

Grundy Center, Iowa.
December 11, 1933

Mr. Philip A. Du Mont,
Des Moines, Iowa.

Dear Sir;

I have just read your very interesting report on "The Present Range of the Starling in Iowa." Since you have had no report from Grundy County, perhaps you may be interested in my observation of that particular bird right here at my own home. We live on a farm and the house is situated in a large grove which is an ideal place for birds of every kind.

Early this spring, a pair of Starling made their appearance in the tall cottonwood trees. Much to the disgust of a pair of Flickers, these Starling usurped their particular tree, and proceeded to build in an old Flicker hole just below the present Flicker abode. Many were the fierce battles, but the Starling stayed and raised numerous young.

After the housekeeping period was over, they moved their family to a willow row in the pasture not far away. Here among the tall gnarled old trees they held sway all summer.

Since the cooler weather, however, they have been having battle royal with the English Sparrows for possession of the cupola on the horse barn. During the day they stay in the willows, about sixty rods away, but as evening comes on, back they come to resume the fight. Tho the sparrows are more numerous, the Starling seem to be quite able to take care of themselves against all comers.

What first attracted my attention to the quarrel, was the great variety of bird calls from the cupola. On climbing into the loft to ascertain the cause of the commotion, I was rewarded by seeing

the most interesting bird war it has ever been my privelege to see.

The harsh grating notes of the starling are in such direct contrast to the wide variety of pleasing notes they have at their command, that it was really quite startling to discover the source of such harmony.

As a lover of birds, perhaps you might be interested in the way the wonderful spring migration of warblers came to us. It was on May 7, 1933 - a cold rainy day with a strong S.E. wind, and all of the birds were seeking shelter in one secluded corner of the grove. From 7:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. it was my great privelege to see thirty eight species of birds all within a short distance of me - some not more than two feet away. Since my own birds are not much afraid, perhaps that inspired confidence in the new comers as well. Field glasses were necessary only for those birds in the taller trees.

I wish to thank you for the very helpful suggestions as to bird books. I have just recieved a copy of your splendid new "Revised List of the Birds of Iowa" and I am sure that will be a wonderful help to all bird lovers in Iowa.

Upon your advice, I sent for Dr. Roberts "Birds of Minnesota", and am more than pleased with this wonderful set of books. I hope Iowa can have a set built on similar lines - they are certainly wonderful.

Thanking you again for your very kind help, I am

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs.) Helen G. King.