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Correspondence Between Danny Bystrak and Theodore Sperry, 1979-1980

Danny Bystrak

Theodore Sperry

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
MIGRATORY BIRD AND HABITAT RESEARCH LABORATORY
LAUREL, MARYLAND 20811

May 1, 1979

Dear Breeding Bird Survey Cooperators:

Enclosed is your 1979 BBS route packet. If the instructions look different, it is because they are! Please read them thoroughly this year because there are many changes that clarify certain points that were not well covered in the old instructions, such as how to handle route obstructions.

Some changes have been made on the summary sheets also. The changes, which are mostly in the heading, should make it easier to properly complete the form. Most of you will receive the new forms but we will deplete our stock of old forms first.

A computer summary of the route(s) you are running is also included, except for those routes not run before 1978. Many observers have requested such a listing, as have State and Provincial coordinators. For first-time observers it is an excellent indication of which species and how many to expect. For veterans, it is a concise summarization of your efforts, and in many cases may point out some species whose calls you haven't been attuned to or have been confusing with another species. If you have the time to look this listing over and comment on any discrepancies or unlikelihoods, it will be appreciated.

Canadians will be pleased to see return envelopes with a Canadian frank on them this year. Please remember not to put stamps on them! We hope to be able to continue using these in the future if all goes well this year.

Thanks for volunteering again this year in the face of rising gasoline prices. If we are lucky, they won't be prohibitive by June.

Danny Bystak

**NEW INSTRUCTIONS
PLEASE READ**

15 June, 1979

Dr. John L. Zimmermann
Fairchild Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS. 66502

Dear John

I know you will eventually get this data anyway, but I thought you might like to see the results before the figures finally arrive from the Washington office.

I had to play tag with the weatherman to get these figures, but they show very little variation from previous years. I have the feeling that some of the forest species are disappearing from the Melrose route (001) as a result of the clearing of various timber patches along the route, so that the difference between this and the Galasburg route (002) is gradually decreasing.

On the Lap (2nd route (004) the Prairie chickens had established a browsing ground on a hillside across a small valley from my count station, which enabled me to count all of the birds at this station. I don't expect to have such good luck with those again.

Sincerely

Red Sperry.

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

MIGRATORY BIRD AND HABITAT RESEARCH LABORATORY
LAUREL, MARYLAND 20311

December, 1979

Dear BBS Observer:

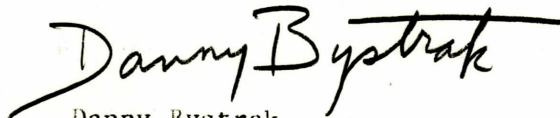
The enclosed machine listing is a printout of the data punched from your 1979 Breeding Bird Survey report. Please take a few minutes to examine it and report to us any errors that you might find. Please check the species names as well as the numbers.

On the assumption that the field sheets submitted were originals, the summary sheets have been checked against the field sheets again this year. Thus you may find some discrepancies on the printout which are the result of our changing the summary sheet to agree with the field sheets. Mistakes still crop up from incorrect AOU numbers, keypunch errors and misread handwriting, so we greatly appreciate your taking the time to check the printout for accuracy. Discrepancies might also appear as a result of our standard procedure of deleting obvious migrants and records that appear to be recording or copying errors. Unusual species without details may have been considered by the editors as errors, so please remember to include details on the observation of any unusual species in the future.

If you find no errors, no communication from you is necessary concerning your 1979 run.

We extend our deepest thanks for the excellent support given to our program and hope you will enjoy the enclosed reprint of an informational article which appeared in a recent issue of Sialia. The 1978 Newsletter is also enclosed. Please excuse the delay.

Sincerely yours,



Danny Bystrak
Wildlife Biologist
Migratory Nongame Birds

Enclosures

Theodore M. Sperry
1413 South College
Pittsburg, KS 66762

26 January 1980

Migratory Bird Research Laboratory
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Laurel, MD 20811

Gentlemen:

Reference is made to your request of December, 1979, to check the printouts of the 1979 Breeding Bird Survey report, for discrepancies which may have occurred on my four reports.

After some twelve years of submitting reports with a creditable record for accuracy, I feel chagrined with the current Melrose (KS 001) and Galesburg (KS 002) reports with five discrepancies on them. What is worse, I really don't have a good excuse for the occurrence of these errors.

With reference to the Melrose (KS 001) report, my report for the Red-bellied Woodpecker showed a total of eight birds, while your summary shows ten. You have two birds shown on page 2, while my records show none on this page. If my original field sheets definitely show two Red-bellied Woodpeckers on this page, I should like to be informed as to what stop they were recorded at so that I may correct my records accordingly.

On the same summary sheet, your office shows 28 stops for the Eastern Meadowlark, while my records show 29 stops (with birds tallied at stops 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 45, 48, 49, 50).

The count of 18 Common Grackles on your summary, including the two birds tallied at stop 32, instead of the 16 birds I reported, seems to be correct.

If two additional Red-bellied Woodpeckers need to be added on page 2 of my report, then your total of 933 individual birds tallied on the Melrose route would be correct.

The two discrepancies indicated on the Galesburg (KS 002) route seem both to be my errors - your tally of four Killdeer on page 3 of my report, and of three Upland Sandpipers on page 1 of my report, both correct. Total individuals are 1212.

No discrepancies were noted on the Lapland (KS 004) report, nor on the Longton (KS 105) report.

My apologies for these errors. I'll try to do better on this year's reports.

Sincerely,

T. M. S.

Theodore M. Sperry

Theodore M. Sperry
1413 S. College
Pittsburg, KS 66762

8 August, 1980

Danny Bystrak
Migratory Bird Research Laboratory
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Laurel, MD 20811

Dear Danny:

Reference is made to your question about the returns from the BBS Lapland and Longton routes, KS 004 and 105, showing a tally of Vesper Sparrow on each route.

I will admit that good field observations were not made on these birds during the survey, and that so far as I know, this species has not been reported as breeding in this part of the state. (Johnston does report summer records from northwestern Kansas).

I should assume that these birds should best be listed as late migrants or accidentals rather than as resident breeding birds on those two routes.

Thank you for bringing these records to my attention.

Sincerely,

T. M. S.

Theodore M. Sperry

Ted:

Could you

send some

details on the

Vesper Sparrows?

→

We acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your 19⁸⁰ Breeding Bird Survey report/s. A machine listing will be prepared from your summary sheet and a copy will be sent to you for checking. We greatly appreciate your cooperation and hope you will be able to participate in our program again next year.

I didn't think they nested in Kansas. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Danny

Nongame Bird Studies
Migratory Bird and Habitat
Research Laboratory
Laurel, Maryland 20811

- 001-Kansas-Melrose
- 002-Kansas-Galesburg
- * 004-Kansas-Lapland
- * 105-Kansas-Longton