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Poultrynz

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Poultrynz Editorial

Winter is just about on us. With longer days and a little bit wetter, the cold will follow. Usual time for the shows coming up it is good to know that there are going to be replacements in the laying ranks that should have by now been sorted.

In this issue there are some larger articles but warranted as the Poultrynz Newsletter is only going out once a month now. I hope you find these longer articles beneficial and more explanatory.
Good luck to all of those who are showing their birds and especially to those who are exhibiting for the first time. It can be quite exciting.

Until next issue.
Regards,
Ian Selby.

It's live!

All the advertisements that have an underline under the email address or url are hyperlinks.

Clicking the link will open your email with the Poultrynz destination in the recipient box.

PENNE WITH CREAMY SALMON & HERB SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

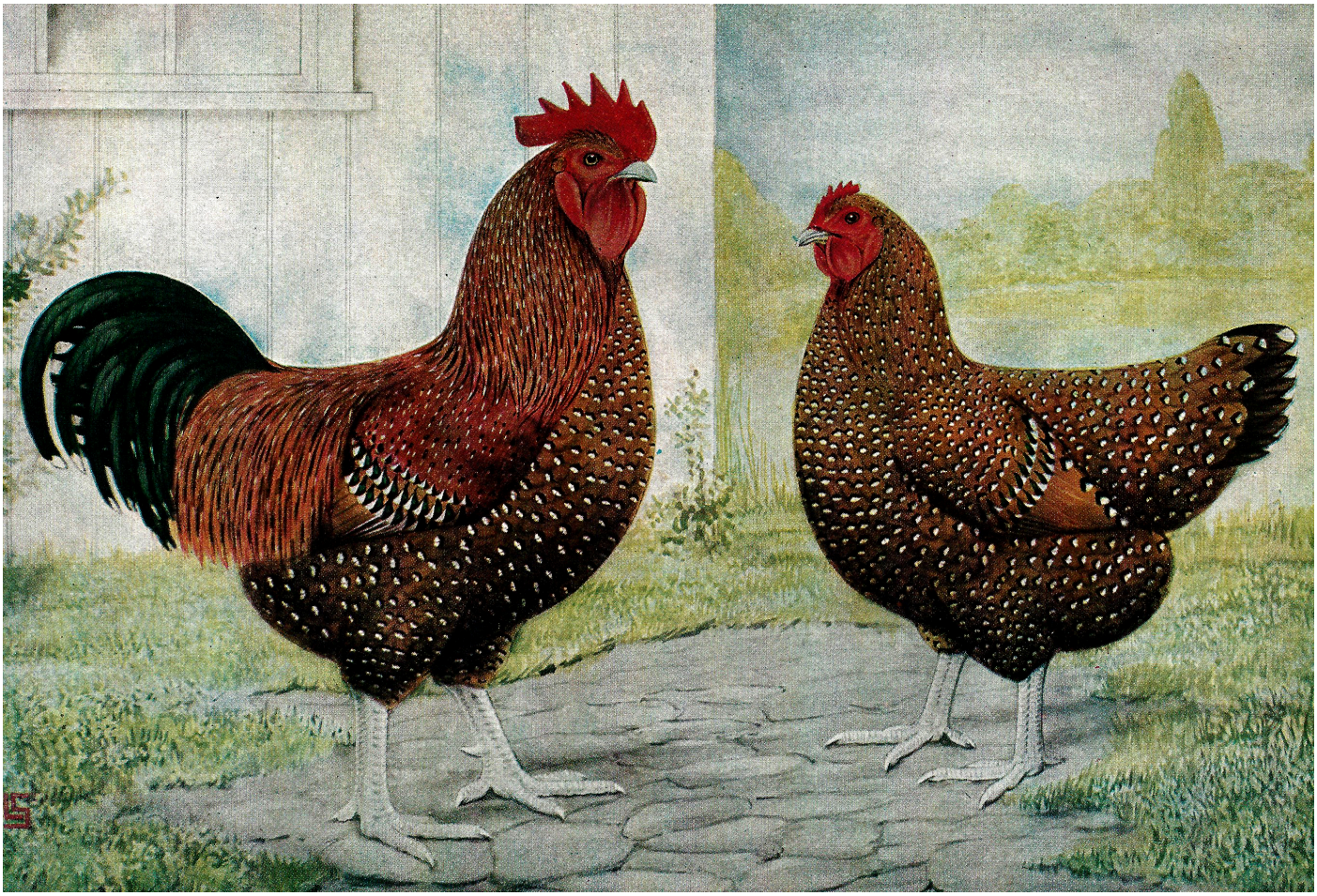
Serves 4.

- 250g crème fraiche
- ¼ cup chopped fresh herbs, eg, chives, parsley, dill
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- 400g penne
- 200g hot roasted salmon, flaked

METHOD

1. In a small bowl, mix together the crème fraiche, herbs, lemon juice and lemon zest.
2. Cook the penne in a large pot of boiling salted water, according to the packet instructions.
3. Drain well, return the pasta to the pot, stir in the creamy herb mixture and gently fold in the salmon. Serve with a green salad.
4. Diabetes friendly

THE SPECTACULAR SPECKLED SUSSEX



An American painting of Speckled Sussex

Author unknown USA.

As a Standard variety of fowl and a member of the Sussex family, the Speckled Sussex has much more than ordinary advantage to recommend it to the husbandman-fancier in the poultry field. It is a sister variety to the Light Sussex which is thoroughly and creditably established as a conspicuous and influential variety in commercial meat and egg production of North America. The Speckled Sussex has all the type and character that it needs for its own true purpose and destiny in the poultry realm.

With that advantage, and one of the most fascinating colour schemes in existence, the Speckled Sussex is an excellent bird for the fancier. Right at the start it must be understood that the fancier's purpose includes the oldest in the fowl husbanding realm. That is, in producing beautiful birds of natural adaption to utility values. The fancier is not seriously concerned with devoting himself to a live egg machine of a character which to his best human judgement must be opposed to the normal balance in Nature. The fancier knows that such balance is an asset to success. Accordingly he applies himself to the vigour, procreation and embellishment of his bird. That embellishment is in both shape and colour.

So far as breed type is concerned, the Sussex puts the Standard breeder at a natural advantage. In all breeds of fowl there is a tendency to incline toward the middle of the road regardless of what the Standard stipulates. Standard specifications are maintained and forwarded by selection. This selection can be practised in the Sussex with less discrimination than in most of the general-purpose fowl popularly classed as heavies.

This does not mean that the type is to be the least neglected because even in parti-coloured varieties the preponderance in scoring points goes for type. It does mean that the Speckled Sussex breeder can give more attention to colour creation and perfection than is the average need of other general-purpose heavies. That is a fortunate thing because the Speckled Sussex breeder is striving with one of the most difficult fowl patterns in existence. The prize is worthy of the effort

because the Speckled Sussex, with a pattern all its own, is one of the most beautiful fowl in existence.

The Sussex is not as big as the Orpington or Plymouth Rock but bigger than the Wyandotte, the Rhode Island, the New Hampshire, and the Australorp. This makes it rather big among the popular clean-legged layers of brown eggs. Its station comes within the popular range but there is a little more accent on stoutness than in the others. The breed has been of great use in the production of meat especially in the Old Country where there is a great preference for white meat.

Speckled Sussex Breeders

There is further catering to the meat character in the Sussex length of body. The demand is that the body be outright long. This gives the Sussex the longest body among the English breeds and that of the American varieties except the Rhode Island, the Java, and the Chantecler. There is weight enough in the Sussex that the breadth has to be maintained. The fluff has to fit closely and the body plumage gives full view of the thighs. The interrelated occurrence of body and thigh plumage is important in all breeds of fowl, big and small.

In the Sussex breed the absolute level of body carriage is not demanded. That puts the breed more in the category of natural occurrence, as compared with the Rhode Island, for instance. The back and tail line makes another contribution to that natural occurrence. The tail of the Sussex is not longer than it is in general-purpose breeds in this size category but it is to be remarked that in the back and tail contour of the Sussex the sweep of back does not occur. That is because the junction of back and tail is obscured by the covert and saddle plumage which contribute to the sweep of back in American breeds. The length of actual back in the Sussex nevertheless is there. This is a point that needs to be noted.

This back and tail Sussex contour is not hard to

Speckled Sussex Hen

establish but here again is no place for neglect. The Sussex is an English breed with a British character of avian aestheticism that assets itself in a zealous pursuit of features as a parallel to the American ardour for streamlined contours. The Sussex as we have it is a North American version of the British Sussex. Here the tail is important in smoothness of curvature and integration to a complete whole. Angularity is to be avoided here.

Another type point to keep well in mind, especially in any breed, where there is a preference for even a small degree of the oblique in body carriage, is that the centring of the torso over the legs is tricky. The legs are wanted to come up to make a balance of the torso as even as the old teeter over the rail fence, regardless of the angle. A "V"-shaped torso is especially faulty in the Sussex which, being a meat breed, must show substantial breast formation and a body to balance it.

With all breeds it should be emphasized that in single combs such as that of the Sussex the points at front and rear are smaller than those in the middle. The natural occurrence of the longest and highest point at the rear of comb is a rarity and often accompanies too long a blade, all defective and demanding investigation.

Repetition of the fact that the Speckled Sussex has a colour pattern all its own is warranted. That pattern is not in the Standard department where the general patterns are described. It appears under Sussex only. The Speckled Sussex was the first of its breed to be taken into the Standard of Perfection in America. Therefore it is safe to assume that the beautifully spectacular colour pattern is what broke the Sussex into the posterity of breeds in America. There is always someone to whom the unusual has the greatest appeal. When the spectacular occurs with the unusual the result is really fetching.

The Speckled Sussex is a three-colour breed in the same sense as the black, white and tan cats are called three-coloured. The white is considered as one of the colours; that is notwithstanding some technical opinion that has declared white to be not a colour. Anyway in the Speckled Sussex we have white that we want to be white. We have black that we want to be black. Besides that we have mahogany bay.

It is a cardinal principle of Standard colour conception that when two or more colours are employed, unless it is stipulated to the contrary, those colours be distinct; that they meet sharply in clean, regular lines, without blending. Therefore the first move in the order of approach is to get the basic colour accurately defined. The ground colour of the Speckled Sussex is mahogany bay. In the male plumage there are

feathers of the hackle, back, and wing bow sections which carry a glossy surface and were referred to by Arthur 0. Schilling as masculine sex feathers. In those feathers the Standard asks for lustre with the mahogany bay colour.

Now in the field of bay colour, besides the mahogany bay, we have golden bay, reddish bay and other tints. The Merriam Webster dictionary defines mahogany colour as reddish brown but does provide for variation to extend as far as brownish yellow. Mahogany paint leans a little more to a darker hue. Bay, as a term, is employed mostly to horse colour in which Webster sees it as a reddish brown or a light reddish chestnut. The authority of usage puts mahogany bay on the darker side of unqualified bay. It would be fair and logical to come out of all this with an acclamation of mahogany bay as darker than the average bay.

The tone of bay that is doing most of the winning in Standard fowl belongs in that colour bracket. Within that bracket the mahogany bay should not be too dark to contrast with the black, but up to that point should be darker than the unqualified bay.

The effect of the spectacle diminishes if there is less than the right amount of ground colour. The same applies to the black and to the white but the ground colour suffers most by the obliteration. The black bar should be narrow but wide enough to give character to the general effect. The white tip should be a sparkling white. The mahogany bay, however, is the basic colour showing.

The Standard does not amplify the requirement for shape of saddle stripe. At the time the Speckled Sussex Standard was written the diamond-striped saddle had not been ordained. Whether in the upper base of the saddle stripe the black is to meet at the shaft of the feather as a diamond or whether the stripe is to occur as an open-centred "V" is not specifically declared. It is absolutely necessary, however, that to conform to the Standard there must be an open break of pure mahogany bay between the upper extremity of saddle stripe and the fluff of feather. In any case this is the back which is the most important section in both shape and colour. Deficiencies in this section are increased by the relative amount of importance the Standard Scale of Points gives to the section.

In the male tail section the lustrous greenish-black sickles tipped with white have a marked effect on the general appearance. Sharp white tipping here is much desired. There is a degree of latitude in the colour of main tail as well as wing primary.

The Speckled Sussex female has a stem ideal to conform to. The obstacles are manifold. Pepper

Speckled Sussex Pullet

colour finds its way into the mahogany bay of all sections, especially that primarily important back. That pepper increases to a smudge. There is a great failure of the black bar in outline and colour purity. If too wide it nullifies the contrast; if it is too narrow it comes up with a dull overall tone. The white of the tip overflows into the black bar. Blends of different colours are liable to occur anywhere in the plumage. Elimination in the breeding pen is the best way to strive against all that.

Not only does the white often blend or mingle with the black. It sometimes merely fringes the ends of feathers, sometimes it splashes the black and bay, and in extreme cases makes a frosting throughout.

The Standard calls for three bars of undercolour. If two birds were absolutely even in every other way, the one with the best undercolour would have to win. The Standard is framed for selection, however, and the breeder is wiser to select from the surface inward than from the undercolour outward. The judge, of course, has to be careful not to give undue consideration to undercolour.

To get the right amount of each required colour for each feather for the maximum effect the breeder will likely find his most dependable help will come by way of selection from his own studied finding, size of feather, area of ground colour, size of black bar, size of tipping. Conforming to the outward manifestations of Nature is slow but surest.

Breeders of mottled birds have enlivened the surface by breeding for bigger white tips and then plucking the feathers bearing the biggest of those tips to give a greater sparkle to the remaining white with less covering of the ground colour. The natural way with studied selection is much better.

All in all, in building and husbanding a type and colour strain the Speckled Sussex is indeed a captivating variety. It lends itself generously to the greatest yield of happy pursuit by keeping the character and the anatomical function of the bird in that procreative balance ordained by the original Creator. It also yields a maximum in the equilibrium of amenity that comes from work and play with domestic poultry. In the male tail section the lustrous greenish-black sickles tipped with white have a marked effect on the general appearance. Sharp white tipping here is much desired. There is a degree of latitude in the colour of main tail as well as wing primary.

The Speckled Sussex female has a stem ideal to conform to. The obstacles are manifold. Pepper colour finds its way into the mahogany bay of all sections, especially that primarily important back. That pepper increases to a smudge. There is a great failure of the black bar in outline and colour purity. If too wide it nullifies the contrast; if it is too narrow it comes up with a dull overall tone. The white of the tip overflows into the black bar. Blends of different colours are liable to occur anywhere in the plumage. Elimination in the breeding pen is the best way to strive against all that.

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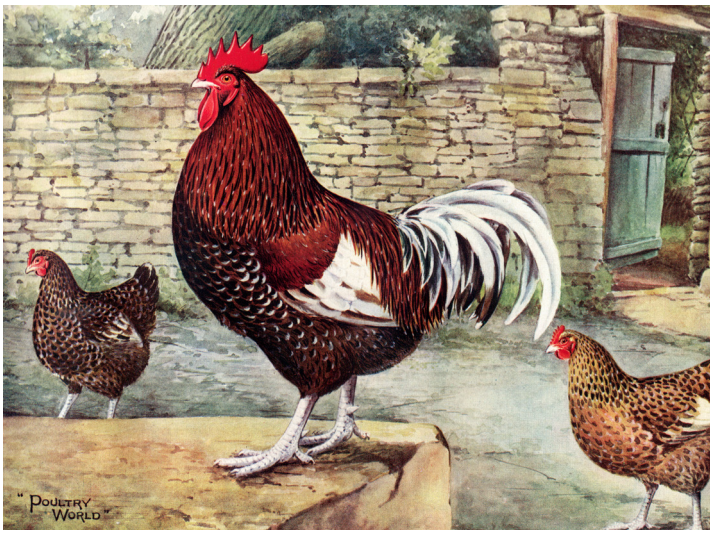


HOW TO REDUCE YOUR FEED BILL BY UP TO 35%

by Dr Chris Tempest from "New Zealand Poultry and Gamebirds."

Feed is the largest single cost in most poultry operations. Almost all birds will over-consume feed, so a tight control over allowances/wastage/ration selection can reduce feed cost 25-35%. Where feed comprises half of total costs, this can mean the difference between profit and loss.

How much feed is enough?

In feeding any group of birds, it is important to know how to estimate the minimum feed requirement for health/production/vigour. It can be assumed that birds will happily eat up to twice the amount of food they need. The result is over-fatness/poor reproductive performance/prolapse, etc.

Once birds become overfat slimming can only be done by drastic means, generally involving a full moult. Any attempt to put the birds on a slimming diet during lay will cause a dramatic fall-off in performance.

Pekin Ducks

Most birds will eat a surprising amount of grass. I once had a group of first-moult Pekin ducks on grass which had been getting 12kg of feed/100 birds/day for some while and maintaining good condition. They were then shifted on to a bare yard and within a week their body condition became markedly poorer. A feed increase to 18kg/100/day was required to compensate for the pasture.

Gallinaceous species such as quail, pheasant, guinea fowl, chicken etc. will all eat surprising amounts of grass and benefit from being able to select roughage, foliage and even soil.

So, back to the question: How much feed is enough?

The answer must be obtained by trial and error. Let us assume the birds are on "ad lib" feeding, i.e. getting whatever they will eat. This means if feeding time is 5.00pm, the previous day's feed will have been completely cleaned up by about midday. Birds should never have feed left over at the next feeding.

At the same time, get a feel for how the birds are thriving. If they are laying, record daily egg production. If birds are being reared or moulted, weigh a sample of birds each week. Five to 10 birds weighed regularly will indicate whether they have a small but steady weight increase, which is our aim; or are losing weight.

Lastly, handle birds at least weekly. Feel for the "condition" of the breast muscles, abdominal fat (thickness of the abdominal skin behind the point of the breast) and how

sharp the pelvic bones feel.

Top performance will come from birds in lean condition.

A word here on rearing. Once chicks are established, i.e. 4-6 weeks, they can be kept very lean until 3-4 weeks pre-lay. Evidence in meat breeders shows that the best subsequent egg production comes from birds which have been reared in hard condition.

Once the performance or condition of the group has been established, start to gradually cut back on feed. Determine how much feed the birds are eating ad lib. Then, for the next week, reduce the daily feed allowance by 5%, i.e.. if the group has been getting 10kg/100 birds/day, now feed 9.5kg/100/day. Watch egg production carefully, especially egg size which will be affected before egg numbers and is a useful indicator that feed intake is marginal. Don't forget to handle birds at least weekly.

Choices of feed

If the reduced feed produces no ill-effects, repeat. But monitor the flock carefully. Remember that during the first half of lay, a bird needs more food than during later in lay.

WHICH RATION OR FORMULATION TO USE?

Formulating and milling modern compound feeds is a high-tech business. Research has carefully defined the nutrient requirements for most domesticated bird species and for each phase of their life-cycle. The commercially-important species, hens, broilers and turkeys have been most intensively researched.

Choosing the correct ration not only ensures a balanced diet for the birds, but saves money. A ration must not be chosen because it is cheaper to buy.

So, check with your local feed mill or merchant.

FEED WASTAGE?

In the top commercial operations, 5% wastage is considered normal. Once spilled feed becomes obvious, especially on litter, then wastage is probably over 20%.

The physical presentation of the feed is important in reducing wastage. A hard pellet with minimal dust allows little wastage, compared with mash.

Most larger meat producers pellet all feed as part of Salmonella control programmes then crush the pellet to whatever size is required. Even a fine crumb will not be wasted as much as a mash.

The key to minimal wastage is feeder design. Outdoor feeders should be weatherproof, and have a lip high enough to prevent spillage. Wild birds not only waste feed but also constitute a disease risk.

Indoor feeders should also be designed to prevent loss.

SUMMARY

1. Careful feed management can reduce feed costs by 25-35%.
2. Set up a system so that birds are being fed only what they need for health, production and vigour.
3. Remember pasture can make a significant contribution.
4. Get expert advice from your feed manufacturer or merchant on the appropriate ration. Don't buy the cheapest. Look carefully at feeder design.

TREATING POULTRY LICE

This fact sheet is designed to improve the understanding of Poultry Louse infections in poultry and the variety of treatment options available.

A Blue Orpington Hen dustbathing in her favourite spot

POULTRY LOUSE LIFECYCLE

In order to fully discuss treatment options for the treatment of lice, it is important to make the correct diagnosis and understand the life cycle.

DIAGNOSIS

Be confident to not confuse poultry lice infections with mite infections. Scaly Leg Mites infect legs and cause the well known knobbly scales. Other species of mites infect beak ceres in parrots. You generally only know if these mites are present from examining the symptoms. There are also mites which live off the bird (Red Mite) and use poultry as a mobile cafeteria and suck blood during the nights, so they are not usually visible during the day time. These poultry mites are pin sized.

Generally, lice are easily visible and live on the bird in a number of locations depending on the species.

Lice only have a life cycle on the bird and can be found easily. They lay eggs on the bird, and these leave tell tale signs present as fans of eggs (nits) on the base of the feather shafts. This information sheet will confine it's comments to lice. The important message is to be able to identify which ectoparasite you are dealing with.

There are a number of lice species on birds, with the main group being classified as 'Mallophaga'. Lice are light sensitive and scurry away when the feathers are parted. Young lice are pin head size and white, while adult lice are usually a light brown colour. Areas to look for lice are under the wing, around the parsons nose and around the feathers below the cloaca. Lice are transmitted between birds by direct contact. There is no part of the life cycle away from the birds. Eggs hatch within a few days, and the eggs are usually visible in chronic infections as fans of eggs, particularly under the wing.

It is important to understand they key difference between mites and lice. The main reason is because the treatment options can be quite different.

Knemidocoptes species mites (also written as Cnemidocoptes) spend their entire three-week life cycle on their bird hosts (poultry, turkeys, pheasants). The females are viviparous; that is they lay live larvae which have developed in the body of the adult.

The infection can be confirmed by soaking off an infected scale and having this examined by a laboratory. The base of the scale needs to be carefully removed, as this is where the lab will find the mites.

However, usually diagnosis on symptoms is very reliable. It is important to not confuse the swelling from leg mites of that of bumble foot, which is a larger area swelling, usually of the foot pad.

Lice lay eggs on the bird (not under the skin as with some mites). The life cycle of a louse takes around 7 days from hatching to a visible louse which can be easily detected on a bird. The lice chomp down to the layer immediately under the main protective skin layer and in those areas of the bird where they are comfortable. A louse found on the back of a head can be a different species to one found under the tail feathers. The process of skin munching and foraging damages the underlying tissues. The result is an inflammatory response can result in dried, crusty fluid loss. Birds become irritated and preen and worry the areas where they are itching. This breaks the feather shafts and results in the typical symptoms – bald birds with rough feathers. These birds are unable to keep warm and production drops are inevitable in colder weather.

Head and neck lice on a Fowl

The lice are transmitted from bird to bird prolonged close or direct contact. Lice are most active in winter time. In summer, and especially when birds dust bathe, the lice escape up the feather shafts and hold on with special claws. They can be difficult to spot so, if looking for lice in summer, always check the feathers and do this in a well lit area. I have been fooled numerous times. The second message is to check birds regularly, and check a reasonable number in a flock. Lice never infect 100% of birds at the same time. They spread slowly.

Lice are carried between batches on birds. They do not tend to live in the environment for a long time. Birds which have hatched naturally under infected parents may be more likely to be infected during this time. Infected flocks where there are always multi-aged birds are likely to remain infected. Lice are mainly transferred by physical contact. One way in which the cycle commences in birds is through infected older birds contaminating the environment of the younger birds. Treatment therefore needs to consider the size of the flock, and the severity of infection, and what is going to happen to the eggs. It is not uncommon to find birds which are heavily infected with ones which you can not find lice on. This is simply a result of the direct contact way lice are transmitted. It is a numbers game. The point here is always check at least 10 birds in a flock before you declare yourself louse free.

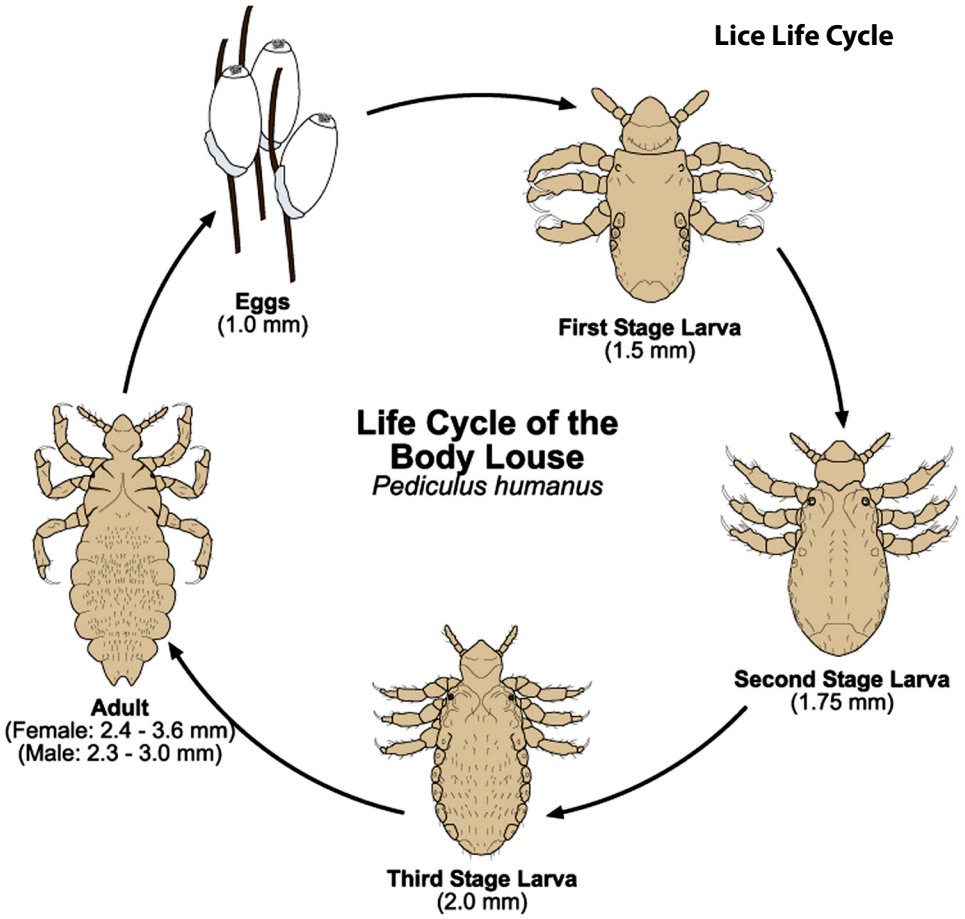
CHOOSING LOUSE TREATMENTS

Dusting powders are favoured for small bird groups. A popular choice is diatomaceous earth (DE). Read the following carefully. The rule is to apply the powder where the lice are, and never to randomly poof some powder under wings. Thorough coverage with powders is always indicated, as is rubbing the powder into the skin. This method ensures gently and thorough treatment of all birds, and is as easy as applying flea powder. If the application is not done thoroughly, the lice simply relocate and come back home when the powder residues have disappeared.

You can also add some treatment powders as dust baths, so the birds spread the dust over themselves. You need to keep this level of treatment up, so regular maintenance of baths is important. Place the baths in sunny spots where the birds will not be tempted to think the powdery havens are for laying eggs. This method needs to be monitored, as not all birds will use the dust baths, and there needs to be enough of them to ensure that all birds take a bath. This method suits larger numbers birds numbers. Providing

sulphur supplements has also been demonstrated to assist with louse number management.

There are popular dusting powders which contain active insecticides. Generally insecticides kill very quickly.



Note: Lice take several blood meals daily in larval stages and as adults.

NEW GENERATION LOUSE POWDERS

One patented new generation powder uses elemental sulphur and rhizome unextracted essential oil combination. Research has shown this to be highly effective in killing over 95% of lice within 48 hours when applied thoroughly to a heavily infested bird. Safe to use on birds of all ages, there are no known impact from residues. A repeat application is really important. Be sure that any organic products you use are backed up by research data and they are not detrimental to the bird.

LIQUID LOUSE SPRAYS

These often contain insecticides (e.g.. malathion) or extracted or distilled essential oils. As a choice you should use louse sprays that kill. Some essential oils can be caustic to skin when used at concentrations which inhibit the lice. The oils, usually purchased as a concentrate, and carriers can be severe on nostrils and eyes. They can also only be louse repellents and the lice use the relocation principle and return quickly. Never use sprays when wet birds can be easily chilled post treatment as this will trigger respiratory diseases – which are far worse than lice infections! Spraying products onto bird feather surfaces is usually quite ineffective and will usually only give a knock down. They are generally not effective against the lice eggs (nits). Sprays are often short acting. There are also washes that can be used to immerse the total bird. Once again the penetration of the active ingredient needs to be thorough and the bird must not be chilled whilst drying.

LONGER TERM SINGLE TREATMENTS FOR LICE

Generally these are ivermectin products – essentially a low volume liquid louse treatment, usually present

Lice eggs and showing damage to the skin of the bird

as a pour on drench. This product is absorbed through the skin and effectively circulates through the entire bird, where it will diffuse out of the blood vessels and into the skin tissues the lice (and also mites) will be consuming. The ivermectin will also happily diffuse into eggs and also paralyses gut worms. The product uses solvent carriers to carry the ivermectin through the skin and all three of them can also find themselves inside egg yolks and egg whites. There is no data on how long the eggs are safe and residue free after this period. The products used are not registered for treatment of poultry producing food and eggs for human consumption. These drenches are registered only for birds which do not produce products for human consumption. Off label use can only be prescribed by a veterinarian. These options are attractive because they reduce the need to retreat as the produce remains active for longer than it takes for eggs to hatch, meaning there is sufficient active ingredient remaining in the bird skin (food source for lice) to kill the lice.

Poultry Lice eggs attached to the base of the feathers.

Whatever product you use, the principle is to repeat the application several times until the population declines. Have a check and retreat policy. You also need to be aware that most treatments do not stop the nits from hatching. The incubation time for eggs is about a week, so it is a very good idea to repeat applications at this time limit. A single knock down can never be relied on. As the lice numbers decrease, inflammation will decrease and eventually the damaged skin will heal. When the adult population is controlled, there is reduced scratching. Some formulations assist healing. As an aside, if you can see signs of scaly leg mite, use a Poultry Leg Spray

If you have many birds infected, then you have a long, slow and thorough job to complete on each bird. The minimum time for treatment will be two applications over three weeks, as any lice eggs which were recently laid need to be treated. Lice treatments can be done in a way which is kind and gentle to the bird and the skin. At the same time, try and work out how many birds are infected. Always monitor the success of your treatment. Remember that the more birds you can treat at once, the greater your chance of success. Remember that the total site depopulation and suitable hygiene measures will eliminate lice and mites. However, incoming birds need to be louse free. Free range birds can be exposed to wild birds, which can carry lice and mites which can infect all poultry. Therefore, early detection by regular inspection is an important factor for control. Lice are not serious but can exert a significant impact on bird health longer term.

I cringe when I easily see lice in show birds, knowing that it is an easy to give birds a louse reduction treatment prior to showing. The opposite to this is that when showing birds, your own birds can be in the position to pick up fresh lice infections from the birds in the next pens.

Efficient louse management and control is an important factor in all ectoparasite programs. Given that this parasite is quite easy to eliminate or reduce to low levels, they should be difficult to find in any well managed flock.

PREPARING FOR EXHIBITION

Courtesy of the American Bantam Association.

Courtesy of the American Bantam Association.

A Poultry Show where you can measure the value of your birds

Have you ever put your Fowls in a show to find out how good the birds you have are? One of the best ways to find out how good they are is to exhibit them along side other birds and let the judge pass on them. Birds will frequently look good at home but not good enough to stand hot competition. Don't go to a Poultry Show and say you have a whole lot better birds at home – perhaps you have – but can you get them to the Poultry Show looking as well or better?

One should not exhibit birds unless they take an intense interest in their Fowls and likes to see them look their very best. It is work that requires a good deal of time and close attention, if it is done successfully. Nor should one exhibit Fowls unless he is a good loser as well as a good winner.

The primary thought that underlies judging exhibition birds is the beauty or artistic quality of its make-up. Study your birds for their beauty for each one is a live painting.

To thoroughly prepare birds for a show begin several months ahead of time in order to get the feathers in best condition, with the tails properly grown and the birds feeling and looking their very best. If you wait until just before the show you may not have the opportunity of getting some of your best birds into condition for showing.

In picking out the birds, first look for the general outline or get-up of the whole bird. The individual points, that is, the head, body, and tail should only be considered after getting the proper appreciation of the make-up or balance. It is harmony of parts that wins and not a bird that Is merely good in one or two sections. The exhibitor that is showing for the first time is Inclined to place too much emphasis on one or two things, such as the number

A chicken being prepared for a show

A prize winner giving the owner the pleasure of exhibiting their birds

of points on the comb, particular colour of plumage or particular type of marking.

It is quite important that the feathers should be smooth and give a fine surface to the birds. A rough, uneven, lined condition is not at all desirable.

The heads should always show strength, indicating a strong, vigorous individual. The neck should generally be full and melt or fuse into the body so that there is one smooth, even curve going from the head to the body depending on the breed.

In picking out the birds for showing, study the particular desires of the judge who is going to place the ribbons since all judges do not agree as to what is the most desirable kind of a bird, even though the Standard outlines the kind, and since the fashions change from year to year. While all judges should place the birds In the same way we know that human nature naturally makes certain men place more emphasis on some points than on others. Consequently, two conscientious judges might make entirely different sets of awards on the same class of birds. Make it a practice to show under different judges. Some shows engage the same judge or judges year after year and this is neither good for the exhibitor or the show.

It is particularly important that the birds should be in the right physical condition at the time of showing. Practically without exception a pullet or hen should be just coming into laying. Unless a bird is very full in the abdomen she will look her best just as laying starts. Most exhibitors try to hold their birds back in production until just before exhibiting them or try to have them start laying after they reach the show.

Male birds must be in the very best of physical condition to show themselves off properly. An inactive, stupid, wild male bird has very little chance in reasonably hot competition.

It is not generally necessary or desirable to wash coloured birds unless they are very dirty and their feathers badly soiled. In that case they may be washed. For washing use a pure soap such as Ivory. Always use soft water, preferably rain water, rinse the birds a number of times after soaping them so as to make sure that the soap is all out. If the soap remains in the feathers they will be sticky and become dirty very quickly. If the birds are put too near a hot fire the feathers are liable to curl in drying. Place them in a moderately warm coop with a wire bottom so that the water can drain without soiling the feathers. It is best to take several hours for drying so that the birds can help smooth out the feathers and work water out of their feathers. Do this washing in the daytime.