

5-6-12  
May 1912

FILE COPY  
Game and Bird Reservations

Niotrara Reservation

Netraska

With the exception of the few days, taken for the trip to Friend, Netraska, I was at Niotrara Reserve from May 9' to June 6'.

I borrowed a crude outfit from the County Surveyor and obtained a fair idea of the location of the inside cross boundary as well as to plan and measure up the proposed small enclosure for the Giltert Herd.

At this time of the year the appearance of the Reserve is at its best: A heavy and smoothe mat of green grass, reaches in all directions; The trees are out in full leaf;

There is no immediate plan for the opening of the balance of the lands to settlement; This, with the buildings in charge of two men who are living there under permit, of the Interior Department and who are doing some farming;

Under its present status, a report on conditions, pertaining to the bird life is essential;= The area covered by timber and small growth is a small part of the whole and lies along the two sides of the River, up the gulches and about the many little spring runs.

This cover fairly swarms with the small bird life of that region; It is abundant and varied, but was mostly in transition, the breeders not coming on until the latter part of my stay - most of them

More directly bearing on the title, I would state that the quail are most abundant, all through the brush and up and down the

Burn

river. When lands are taken up, below and above the "Bird Reserve" the reservation part will prove a great refuge for the quail; Birds of the upland plover varieties are not as numerous as I expected to find them

With regards to the prairie chicken and sharp tailed grouse, there are considerable numbers nesting out in the hills, which I am assured of and yet I did not flush but one from its nest; These birds set very close, and about the only way to obtain an idea of the extent of the nesting, would be to drive the ground with a bunch of sheep or cattle; The parties at the buildings and the other ranchmen within our boundary, state that early in May, there were many "chicken" and grouse about, near their barns and fences, and it is reasonable to suppose, these are now out in the Hills on nests

The Reserve might not prove the absolute refuge for these varieties, which we now suppose. If all the lands on every side of the boundary were settled and the reserve was the only refuge, it would hold its local bunch from extermination, but adjacent on south and east is the large territory exactly similar in character which will always have as many "chicken" as our land will and which will be open shooting to all, unless the State should close all chicken shooting (not probable)

This country cannot be settled up on account of its character and it will remain a hunting ground in season. The "Chicken" will of course move from our tract to the other, continuously.



There is too much crow along the River also the Blue Jay (cristata) is common and I presume these are hard on all bird life I understand the red squirrel are bad for destroying bird's eggs; They are abundant; Coons are plentiful; The bull snake is particularly plentiful; They clean up every nest of eggs or young on the ground, they can find.

*Fred. M. Dille*