

3420 N. Lawler Ave. Chicago, Ill.
(Forest Glen) June 5--'18

Mr. Robert Ridgway
Chicago Ill.

My Dear Mr. Ridgway:

Your reply to my letter questioning about the Terns was received. I am very grateful to you for it. You surely have abundant excuse, if any was needed, for not replying immediately to my queries.

Several times I have written to different authorities for bird information, always receiving such helpful and courteous replies I believe there are few workers for the public good more generous and devoted to their work and I doubt if there ^{are} any.

With such help as I could get I had decided the Terns were probably Forster's Terns. - It was a new discovery to me that web-footed birds rested in trees, and I was surprised at their fearless and indifferent attitude toward so many people as gathered around the tree.

There was no crest on top of their heads, they were black, but a peculiar ruff of white feathers on the back, the neck just below the black feathers.

When I tell you I am wearing my "three cone + ten", so deaf I have not been able to hear a bird note for twenty five years; in failing health and eye sight, you may think bird study can't be of much interest or importance to me - But I wish all the ornithologists might know, that aside from their real and increasingly necessary work, how much pleasure, delight, they give to many who can do nothing great - but can enjoy much and help a little.

Seven years ago after an illness from which I have never quite recovered - I sat on my front porch much of the month of May - we had a pleasant lawn with fine trees and a good garden back of the house. Esletburg, my home, is a college town & I had a student with me who was studying birds - I have always been interested in Nature's beauties but thought more of flowers than birds - This boy was expected to describe fifty birds, at least - in his work - I thought rather vaguely - if he

the home and came here to live with-
relatives - Cook Co. has purchased the
land along the north branch, Chicago
River, which runs through this village.
In Forest Preserve - The woods are fine,
fields, meadows and the river attract the
birds and in spite of many limitations I
have added quite a number of new ones to
my list - The Bobolinks I have seen
for the first time - They have taken up
a claim only a block away - How I wish
I could hear them! My father said
"back in Vermont when he was a boy, they
used to sing - New England, New England,
hell and damnation, crook-necked
squash - there he goes, see 'im, see 'im
see 'im."

I belong to the National Association of
Audubon Soc's - A sustaining member -
but did not even know there was a State
(Ill) Association until last winter I
received a copy of The Bulletin - Winter
1917-18 - I have seen only this one and
enjoyed it very much. I knew about
Bird-Haven some time ago - Was sorry it
was not all kinds of a success. I very
much hope your eyes are better, you
surely need them - Thanking you
for your letter I am
Very Sincerely Yours
L. Elizabeth Clark

can discover fifty varieties, in the neighborhood I wonder if I could identify twenty-five species from my own dooryard - We had a few wren boxes and I kept a pan of water always fresh, with a sloping stone in it, a few feet from my kitchen window.

As I grew more interested, my brother bought me a field glass, and a few books and my physician loaned me our State Ornithology, prepared by yourself - I have never stopped looking for birds - From my dooryard, a lot

4 x 13 rods - I identified seventy-four species and saw a few I hesitated about naming - I have never enjoyed any study so much - I watched bird-life - especially around the pan of water and have never ceased to wonder if it was all there before I began to look for it - Dr. Chapman says

We never forget our first warbler - mine was the Chestnut-sided, but I know now twenty now - When I was a week I held it lean against a tree and could hardly hold a field glass, I still watched and read my books - now I can tramp a mile or more but do not accomplish as much as I did in my own home - When it was left alone, I sold

5-420 W. Lawler Ave. Chicago Ill.
Forest Glen Apr. 27th 1918

Mr. Robert Ridgway
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:-

May I trouble you
for a little information about two birds
we saw last Sat - Apr. 27th

I have lived all my life in Galveston
Ill - so have had little opportunity to
know water birds - I was called out
to see two birds very high up in a cotton-
wood tree. The morning was very
foggy and the birds appeared gray -

They were very indifferent to our
presence and remained a long time.

Finally a boy threw at them & they flew
to another tall tree near - The fog
cleared; then they appeared pure white
with dark wings (almost black) and a
black cap or crown - just back of the
^{small} black cap the white feathers set up like
a little ruff or ruche - The birds, we
thought - were about a foot long but most
of the time they were bunched up, with

head drawn into their feathers - & were twisted, dressing their plumage &c -

When they stretched their necks, the head appeared small - Their motions in the tree were not easy, like tree birds but were cautious - The white tail

was not very long - more deeply forked one boy said it was like this but in flight I did not get a good look at it - the long pointed wings were almost as long as tail.

The boys brought a long ladder and climbed the tree, the birds paying little attention. One boy sat some time about five feet from them. The feet were muddy - the bills, I thought light-red about an inch, but was too far from them to be sure & the boys not accurate enough.

After some hours they were frightened away & flew with graceful flight - more slender than herring gulls - I think they were terns - I have Chester Reed's Birds of Eastern N. America - Dr. Chapman's Bird Life & some other helps but Mr. Reed's pictures do not quite describe them.

Do terns & gulls ever rest in trees? Does the Arctic tern pass through N.E.?

The tails were not deeply forked enough for Roseate terns - The little "crest" we agreed, was made of the white feathers

The breasts were not "stringly washed with gray" but looked pure white -

We are about five and a half miles from Lake Mich. The north branch of Chicago river runs through the village - We often see gulls in winter, flying over but I never saw one in a tree.

From my little dooryard in Peleeburg, a lot 4 x 13 rods, I identified over seventy species of ^{birds} and have seen a few I could not name.

In poor health and well along in years I can not do much - But bird-study is my most enjoyable recreation -

I have a good field glass - These birds paid no attention to it -

Very sincerely
(Miss) L. Elizabeth Clark