

31 March 1975

Dr. David F. Parmelee  
302 James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Doctor Parmelee:

With so many mutual friends in ornithology who speak enthusiastically of you, I am sure that if it is ever our good fortune to meet, it will be as old friends. George Sutton's opinions are highly respected by us -he was the first to speak of you. The list is long - including a long-standing acquaintance with Conservation Officer Wallstrom in the Curtis District in the U.P. who speaks of you proudly after his annual check into our progress, or we take him in to see a nest. We didn't see him last June; we could have shown him the first Bay-breasted Warbler nest for Michigan. The conservation office at Grand Marais was eliminated last year which makes his territory much larger and could account for us not having seen him.

The reason for this letter is because of the most recent mutual friend. Eliot Porter wrote (again, enthusiastically) that he had met you in the Antarctic and the conversation included birds in Minnesota (fabulous, in our estimation!) and that he had promised to send you information on the location of the bogs we worked. Since he couldn't remember, he asked me to either send maps and information to him to relay, or to write directly to you. The maps which he thought could be Xeroxed are useless unless an interpreter accompanied them; for some reason the ones we picked up were either for tourist lodges, or gigantic topographical ones with scarce landmarks. I think I can do a pretty good job from memory because Powell and I spent more time there than Eliot, and I am a note-keeper.

First: I am sure that you will find in the Museum Library the June 1962 issue of THE FLICKER, Volume 34, #2, which carries an article "A Search for Nesting Cape May Warblers" by me giving the location and species we found that first year. After you read it, this additional information will be of help. We stayed at Pine Point Lodge on White Iron Lake, 6 mi. East of Hly on County Rd. 16; the bog containing the most Cape Mays was 1 mi. beyond the bridge near the cabins. You may still be able to see a pull-off there on the north side of the road... the extent of the bog is not visible until you walk the high ground through mixed forest to the N.E. of your car. I am sure our trails can still be found (!).. and there will be songs to guide you if you go in June. There's where we also found Connecticut Warbler nest along with Cape Mays, Bay-breasted, Tennessees,



and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers - among the more usual species, including Lincoln Sparrows. A little farther east on that road (16) is an entrance to Farm Lake where there are Northern Waterthrushes and (then we had) another Connecticut Warbler. Then a little farther east you will come to cabins on the shore of Farm Lake.. AKI-NIBI was the name of the resort in 1967 (we stayed there a few nights).. almost directly across the road -south side it would be- was some sort of trail we could drive in a little way and hide our cars. We then followed the trail on foot into another bog, this one older than the first one-with taller spruce and birch trees, but in 1967 there were several pairs of Cape Mays in there. We found a nest just in time to see the young fledge 30 June. That whole area from the bridge between White Iron and Farm Lakes to the dead-end at Border Waters is (was) loaded if you know your birds! And you do.

I can't say what it would be like now: the last year we were there trailer camps had sprung up, water skiers and speed boats churned the pristine waters, people everywhere. Reservations have to be made early - camping out, unless you have a motorcoach or the like, would be disaster. After spending 3 seasons there, we had to go back to real wilderness for our northern favorites. Of course there is nothing like the Superior National Forest for wilderness, but birders have to have access other than canoe. Even now, our secret wilderness trails are being used by trail bikes and the like.

After the Antarctic you will be prepared to enjoy the Minnesota spring. Winter hangs on here, but we're working on Woodcock. Which reminds me of Bud Tordoff - he came over here to hunt them with us one spring. Please tell him hello, and that the Cottrilles miss him.

Unless things have changed completely at Hiy, you should have a very rewarding time there. Let us know if we can be of any further help, won't you?

Sincerely,

(151 BETTY COTTRILLE)

C.C. Eliot Porter

P.S. I believe a picture of a Nashville Warbler I took in the first bog I described to you will be in the new Minnesota bird book coming out soon. I expect great things of that Janssen-Green work, and it is certainly needed.