write up in a paper. It occurred to me that you might have in some form material which would be of use to me.

Specifically, have you ever noted any correlation between the size of quail egg clutches and the density of ~~the~~ local ~~the~~ populations? For example, do your data show the six nests you found concentrated on an acre of land to contain the average or less than the average number of eggs? Of course, all nests used in making comparisons should be of approximate age and degree of completeness. What I ~~want~~ ~~need~~ ~~to~~ ~~find~~ ~~out~~ ^{among other things} is, ~~whether~~ whether the species shows any ~~tendency~~ ~~to~~ limit its reproduction in environments where living conditions tend to become crowded.

If it wouldn't be too much trouble to you I would appreciate it if you would check over notes concerning the best of your most representative nests to see whether there is or there isn't any difference. I believe that whatever evidence you would have -- with your data on hundreds or thousands of nests -- should be of vast significance. I am not asking you to spend more time than you can afford to do this, but at least you might think it over.

The Iowa research appears to be going along very nicely, although none of us know exactly where we stand in regard to financial matters. The past winter we did some quite satisfactory work on the wintering of quail in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota and ran a series of pheasant experiments, which produced some very startling results. We have also been working on horned owls, foxes, mink and waterfowl. This summer we expect to devote most of our attention to waterfowl,

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game bird nesting studies, food habits studies of snakes, marsh hawks, horned owls and foxes, and may even branch off a little bit into song birds, if we can arouse sufficient interest in possible cooperators.

I would certainly like to see you for it would take days really to unload everything that I have in my system. All in all the research data seem to be coming in just about twice as fast as I am able to write them up, which is satisfactory in some respects, but not so convenient in others.

Sincerely yours,

PLE*B

Paul L. Errington,
Asst. Prof. Wild
Life Research

P.S. I was in Prairie du Sac last week and Albert told me that Mrs. Ochsner was in a dying condition from cancer. I did not go over to see her because I felt that I might be out of place. Since you are such good friends of the Ochsners, however, I thought that I had better let you know, in case you didn't already. P.L.E.