

Poultrynz

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Poultrynz Editorial

At least with this Editorial I can, with confidence, say that the weather is a lot better than in the past month. Still a bit of rain about and hopefully we are in for a bit of fine, warm weather in the next couple of months. It is usually a bit quiet in the Poultry front at this time of year, lots of birds in the moult and young ones showing promise. I know with mine the

young cockerels are starting to crow and the young pullets are a bit flighty and scatty, but as they come onto the lay they seem to settle down. Not many good ones at my place but there are a couple that are showable. Until next issue.

Regards, Ian Selby.

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BACON & EGG PIE

INGREDIENTS

- 3 medium potatoes, diced
- 6 eggs
- ½ cup cream
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 4 rashers bacon, chopped
- 1 teaspoon crushed garlic
- 130g baby spinach leaves
- 2 sheets ready-rolled flaky pastry
- freshly ground black pepper (extra)

METHOD

- Preheat the oven to 185°C. Line a 26cm (approx) tin pie plate. Simmer the potatoes in salted water for about 15 minutes, or until they are just tender. Drain and set aside.
- Whisk 4 of the eggs with the cream and season well. Heat the oil in a fry pan and sauté the onion, bacon and garlic for 2-3 minutes until softened and coloured.
- Add the spinach leaves and toss until wilted and bright green. Line the pie plate using about 1½ sheets of the pastry and trim neatly. Cut remaining pastry into lattice strips, cover in cling wrap and chill.
- Arrange the potatoes and bacon mixture in the pastry case and pour over the egg mixture, reserving 1 tablespoon. Crack the remaining two eggs over the top and pierce them to let the yolks run slightly.
- Top with the lattice pastry strips and brush the pastry with the reserved spoon of egg mixture. Grind over the extra pepper. Bake for 40-45 minutes in the preheated oven until the pie is set and the pastry is puffed and golden. Allow the pie to cool slightly before slicing. Serve with a salad.

TIP

Invest in a special pie tin — it really makes a difference to the even cooking of the pastry.

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THE ARAUCANA



by W.L.Cox. USA.

A pen of Lavender Araucanas

These birds originally came from Chile and were discovered there about 1880 being raised by the Araucana Indians.

Mr J. Bruckner said in the Poultry Press USA that he believes that Professor Costello's paper at the World Poultry Congress in 1921 where he first described the breed and Mr Vosber's article in the National Geographic magazine in 1945 have caused more misunderstanding as to what an Araucana is than can ever be corrected.

Most people would not have access to the 1914 proceedings of the World Poultry Congress, so I quote verbatim from Professor Costello's article as follows:

"Having admitted my error which as previously stated was due to the modesty of Dr Bustus, who did not want to tell me birds with three different characteristics which he exhibited in the international Poultry Exhibition in Santiago in 1914 were the result of his own work, I adhere myself to the opinions of Professor Prado, Mr Finsterboush and even Mr Bustos himself to the effect that there are in Chile the following types:

FIRST:

The common Chilean fowl which doesn't differ materially from our own but of which frequently appear families which lay blue eggs. I have in my possession one of this physiological characteristic.

SECOND:

The tailless hen or anuropigides (collonca or francolin as per the Chilean names) which already has its name *Gallus Ecaudatus* (cornevin) and in which the characteristics of blue eggs is so frequent that in Araucanas nearly all colloncas lay eggs of this colour.

THIRD:

The real *Gallus Inauris* (Costello) of normal farms but with the tufts of feathers and the epidermal aural appendices, on which the feather tufts are situated. Also of this type families which lay blue eggs are sometimes found."

In view of the above it would seem that the first statement is the most appropriate for the situation in this country.

The second statement may be true in that the genetic rumplessness might be linked with the

character for blue egg shells, even as the peacomb and blue egg character is, but this has been demonstrated. Moreover inherited rumplessness has shown indication of being a lethal gene, so if you intend to breed Araucanas you should keep a few tailed birds to breed back when your fertility starts to drop off.

The third statement pretty well refutes the idea of any linkage between the presence of ear tufts and blue egg character.

Where does this leave us? Without ear tufts and rumpless we have any other breed. Because I have Turkeys that lay blue eggs. Mrs Ranson told me she had Frizzles laying blue eggs. Blue egg character is a dominant gene and we may have any breed lay blue eggs, so I believe we should have the ear tufts and rumpless and blue eggs for a distinct breed.

Now as to whether the Araucanas is a native of South America or brought here by the Spaniards there are some things to think about. In 1519 Magellan on his voyage around the world via Patagonia Straits, stopped at Santa Laci Bay and secured fowls to stock his ships larder from the Guarani Indians.

The fact that the fowl was abundant enough to stock a larder rather disputes the theory that the fowl was an escapee from Cabvrais Voyage in 1500. The Guarani are thought to be closely related to the Araucanas. In 1519 Pipapheta wrote "We entered into this port the 13th December at noon and the people of this place gave, in order to have a knife or scissors, five or six fowls and, for a comb, they gave us two geese. For a king of cards they gave me five fowls and thought they had cheated me".

In 1526 Cabot's party gathered "hundreds" of fowls from the coastal villages of Southern Brazil and sent hunting parties forty leagues inland to secure more. In 1578 Acosta wrote that the Indians of Peru raised the fowl before the Spaniards arrived. The Indians had a proper name for the cock and hen and also the egg. Acosta noticed that the Indians like to carry their fowl around with them wherever they went.

The Araucana was first brought before the public by an article written in the National Geographic Magazine in 1927 by Dr M.S.Jull of the United States Department of Agriculture. With it appeared a print of a trio of fowls showing ear tufts, rumpless stern, and blue eggs. We have noted the colour must be a protection, for these eggs remain in fresher state longer than other eggs; the brown longer than the white.

When the chickens were first brought to America,



A Tuffed Araucana Hen

A Guide To Poultry Breeding

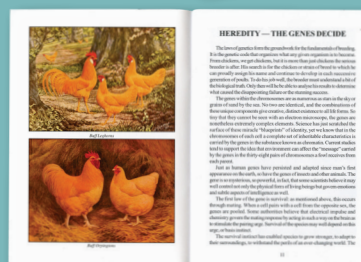
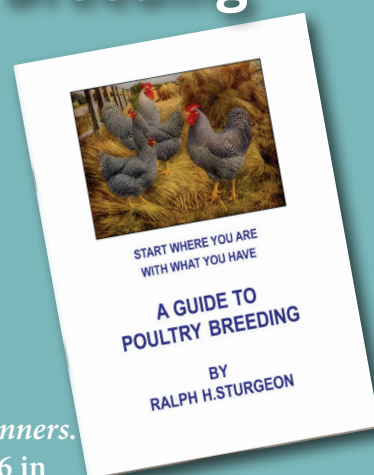
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hatching eggs sold for \$10 each and hobbyists paid \$150 for breeding birds.

In seeking out the facts pertaining to Araucana it was found, quotes Laboratory Report 6949 of the Ontario Testing Lab., G.E. Dunn, Chief Chemist, records the protein content (*deg basis*) of Araucana eggs to 58.6%. This extremely high nutritional value so significant. Some Araucana breeders call their stock "Araucana Health Egg Chickens." Araucanas are good layers and most eggs are not large.

Regardless, you will find them a most interesting fowl as well as quite an attraction with your friends, unbelievable to most people. They are fine for meat too.

The chicks fascinate us as they come in a wide assortment of colours and types with Black being the dominant colour with various marking of other colours. We had a few white ones, buff, cinnamon, red and blue along with various combinations of these colours.

Some of the little ones had "wiskers" and topknots, while others were muffed with bunches of feathers growing from each side of the head near the ear region.

Araucanas have definite "gamey" appearance (mine have been bred away from this look) and have longer legs than others chicks. Some of them remind me of Ostriches.

The chicks are very active, display good appetites and grow quite rapidly. After just a week some, that have shown no special Araucana characteristics at birth, developed crests and muffs; others remained quite "normal" in appearance.

Before long the young ones grew up and beautiful blue or green shelled eggs were seen in the nest boxes. We collected all the coloured eggs for setting at first, as it seemed almost a crime to eat them when it could produce such an interesting little creature.

The Araucana has given us a great deal of enjoyment and waiting for a new batch is always a time of curious anticipation. With other breeds, one knows what the young ones will look like, but with the Araucanas and their variety of colours and type we always find pleasant surprises as new combinations emerge.

In breeding Araucanas you have to use a tailed male every three of four years and it is best to keep and use one of your own line as it will carry the genes for rumpless and tufts.



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THE SILKIE

THE FANCIER'S FRIEND



Silkie Hen with Chicks

by J.H. Coventry

Although small in size the Silkie cannot be regarded as a bantam, and unless classes are specially provided for it, it should be entered in the Any Other Standard Breed Class (big fowl) and if this class is divided into light and heavy breeds, the Silkie should be entered in the light breeds.

Even though the Silkie is not a bantam it is much sought after by bantam and pheasant breeders who hail it as the of the best and most reliable sitters and mothers that can be found. I have not yet had a Silkie break an egg or crush a chicken. The one weakness they do possess is that the breast feathers are liable to be matted by droppings etc., and chickens may be caught in the tangled feathering and may be strangled. Some fanciers advocate clipping the feathers from the under surfaces of the brooding hen, but I prefer to use shavings from a planing machine as litter where the chicks are being reared. These I find to be very absorbent and feathers are not so much danger of being tangled. The litter, of course, needs changing at frequent intervals. I do not suggest that this is the complete answer to the problem, but I do offer it for what it is worth.

The Silkie hen is a typical nurse and is even endowed with a crest which is often compared with the cap

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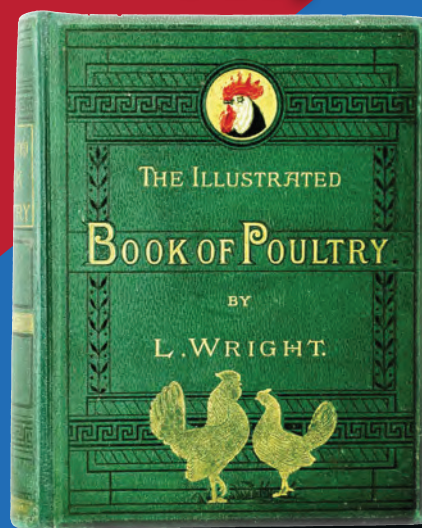


Silkies - Buff - White - Black

worn by members of the noble profession of nursing. She is one of the busiest of the busy, either sitting or in her gentle way rearing her chickens, and in between times laying cream coloured eggs of fine quality. They will seldom leave chickens of their own accord even though their chickens may be quite large and well able to care for themselves. I've had several hens which are still prepared to mother chickens after they themselves have laid and gone broody again. I find that a Silkie hen can quite easily manage sixteen ordinary bantam or about ten big fowl eggs in a setting and when brooding chickens during the warmer weather they can manage about twenty bantam chickens quite will provided that during the night time the chickens are off the ground. For this purpose I provide in the corners of portable coops 'duck boards' covered with two or three thicknesses of wheat bags or old felt. Silkies are not good layers, that is as far as numbers of eggs produced is concerned, but once they commence laying they seldom miss a day before they are broody. My experience over many years is that they usually lay about six to fourteen eggs before going broody, but early in the breeding season one sometimes finds that a hen may lay even twenty or thirty eggs. It is quite common for a Silkie to set and successfully rear three broods of chickens in one year. Many fanciers prefer the Silkie crosses as this retains the Silkie sitting and brooding qualities and at the same time overcomes the problem of strangled chickens mentioned earlier, as a webbed feather is worn by the hybrids. I prefer to keep the purebreds. The Silkie is a decidedly beautiful but quaint bird with

its fine silk in feathers, the production of a wealth of such being the ideal of the fancier, powder puff crest, mulberry face, comb and wattles, turquoise earlobes, lead coloured shanks and five toes. The breed is to be had in several colours. Silkies breed true to type and only one breeding pen is required.

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BLACK COLOUR IS NOT ALWAYS WHAT IT SEEMS

by Tom Leonard in 'Poultry Farmer' (Eng.)

There might not seem to be very much in a black fowl to the non-fancier; but just have a good look at one or two black birds.

Some have a very bright green sheen on almost every feather, some have a plum or purple coloured sheen, while others have both purple and green or no sheen at all. Little seems to be known about the way these sheens are inherited. The brightest and purest green sheen is seen in those fowls or the colour known as 'black-red'. I have an old Jungle Fowl cock, stuffed many years ago, which has still the most beautiful green sheen on his black parts; the rest of him, of course, is red and gold. This brilliant sheen which appears with gold was noted by the old fanciers.

SEEMED TO MOULT

"You get a brighter and better sheen with a bit of gold in the breeders," so said the old breeders of black fowls, and if there happened to be an odd gold feather in the perfect show offspring, that



Hen showing Red in the hackle and Green Sheen in the body

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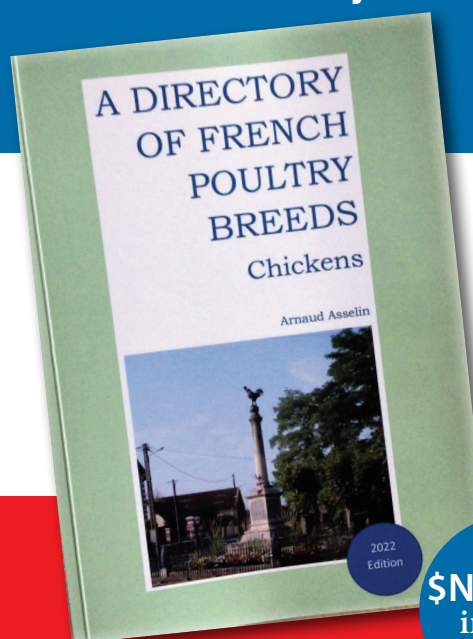


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Ayam-Cemani showing Purple Sheen

feather always seemed to moult before the show. Constant breeding for the best sheen in black birds produced birds that were nearly always gold underneath, and this has led more than one person to say that black birds are always 'gold.'

Every bird must be either 'gold' or 'silver' no matter what it is on top, and a black bird may be either gold or silver and, although most of the black breed like Black Leghorns, are gold under their black, some are silver and these birds, as a rule, have not such good sheen as the others. The white undercolour and on the tail, or some Black Leg-



Orpington Hen showing Green Sheen

horns is not silver, however, but is connected with yellow as against willow shanks.

The fact that most black birds are gold has led people to think that all the progeny of a black Leghorn crossed with a Rhode Island Red should have a black body with, if anything, a gold colouring on the neck and sometimes wing. If the Black Leghorn used for this cross should happen to be a 'silver' the crossbred progeny will have silver on the neck and wings.

What about when these Black Leghorn x Rhode Island Red crosses come out white, black and white, or almost like a red? This, I am afraid, shows that the Black Leghorn used was not pure for black. Should a Black Leghorn male throw odd colours when mated with a Rhode Island Red, many people certainly won't buy them as being a Black Leghorn x Rhode Island Red. Although they are this cross, I do not think a pure stock cockerel should breed such odd chicks even in a cross. It is up to the pedigree breeders of blacks to see that they are selling pure black, not half-pure, birds. It can be done.

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GRIT VITAL FOR PROPER FOOD CONVERSION



Author Unknown

Normal Oyster Grit - Fine Oyster Grit - Course Oyster Grit

Grit, correctly speaking, refers to the flinty, insoluble material that is used by the fowl in the gizzard to assist in the grinding of the food; and tests have shown that it is not absolutely necessary to supply insoluble grit to birds under most conditions.

For example, stock on free range will pick up sufficient small stones to serve the purpose of digestion quite adequately, while even birds kept intensively do not need grit if they are feed on a mash diet.

It is also possible to keep intensive birds on a mash and grain or a pellet ration without grit; but in such cases there is a poorer extraction of nutrients from the food, due to incomplete pulverisation in the gizzard.

Nevertheless, it is wise to provide some insoluble grit for all birds however managed and fed. An adequate supply in the gizzard tends to prepare the food so that later stages of the digestive process are made as easy as possible, thereby saving food. It certainly helps, for example, to deal with any coarse grass that may be eaten.

Much Wasted

There is no doubt at all that vast quantities of grit is wasted every year, since the regular addition of small amounts of grain to mixtures or mash is unnecessary and wasteful.

When a regular ration of grit is given daily, much

of it is either left on the ground or, if eaten,

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The image shows the cover and open pages of the 'New Zealand Poultry Standards' book. The cover is blue with a map of New Zealand and various poultry breeds. The open pages show detailed text and photographs of different poultry breeds, including chickens and ducks.

disposed of by the gizzard, as only sufficient is retained in that organ to perform the function of grinding satisfactorily. The excess is passed on through the intestines and is voided in the droppings.

If grit is placed in a separate non-waste type of hopper or container, the birds will help themselves only when it is actually needed. This is the most economical method of supplying grit as it ensures the minimum intake compatible with the stock's requirements.

Although flint grit is term insoluble it is, in fact, gradually dissolved by the chemical actions of the gizzard and when it has lost its sharpness and size the residue proceeds through the intestines for eventual disposal.

Size Important

The size of the grit particles therefore is of some importance. Very fine samples, such as those used for young chickens, are quite inadequate for adult stock, and all birds over 12 weeks of age can and should have coarse grits. These tend to do the work better and remain in the gizzard longer than the medium or small samples.

For young chickens a fine grit is desirable and birds that are started on grain should be given

some grit right from the first meal. Beware, however, of feeding excessive amounts, because if the undissolved grit is passed into the intestines the sharp edges can cause severe injury to the delicate bowel walls.

The practice of providing a mixture of flint grit or limestone grit is of doubtful efficiency. Obviously the requirements of a flock of pullets for calcium will vary according to the rate of production, and it is therefore difficult to decide on the proportions of flint and shell to use.

It is far better to provide two separate containers – one for each material – as this avoids the excessive intake or waste of either. This applies particularly when the feeding space in the hopper is rather small.

In such cases when the grit is mixed it is sometimes necessary for the birds to scratch out one material to allow the other to be found.

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