Divertimentum Ornithologicum

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*After Jorge Luis Borges's
Argumentum Ornithologicum.*

A synchrony of wings across the sky
is quavering its feathered beats of flight.
Their number is too high to count—I try
to estimate it but I can't: the night
is dark, the birds are black, my eyes are weak.
Certainly less than N but more than k ,
I tell myself, but then, in an oblique
arrow of thought, I argue with dismay
that if k is too small, then $k + 1$
can't be enough, and so, inductively,
all of God's natural numbers fail—there's none
determining how many birds I see.
I entertain that He might not exist,
but N being hyperfinite I resist.

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