

CORRESPONDENCE.

A Bird Census of the United States.

EDITOR OF 'THE AUK':

Dear Sir: A preliminary census of the birds of the United States was undertaken by the Bureau of Biological Survey during the spring of 1914. The results were so encouraging that the work is to be repeated in the spring of 1915 on a larger scale, and will probably be repeated yearly hereafter in order to obtain permanent records showing the fluctuations in the bird population of the United States. Observers are particularly desired in the West and South and it is hoped that the readers of 'The Auk' will be able to render valuable assistance in the campaign for the coming season. Anyone familiar with the birds nesting in his neighborhood can help, more particularly as only about the equivalent of one day's work is needed.

The general plan is to select an area containing not less than 40 nor more than 80 acres that fairly represents the average conditions of the district with reference to the proportions of plowed land, meadowland, and woods, and go over this selected area early in the morning during the height of the nesting season and count the singing males, each male being considered to represent a nesting pair. In the latitude of Washington, D. C., the best time is the last week in May; in the South the counting should be done earlier; while in New England and the northern part of the Mississippi Valley about June 10 is the proper time. The morning count should be supplemented by visits on other days to make sure that all the birds previously noted are actually nesting within the prescribed area and that no species has been overlooked.

Readers of 'The Auk' and others who are willing to volunteer for this work are requested to send their names and addresses to the Biological Survey, Washington, D. C. Full directions for making the census and blank forms for the report will be forwarded in time to permit well considered plans to be formulated before the time for actual field work. As the Bureau has no funds available for the purpose, it must depend on the services of voluntary observers.

Very truly yours,

U. S. Dept. Agr.
Feb. 16, 1915.

E. W. NELSON,
Assistant Chief, Biological Survey.

[It is to be hoped that the readers of 'The Auk' will respond promptly to Mr. Nelson's appeal. The Biological Survey has done so much for both birds and bird students throughout the country that this request for coöperation should meet with a hearty response.—ED.]