

New Soils Building
August 7, 1934

Mr. Robert P. Allen
National Association of Audubon Societies
1775 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Allen:

Mrs. Nice's comparisons in the Wilson Bulletin have, in my opinion, a high degree of validity, even though technically one might object to calling them a "census." Linear counts are really an index to population density, not a census of density. However, the Audubon Society has long since sanctioned the use of this term for linear, as well as areal, counts.

There is no way to reduce these index counts to a census, and no need to. They may be compared directly with each other, as Mrs. Nice has done, and the comparison is valid to the extent that each covers the same season and all hours of the day. She has at least approximated these conditions (except in her comparisons with England and Africa, which are doubtless offered merely "for what they are worth").

The comparison of the East with the West may also be partially invalidated by the wider visibility in the West, but this error could hardly be great enough to totally invalidate her comparison.

In general, I think Mrs. Nice's figures fully support her conclusion: "Our hawks are in a perilous position."

To clinch this matter of a factual basis for our committee work, why not collect actual censuses of breeding density, or else ask the U. S. Biological Survey to do it? There are numerous game, erosion, forestry, and other projects scattered all over the country which already have available: (1) local maps of a definite area, (2) resident field personnel competent in ornithology.

All that is needed is somebody to ask and somebody to compile. If the Biological Survey lacks these facilities, we could put the work under state chairmen if necessary. I would be glad to handle Wisconsin, or else all game projects, if necessary.

I suggest you consult McAtee.

Yours sincerely,

Aldo Leopold
In Charge, Game Research

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