THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

GAME CONSERVATION BOARD
(COURT-HOUSE)

VANCOUVER, B.C., Mar. 3, 1924.

Dr. CaseyWood,
University of California,
Museum of Vertebrate Zoology,
Berkeley, California.

Dear Sir:

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 28th ult., in which you inform me that you are preparing a paper on the Chinese or Japanese Starling, introduced into this province some years ago. Dealing with your letter in detail, I beg to inform you that:

(1). No record is at hand showing the date and the purpose as to why these birds were introduced in this province.

(2). From personal observations, I find that the Japanese Starling has been a great offender in taking the nesting sites of some of our valuable insectivorous birds, and during the last few years it has been noted, especially in the vicinity of Vancouver, that many of the insectivorous birds that were to be seen at one time have left their old haunts or nesting places, and that these are now occupied by the starling largely. A few days ago I had occasion to visit Carrol and Cordova Sts., which is in the very heart of the city, and I may say that I noticed at this place a few years ago a number of starlings. On my last visit, they had without a doubt increased considerably. In the outlying residential districts it seems that the Japanese Starling has gained a foothold in practically every locality. I have travelled around the Vancouver District considerably during the last year, and I may say that the Starling is only confined to a small area, principally in and around the city of Vancouver, Lulu and Sea Islands, and in the Municipality of Point Grey. We have found from our own observations that in many cases the Japanese Starling has taken the nesting place of the Woodpecker and also the wren. In the case of the wren they have stolen the nest and have enlarged in its construction.

(3). The Japanese Starling can be found in every conceivable place and I have never been surprised in looking for other birds, to be confronted by a Starling's nest.

(4). These birds during the last few years, as stated before, have become very numerous in this district, and without a doubt are increasing in numbers. I might say that they are not found outside of a radius of fifty miles from Vancouver, in any direction.

(5). From personal observation the Japanese Starling appears to be

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a good deal of a scavanger, feeding chiefly on barnyard refuse matter, and in some instances on insects. I have as yet to find whether or not they destroy the eggs of other birds, although I feel sure that this is a fact, owing to their stealing the nesting places of some of our insectivorous birds.

(6). As far as I am aware, I do not know of the Japanese Starling having any enemies other than the natural and human enemies of our insectivorous birds.

(7). I have made, as stated before, a very close observation on the habits of these birds, and this has been mostly in conjunction with Mr. J. A. Munro, Chief Federal Migratory Bird Officer for the Western Provinces. In some instances the starling is a useful bird ~~but~~ only in respect of its insectivorous and refuse diet. Personally speaking, I would consider that the stealing of other birds nests by this bird, considerably outweighs it's usefulness.

If there is any further information which you desire, same will be forwarded upon request.

Yours truly,

FRB/NB

F. R. Butler

Secretary.