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Iowa Ornithologists' Union

ORGANIZED AT AMES, FEBRUARY 26, 1923

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE FOR SELECTION OF "STATE BIRD"

April 30th, 1927.

Your committee, appointed to investigate the advisability and feasibility of selecting a "State Bird" for the State of Iowa, appointed at the annual meeting held at Atlantic, Iowa, May 14, 1926, desires to make the following report:

The chairman of this committee has always been in doubt of the good to be accomplished by a "State Bird". However, a plan could be devised by which the children in the first eight grades of our public schools would select the bird, and in that event it would be a great awakening of interest in bird study and permanent good results would be accomplished.

The following plan is suggested:

That a letter be sent to all members and former members of the I. O. U., asking them to nominate about five birds. The five or six, or whatever number would be finally voted upon out of the nominations made, would then be submitted to the school children of Iowa, for them to vote upon for final election.

Your committee believes that by this method we would be able to increase our membership in the I. O. U. to some extent because a general interest over the State of Iowa would be aroused. In fact, we could make a campaign for new members in connection with the proposition of nominating and in that way the extra dues received from these additional members would

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in part help pay for the expenses ^{of} this selection, which of course would be considerable.

After the nomination of a certain number of birds for the selection of a "State Bird", the person in charge of the campaign would then appoint the 99 ^{County} superintendents of schools as county chairmen to carry out the program of having the school children vote. It is suggested that the superintendents of schools be made the chairmen, for if any other chairmen are selected they would have to work through the superintendents of schools, or otherwise the cost of the campaign would make it prohibitive. We believe that a large majority of the superintendents of school would be willing to cooperate.

In addition to these superintendents ~~of schools~~ in every county, we believe that there should be an assistant appointed ~~for~~ for publicity purposes. This assistant would be appointed from members of the I. O. U. and other bird friends, preferably located in the county seats.

The ^{el} superintendents ~~of schools~~ would send letters of instruction to each teacher in the elementary grades, together with a report blank for election returns. These election returns would then be returned to the County Superintendent and he would tabulate the returns for his county and report to the state chairman.

As we have a law providing that March 21st of each year, or the first school day thereafter, shall be observed by some exercise or study of birds, it would be advisable that that date be selected for the bird

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probably
election. The superintendents of schools and the school teachers would *mostly* be glad to cooperate for the reason that they are, of course, looking for something to interest the school children in birds on that day.

This matter would get considerable help from the local county newspapers and we believe that a widespread interest would be awakened in bird study and birds, for a large share of the 425,000 children enrolled in the elementary grades of the public schools would be aroused to take some additional interest in bird study and this interest aroused would certainly get some of the children to be permanently interested in nature study.

Your chairman has had a personal talk with Mr. Andrews, superintendent of schools in Polk County, and he will be glad to cooperate with us, and he believes that the greater part of the superintendents of schools in the 99 counties would give their assistance.

Your committee is unable to estimate the cost of this campaign, but it is not believed that it would be less than \$100.00 and might easily be \$150.00. It is submitted that it would be necessary to send out about 2,000 letters which would require \$40.00 postage alone. It would be necessary to print 30,000 letters of instruction and 30,000 election reports, for there are about 12,000 elementary schools in the State, but very many of these schools are divided into separate rooms and separate letters of instruction and separate report blanks would have to be sent to teachers in some of those schools. In addition to the expense of the letter postage, there would be postage of mailing the letters of instruction and the election report blanks. The greater

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part of this expense, however, would be avoided by having the campaign made through the schools, and the postage expense in the counties would be mostly avoided.

\$150.00 may seem a large expense to the I. O. U. members, but we believe that if it could be done at an expense of \$150.00, or even as high as \$250.00, the campaign would be justified.

In order to undertake such a large expense, we would probably have to increase our membership dues to \$1.00 each, and would further have to make a membership drive in order to get funds to undertake the campaign.

There may be other methods for selecting a "State Bird" than by having it done through the school children, but we are confident that no method could be devised by which the selection would be more representative, and furthermore, the selection made by the school children would be popular with all the citizens of the State.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur J. Palas
Chairman

Toric R. Wendelburg

Chas J. Spiker
W. H. Whitney
Ella Clark Burlington