



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Birds -
New
ADDRESS ONLY THE DIRECTOR,
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES
AND WILDLIFE

DEC 7-1962

Professor Martin L. Grant
Department of Science
State College of Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Dear Martin:

I was very much interested in your "Check-list of Iowa Birds" transmitted with your letter of October 17. I hope that my comments are not too late for consideration in connection with its preparation as a supplement to "Iowa Bird Life."

I have several suggestions to offer in connection with this check-list. First of all I believe the full name of each species should be used. This would mean using Common Loon rather than Loon, Common with dittos for succeeding species.

On page 4 I would omit "Pond (Surface-feeding) Ducks" which appears between numbers 34 and 35 and the additional qualification of "Sea (Diving) Ducks" which appears between 45 and 46. I would, however, retain the Order and Family designations.

I would omit all former names which appear in parenthesis. The 1957 A.O.U. Check-list has now been in use for more than 5 years. We are now omitting former names on refuge birdlists and have had no comments or complaints. Roger Peterson undoubtedly will omit them in his next revision.

I seriously question the value of including names or initials following scientific names. This is not done in any of the field guides. This takes space that could better be devoted to information under "Status," which is the real purpose of the list. The inclusion of some describers names in full and others as initials only adds to the confusion. It would be better to omit them entirely.

The inclusion of the number in front of the scientific name must achieve a very limited purpose. To me it represents confusion. Undoubtedly it might be used by one or two classes during a school year when studying taxonomy. This burden should not be imposed on the hundreds of persons throughout the country who would be making use of this check-list. The number in the left hand column is perfectly understandable and your explanation of the numbering as developed by Wetmore for family designations is entirely satisfactory.

Mr. DuMont

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This then brings us to the item of "Status" and I must confess that after trying it awhile, I found it not too difficult to decipher. If space permitted, you might want to add symbols for habitat. Ones that might be considered would be as follows:

- Rivers, ponds, lakes, reservoirs
- Marshes or wet meadows
- Wooded river bottoms
- Woods and orchards
- Brush and hedge rows
- Fields
- Urban areas

I have had no opportunity to check closely on the type of information you requested on corrections of status as it is indicated for individual species. This check-list represents a splendid contribution and should be published.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) PHILIP A. DuMONT

Philip A. DuMont, Chief
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cc:

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