

Biology Building
December 5, 1931

Mr. G. Dennis Hart
Game Conservation Institute
Clinton, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Hart:

As a belated reply to your letter of November 16, I must confess that I am aware of only one place where first-class northern bobwhites may possibly be purchased in Wisconsin, or for that matter, anywhere in the North. Otto G. Beyer of Portage, Wisconsin, has the only birds that I feel at all justified in recommending, and I suspect that his supply is quite limited.

I discussed the matter with W. F. Grimmer, superintendent of game, Wisconsin Conservation Commission, and he thinks possibly that the state might be able to trap up some quail to supply outsiders for stocking purposes. He is not, however, in a position to make any definite statements as yet, for he has not consulted the various members of the Commission on the feasibility of doing this. Wisconsin at this time has an unusually heavy quail population which almost certainly will suffer severe mortality from starvation this winter, and hence should be able to spare a certain number of these birds.

I am much gratified to see that at least someone connected with commercial game propagation recognizes the danger of introducing inferior stock into our wild populations. This, I think, presents a problem of the most serious consequences, especially when we consider the thousands or hundreds of thousands of years which natural selection required to refine our present birds to the product we now know.

As my work deals primarily with the ecology of quail, I have had little to do with the handling of large numbers of specimens and hence am not qualified to distinguish between birds from various parts of the country. I would suggest that you inquire of some of the taxonomists, such as Dr. H. C. Oberholser of the U. S. Biological Survey, as to the technical details by which the sub-species and races can be determined.

In case anything of significance turns up here at Wisconsin relative to the trapping and exporting of northern bobwhites, I shall be glad to let you know.

Yours sincerely,

Paul L. Errington
In Charge, Quail Investigation