

15 November 1932.

Dr. W.T. Calman, F.R.S.,  
British Museum, (N.H.),  
South Kensington,  
London, S.W. 7.

Dear Dr. Calman:

I am writing to ask if you can put me in touch with any bird expert on your staff on the question of the relative abundance of different species. What I am after ultimately is a relative estimate of the total annual breeding population. It will be I think fairly easy to get estimates of the relative abundance of the British breeding species in this country. The other main factor is breeding range, and of course what is known of relative abundance over this range. However, range alone may sometimes settle the question, if the range is not extensive, and the <sup>density</sup> ~~abundance~~ known to be low within it.

For a start and as an example take the twelve British breeding ducks and geese:

Anas crecca	Mergus merganser
penelope	Nyroca fuligula
strepera	ferina
platyryncha	Somateria mollissima
Anser anser	Spatula clypeata
Merganser senator	Tadorna tadorna.

Would it be possible with present knowledge either (a) to put these in order of total abundance, or (b) to group them in say, five classes of abundance. I shall, of course, consult the Oxford people about relative abundance in this country, but your staff may have a great deal of valuable knowledge to the point, even if (a) or (b) cannot be done at once.

Yours sincerely,