

COPY

Oct. 9, 1933

Mr. W. C. Henderson, Associate Chief,  
United States Bureau of Biological Survey,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Henderson:

During the recent grouse season in South Dakota, it came to our attention that birds were badly infested with two varieties of parasites, the larger of the two resembling a wood tick, which has later been identified as a "bird tick." This identification was made by the Zoological Division of the Bureau of Animal Industry at Washington, D. C., from specimens submitted by Dr G. W. Cronen of Pierre, a field representative of the Bureau. A smaller variety quite similar to the common chicken louse was also very much in evidence.

While all birds coming under our personal observation were in good state of flesh, I have definite reports of birds taken whose physical condition could be described as emaciated.

Two field representatives of this Department have been asked to take birds on both sand and gumbo ground in our state and to collect specimens of the vermin and furnish this office with a detailed report on the portion of the bird's anatomy where ticks and lice were found in greatest numbers, a description of the physical condition of the bird, and in the event birds in emaciated condition were taken, the vital organs are to be removed, properly preserved and forwarded to you for examination by the Bureau.

In view of the fact that authorities consider 1933 the peak of the so-called "grouse cycle," it would seem that the discovery made here in South Dakota might be worthy of close study, in that it may possibly be a contributing factor in the periodic disappearance of grouse.

Any Suggestions you may have with reference to submitting specimens for examination by the Bureau, will be gladly received.

Very truly yours,

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Department of Game and Fish.