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The European Starling in Iowa

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CLIFF SWALLOW COLONIES IN IOWA

W. F. KUBICHEK

Available literature on the Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*) indicates that at present this species is not as abundant as it was formerly and that no very large colonies have recently been reported from Iowa. A colony worth reporting is located five miles northwest of Oxford, Johnson Co., Iowa. A large barn with its wide eaves has served as a supporting structure for their mud nests for many years. The fact that most of the nests were on the east side of the barn was due, perhaps, to the proximity of a creek in the barnyard. On this side the writer counted 986 nests, while the number on the other side was only thirty-one. Altogether there was a total of 1,017 nests, the largest colony extant in Iowa or the middle west. In a few places they extended nine nests down on the east side of the barn and in almost every case each was plastered to several others.

Every fall they are broken down by the farmer, not because he dislikes the birds — for he affords them every protection — but to keep the pestiferous English sparrow from taking possession.

Another breeding colony, the previous largest recent nesting site, is described by Oscar P. Allert (Wilson Bulletin, vol. XL, p. 197) near McGregor, Iowa which numbers twenty-seven nests. Many smaller colonies in various parts of the state have been reported by several other observers.

COE COLLEGE,
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA.

THE EUROPEAN STARLING IN IOWA

W. F. KUBICHEK

The first record of introduction of the European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) into the United States was at Cincinnati, Ohio in 1872. However, the attempt to bring this old world bird into the country at this time was unsuccessful. Unable to adapt themselves to the new surroundings they soon all died, and it was not

until 1890 when Eugene Scheiffelin is credited with having released eighty of the birds in Central park, N. Y. City, that a successful introduction was made.

Unlike the attempts that failed, the lot thrived in the new land, and in 1891 forty more were imported. By 1902 it seemed that the Starling had gained a foothold in the United States and had extended its range outside of greater New York; and by 1916 was found in many of the neighboring states. The increase in number and spread of the species has been rapid since 1920. A flock of these birds was seen as far west as Urbana, Ill., in 1922, and two specimens were collected near Milwaukee, Wis., in 1923.

The first published record of the Starling in Iowa came when W. S. Long reported (*Auk*, vol. XLV, 101) seeing a Starling at Lamoni, Decatur Co., Iowa in Dec. 1922. On Mar. 23, 1929 three specimens were collected by the writer near Oxford, Johnson Co., Iowa, a flock of about a dozen having spent several weeks in a grassy gully at this place. These specimens, the first of the species to have been collected in Iowa, are now in the Bert Heald Bailey Museum of Coe College.

The New Hampton Tribune of Apr. 10, 1929 prints the report of one of the birds being taken in a sparrow trap during the first week in April. If the experience of other states holds true here, the Starling may be expected to become a pest within a few years.

COE COLLEGE,
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ON THE INHERITANCE OF RESISTANCE TO FOWL TYPHOID IN CHICKENS

W. V. LAMBERT AND C. W. KNOX

Studies at the Iowa Experiment Station during 1927 and 1928 indicate very clearly that selection is effective in increasing resistance to this disease. Following intraperitoneal inoculation with a standard dose of virulent fowl typhoid bacteria, a total of 1,051 chicks (7 days old), from parents that had both survived an acute infection of fowl typhoid, gave a mortality of 39.5 per cent. The mortality in a group of 1,084 chicks from parents that had never been subjected to an infection with this disease was 89.2 per cent. The percentage mortality in a group of 537 chicks, where the male alone was the surviving parent, was 67.2. In a lot of 57 chicks the