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On The Cover

A stunning La Flèche chicken. Photo by Suzanne Matteo.

Can You Find the Roo?

He looks just like this Roo.

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From the Editor

THANKSGIVING IS almost here again, and I'm already looking forward to my favorite turkey parts: the neck, heart, liver, and gizzard. While I eat these parts with just a little salt and pepper, popular ways to use them are in stuffing, gravy, or soup. Turkey frittata with mushrooms is a recipe I'd never heard of until Bruce and Elaine Ingram contacted me and asked to share it in this issue. In it, they use meat from the turkey wings as well as the turkey heart. Check it out on page 18 and give it a whirl!

While we prepare for delicious holiday meals, it's wise to keep in mind that this season can bring some unpredictable weather. No matter where you live, storms can happen. From hurricanes to blizzards, Heather Levin has tips to help you keep your flock safe.

Keeping your flock safe and healthy also means ensuring their coop remains clean. Since the outbreak of avian influenza, it's more important than ever to disinfect the coop and everything inside on a regular basis. Kenny Coogan talks with an expert who shares the best disinfectants to use and points you to some useful websites.

Finally, as you care for your chickens, it's worth remembering how vital their beaks are. Chickens use their beaks for pecking, eating, grooming, and exploring their environment. The beak is sensitive and contains nerve endings, allowing chickens to detect textures and temperature. Its shape is well-suited for picking up seeds, insects, and other small food items, making it an essential tool for a chicken's daily life. Sue Norris shares more about bird beaks on page 34.

These are just a few of the informative articles in this issue. I hope you enjoy them all. Don't forget to snap some pics of your flock and email them to me at the address below to be featured in an upcoming issue. Happy Thanksgiving!

Ann Tom,
Editor

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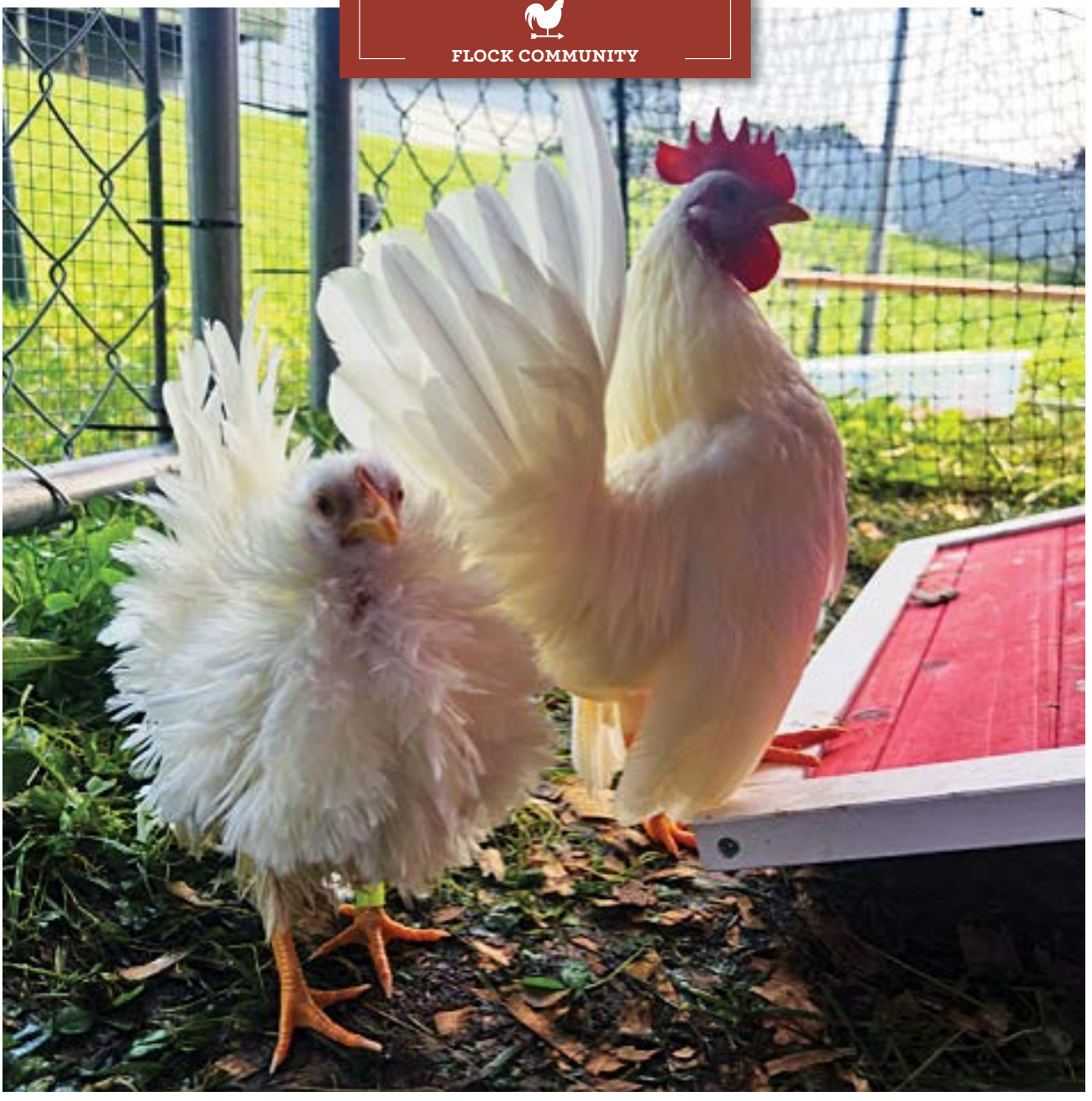

IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE OR GIVE A LADY A CHICKEN!

BY DANA AND LAURIE CARLSON

IF YOU'VE READ the book, *If You Give a Mouse A Cookie,* you'll understand where my story is going. If you haven't read the book, after my story you'll feel like you need to! My story begins with a horse and a pony. They belong to my daughter Dana, and she boards them at a horse barn, which includes a farm. It's a picturesque place, set in a valley, with an old farmhouse and barn, and animals everywhere: chickens, ducks, pigs, sheep, horses, cows, and a couple dogs. There are also kids playing in the yard, Mom is busy planting a huge garden, apple trees, a Norman Rockwell painting, etc.

One Sunday afternoon, we went to see our horses and take my daily bag of fruit for the animals. I work at a high school, and as I walked by the lunchroom last fall, I noticed the huge amount of food waste! It was awful, so I found a use for the unwanted fresh fruit and vegetables.

Every day, I get a huge bag and take it to the farm. The animals soon figured out the reason for my existence. One Sunday, however, was a bit different. I got the bag out of the back of the truck and almost stepped on a small chicken! It was just standing there and wasn't moving. I picked it up, and couldn't believe it, the chicken was enjoying being held. My daughter said, "It's going to die! It's going to get run over or stepped on by something!" I then held it a bit tighter.

We walked over to the horses, as I was still holding the chicken, and the owner of the farm came out and said, "That chicken's going to die," so I brought the chicken home.

I'd had experience with ducks in the past, so this wasn't totally new. We started out with a small pet crate and a tarp for shelter. Then the ball started rolling!

We named her Nellie and decided she needed a friend. The next morning, we headed out to a concert (things you do for your kids). When we were heading home, Dana informed me she'd found a hatchery that happened to be on our way. We turned off on a country road and drove through the countryside.

We finally arrived at our destination, and it was enchanting. A big white farmhouse, beautiful landscaping, cute little buildings, and a big red barn. I felt like I was going to grandma's house. A woman came out of the house, sweet as can be, and took us into a small building where there were chickens everywhere!

The building we were in was the incubation house. She had different buildings for all ages and breeds. She was forever holding a chicken and giving us a bit of chicken history. We ended up leaving with three young, black Silkies, and two gray mixed breeds.

When we arrived home, my daughter decided we needed a chicken coop. The next trip was to the farm store, where we found a coop that resembled a barn. We bought it, and then had the task of assembling it. Things were coming together!

Next, my daughter found a storage unit she thought would make a great winter shelter. After finding a big enough trailer to haul it, we brought that home. Finally, our project was completed.

We accomplished all this in one week's time and were so happy to have it done. Then my daughter asked if I would like to go to a chicken show. I thought, "Why not? I've never been to one." The chicken show had 900 birds, and when we left, it had 898.

We came home with a pair of Saramas. I guess you could say we're now in the chicken business. There's a saying, "Nothing is free," and that's so true. My free chicken has cost me $1,500, but it's worth every penny!


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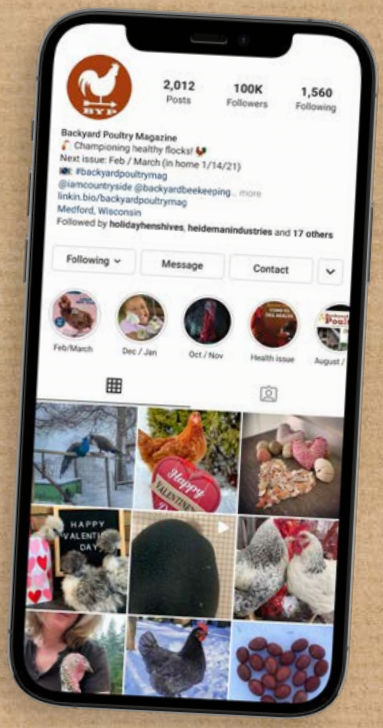

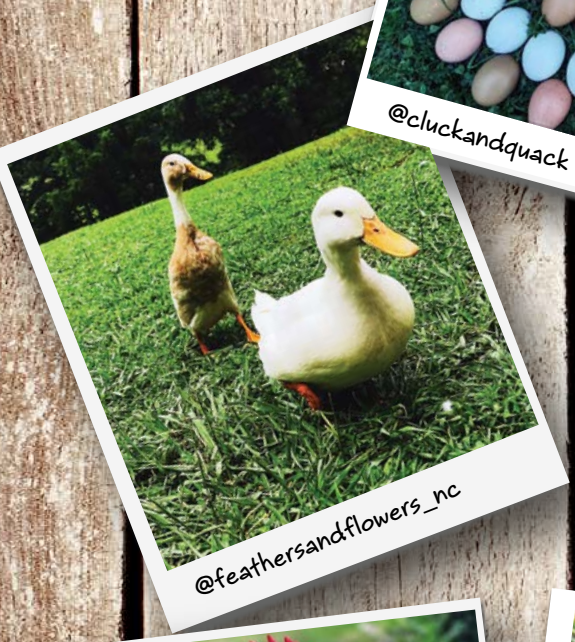

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flock Photos

Bear loves our baby chicks, including Cinderella, who he lets crawl all over him. He's a gentle giant! — Seeka Marie Steinbrecher with Steinbrecher Acres

My granddaughter, Audrey, collecting eggs on our Day's Journey Farm. — *Richard Stone*

Nap time for 8-week-old chicks. From left: Irene, Autumn, Felicity, Bridget, and Wendy. — *Kim Linman*

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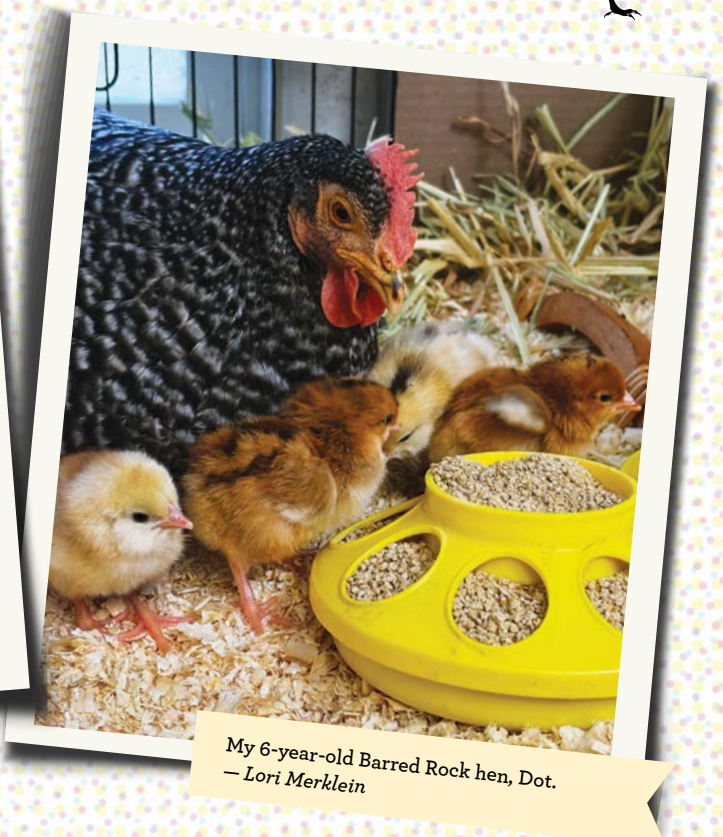
Chick admiring new mama. — *Lori Merklein*



My 6-year-old Barred Rock hen, Dot.
— *Lori Merklein*

New chicks from California. — *Lori Merklein*

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POULTRY NEWS

BY KENNY COOGAN

In "Poultry News" we share poultry stories of the current, odd, fun, and important. If there are stories that you'd like us to cover, or want to share with us, please email editor@backyardpoultrymag.com.

WE'RE EXCITED TO bring you these unique stories from the Fort Branch Library, Indiana, where a special flock of chickens has become an essential part of the library's programs, community-building efforts, and even art activities. These creative projects show how poultry can bring joy, education, and connection to unexpected places. Remember, *Backyard Poultry* is always looking for "Poultry News" submissions, so send us your stories, too!

The Poultry Library

Laura Happe

I'm the director of the Fort Branch and Haubstadt Library, located in two small southern Indiana towns about seven miles apart. During a recent property purchase to allow for a future library expansion, the Fort Branch Library bought two houses next door. One of these homes had a small chicken coop in the backyard, with 11 hens that had belonged to the family living there. Because they were moving and couldn't take the chickens with them, the library adopted them instead.

At first, we moved their old coop to a safe place on library property so it wouldn't be disturbed during construction. However, the coop was aging, and the move had weakened it further. We'd originally planned to keep the chickens for only a year before moving them to a farm to retire — but that changed quickly. The town absolutely fell in love with the hens. People started changing their routes on foot, bike, and even golf carts just to stop and see them, bringing kids who'd talk to the birds or even read books to them.

When Springs Valley Bank visited to learn about our new library building plans, we gave them a tour and shared our ideas. We didn't expect to hear more from them, but they surprised us the next day with an offer to pay for a brand-new chicken coop.

Some of our Library Board of Trustees members and other community volunteers worked together to create a new design inspired by the historic 1917 Carnegie library building. The result was so charming that it's now affectionately called the "Poultry Library," blending our mission of literacy and learning with our feathered neighbors in a way that represents everything we stand for.

These chickens are now part of our daily lives. They spark conversations between patrons, inspire kids to learn about animal care, and help our staff share the joys of library service in unexpected ways.

Chicken Art: A Creative Experiment

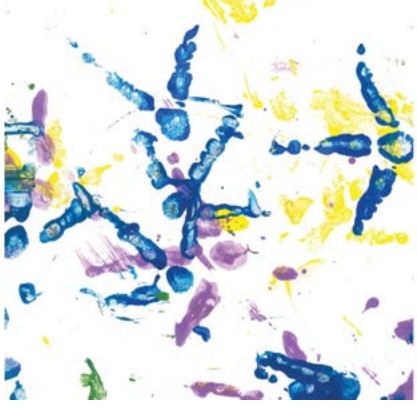
Mikala Sisson

This summer, as part of our May activities and the Summer Reading Program, we decided to put on a program called "Chicken Art" to involve our patrons in a new way. The theme was "Color Our World," focused on art and creativity, so what better way to tie in our library's chickens than to have them create art for the community?

The idea was sparked by hearing about another library that had a goat painting at an event called "Vincent Van Goat." We thought painting chicken feet would be perfect, allowing the birds to walk on poster boards and create fun, abstract pieces. We used tempera paint, which is egg-based and safer for the chickens, and avoided red

because chickens are known to peck at blood-like colors. We even found small aprons at Home Depot to protect their feathers while they worked.

Of course, what sounds great on paper can be tricky in practice. Some chickens, once their feet were painted, refused to move at all, no matter how many treats or gentle nudges we offered. Other chickens tried to avoid stepping on the paper altogether, possibly because of the unusual texture. In the end, with some patience and a lot of encouragement, they created several original works of art.



Our patrons enjoyed watching the birds in action, and we turned their prints into bookmarks that are still available for free at the library. The original paintings were framed, with some given as thank-you gifts to our friends at Springs Valley Bank, and others raffled off to patrons as fun keepsakes. The day after the program, we made sure to reward our hardworking artists with their favorite treats for being such good sports.

A Celebration for the Chicks

Dana Gansman

When we made the heartfelt decision to retire our original library flock, I brought them to my home to live out their golden years, free-ranging and relaxing. At the same time, I gathered fertilized eggs from my own backyard flock to start hatching the next generation of library chickens. We carefully monitored the incubator, making sure the eggs were undisturbed and safe, even with curious patrons asking questions.

To build excitement, we held a live candling session on Facebook, which was a big success — more than 2,000 views in just 48 hours! The chicks hatched on a Sunday when the library was closed, but once we announced

their arrival, many patrons stopped by to see them. Several people even asked if they could bring gifts for the chicks, which sparked the idea for a "Chicken Baby Shower."

We planned a fun day full of chicken-themed games, crafting birthday hats for the chicks, cupcakes, and a chance for everyone to hold the new arrivals and pose for photos. We also set up a guessing game with a nest full of eggs, asking patrons to estimate how many were inside. The top five guesses won the right to help name the new chicks, with the staff picking the final two names to complete the roster.

This celebration was one of the most heartwarming events I've been a part of, reinforcing the bond between our library and the community. It was wonderful to see everyone come together to support and celebrate these tiny new members of our flock.

Chickens as a Library Tradition

Dana Gansman

The Fort Branch Library is no ordinary library — it's a Carnegie library that's been serving the community for more than 100 years. We offer trivia nights, craft projects in our Creation Station, and even access to high-tech tools like a Glowforge laser printer and Cricut cutter. But nothing surprises visitors more than the fact that we hatch and raise our own chickens.

Caring for the chickens is part of my regular work at the library, right alongside shelving books. It's become easier since we built a new coop designed with both the birds and the staff in mind. The coop includes indoor and outdoor spaces, with weather protection and convenient access for feeding and cleaning.

Each day, my routine involves checking food and water and gathering eggs. We use basic layer pellets and scratch grains and sometimes treat them with leftover melon rinds or other fruits. With multiple feeders, the birds can eat inside or enjoy lunch in the sunshine. During winter, we had to move the water inside a heated area to stop it from freezing.

Our flock is quite the rainbow, with hens laying brown, green, or even blue-tinted eggs. One of our smallest stars, a Bantam named Tinkerbell, lays tiny white eggs about a quarter of the size of the others — but she has the biggest attitude. Tinkerbell will squawk and try to peck if you go near the nest boxes, even defending eggs that aren't hers!

The town really fell in love with these birds from the very beginning. When they were chicks, we held a naming contest and let the public vote on names. Our final group includes Polly, Chickaletta, Nugget, Sparkles, Nellie, Yolko Ono, and of course Tinkerbell. If I had to choose a personal favorite, it'd be Nellie, with her dark brown feathers, black accents, and a bright red comb. But among the kids, Tinkerbell is the real favorite, often called "Baby Chicken" because of her small size.

It's been amazing to watch how these chickens became woven into our town's life, adding a spark of happiness every time someone stops by to see them.

Ross 420 Club Celebrates Breeding Excellence in Hungary

Aviagen Kft hosted its biennial Ross 420 Club event, recognizing poultry producers across Hungary who achieved exceptional results in broiler performance. The gathering brought together 76 guests and highlighted advances in genetics and husbandry that are improving bird health and productivity.

South Africa Approves Bird Flu Vaccine Rollout

South Africa has greenlit a controlled vaccination program for poultry against highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). This marks a hopeful step toward reducing outbreaks and protecting both commercial and backyard flocks.

These developments show that even in a challenging landscape, innovation and collaboration help poultry producers move forward.

People Flock to NYC to Celebrate Pigeons

New York City's first-ever Pigeon Fest took flight on the High Line this June, transforming the elevated park into a celebration of one of the city's most misunderstood residents. Inspired by Iván Argote's towering 17-foot pigeon sculpture, Dinosaur, the festival blended whimsy with urban ecology — featuring carnival games like "Pin the Tail on the Pigeon," hands-on art workshops, and a wildly entertaining Pigeon Impersonation Pageant judged on plumage, strut, and coo. Despite the rain, crowds turned out in droves, proving that New Yorkers are more than ready to embrace their feathered neighbors. Beyond the fun, the event spotlighted bird-friendly city planning and conservation, reminding attendees that pigeons aren't just city clutter — they're resilient, historic, and oddly lovable icons of urban life.

Here's a quote from Taylor Zakarin, Associate Curator for High Line Art, and a key organizer of Pigeon Fest.

"Pigeon Fest was a huge success! We saw thousands of visitors flock to the High Line to enjoy the day's activities, including pigeon-themed carnival games and crafts, musical performances by Sun Ra Arkestra and Lee Ranaldo's Bird is the Word collective, and the first ever pigeon impersonation pageant. From the Birdsong Project to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to the Wild Bird Fund, and everyone in between, we're grateful for all the participants and organizations that made Pigeon Fest possible. It's our hope that everyone who attended Pigeon Fest gained a renewed appreciation for our feathered friends in our urban ecosystem." ●

KENNY COOGAN earned a master's degree in Global Sustainability and co-hosts the Mother Earth News and Friends podcast, which can be enjoyed at *MotherEarthNews.com/Podcast*. He also hosts and created the television show *Florida's Flora and Fauna with Conservationist Kenny Coogan*. To learn more about that program, visit *www.FloridasFloraAndFauna.com*.

Do You Have Something to Crow About?

We want to hear from you.

Send questions, comments, opinions, advice, upcoming events, etc. to: *Backyard Poultry* Editor, 1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609 or email editor@backyardpoultrymag.com.

Backyard Poultry June/July 2025 Cover

My daughter thinks she's famous now! Here she is signing copies.

Rachele Paulus

In Response to "Transition Week" *Backyard Poultry* June/July 2025

I enjoyed reading "Transition Week, Adding New Chickens to the Coop" by Wren Everett in the June/July issue, particularly because we're preparing to introduce our new pullets to the main flock soon.

I'd like to suggest a method to ease the transition that we've used every other year since 2013, and it's been successful each time.

I built a pullet pen that we install temporarily in the chicken room in our barn. It's made of PVC plumbing components fitted together without glue so they can be taken apart easily. I made a barrier out of polypropylene deer fencing that fits over the PVC frame and is held in place with zip ties. There's a hatch in the top to provide access for food and water that's secured with dog leash clips. To clean the pen, we simply tilt it up to provide easy access.

After six weeks under the heat lamp in the house, we put the pullets in the pen. They go in the pen every night after spending the day in their own outdoor pen. We follow this routine for 12 more weeks. At that point, the older chickens and the new chickens have been next to each other for three months, so when the temporary pen is removed, it's not a big shock to anyone.

This method has worked well for us. Perhaps it'll be helpful for others.

Jay Winslow, New York

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WILD TURKEY FRITTATA WITH MUSHROOMS

BY BRUCE AND ELAINE INGRAM

THE WINGS OF A TURKEY don't contain much meat, but those little tidbits are quite tasty, and the heart is similarly small, delicious, and nutritious.

Yield: 2 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil

¼ cup white onions, diced

¼ cup diced wild or domestic mushrooms (for this particular dish we used amber jelly rolls and giant puffballs)

¾ cup broccoli florets, cut small

½ cup thawed peas

½ cup diced, cooked turkey wings and heart

3 eggs

¼ teaspoon salt

⅓ cup grated cheddar or mozzarella cheese

1. In large skillet with lid, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onions and sauté for 5 minutes. Then add mushrooms and cook 2 to 3 minutes more.

2. Add broccoli pieces to skillet, and after a couple of minutes, add peas and turkey. Cook until all it's all heated through.

3. While cooking items in skillet, combine 3 eggs with salt in bowl and beat thoroughly until smooth.

4. Pour egg mixture over contents of skillet. Cover with lid and cook until almost set, stirring as necessary.

5. Top with cheese, and cook another minute or so with lid on until cheese is melted.

BRUCE AND ELAINE INGRAM are authors of *Living the Locavore Lifestyle*, a book on hunting, fishing, and gathering for food, including recipes. For more information, contact them at: *BruceIngramOutdoors@gmail.com*

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To Cook A Turkey

The Differences Between Cooking a Heritage Breed and a Production Breed Turkey

BY SHERRI TALBOT

AS DISCUSSIONS ABOUT living a sustainable lifestyle become more common, and interest in heritage breed livestock increases, there's also more desire to cook heritage breed turkeys for Thanksgiving. What does it mean to have a heritage breed at your family dinner? Why do they cost so much more? And the most important question: How does one cook a heritage turkey, anyway?

What does "heritage breed" mean?

Heritage breed turkeys are older varieties, more closely related to wild turkeys than to the white broad-breasted that one commonly finds in the grocery store. Broad-breasted varieties are prized for their quick growth and a much larger percentage of white meat. Heritage breeds take longer to reach butcher weight, and have a smaller breast and richer flavor. In addition, heritage breed turkeys can fly, forage, and reproduce without help, while these behaviors have mostly been bred out of commerical broad-breasted turkeys.

On average, heritage turkeys are smaller birds than the broad-breasted varieties. The Standard Bronze and the Holland White are among the largest of the heritage breeds and are usually about 25 pounds when dressed out. Other heritage breeds, such as the Beltsville Small White turkey might reach butcher weight at only 10 to 15 pounds. For contrast, the white broad-breasted can hit 38 to 40 pounds when processed.

Some people have concerns about heritage turkeys tasting gamey, but taste tests and anecdotal reports generally describe them as having a more flavorful taste than a broad-breasted turkey. Heritage breed turkeys have an even layer of fat over their bodies, which gives their meat a richer flavor. Their ability to forage and fly, as well as their longer lifespan, affect muscle development and enhance the taste.

Why do heritage breed turkeys cost so much more?

Buying your first heritage breed turkey for dinner can come with a case of sticker shock. They're likely to be raised by small farmers, which means more individual attention to the birds, often more space per bird, and a longer lifespan before butcher. All these increase costs to the farmer and drive up the price.

In addition, smaller farms have less ability to buy in bulk, haggle for better deals, or keep a veterinarian on staff. Heritage chicks, especially those from reputable breeders, cost more and are harder to find. This means it costs more for a small farmer to provide the basic necessities for their bird.

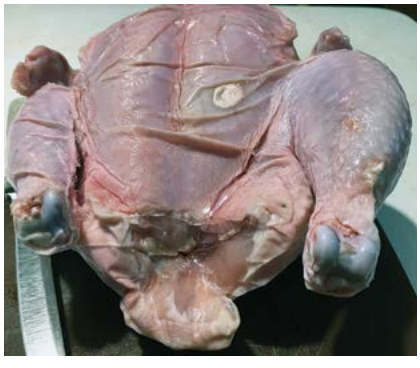
I have my bird. Now what do I do with it?

Since heritage breed turkeys have a smaller breast, you end up cooking a bird with more dark meat. This means less worry about the breast drying out, and an easier time getting a crispy skin, if you play your cards right.

Cooking a heritage breed is different than cooking a grocery store turkey. Check various recipes or websites and you'll find those who

advocate brining the bird and those who swear it'll ruin your meal. Other recipes suggest a long, slow cooking time while others suggest that heritage turkeys should be cooked more like game fowl — high temperatures and a quick cook.

Many of these differences are based on the size of the bird, the age, and the desired results. Wet brining, for instance, will help keep the meat juicy, but makes it harder to get a crispy skin. It can also take a lot of room in the refrigerator! Dry brining consists mostly of salt and may not give you the flavors you're looking for. It also won't penetrate the bird as deeply as a wet brine and can dry out the top layer of meat. Others may like to use a mix of butter, oil, or spices under the skin of the bird to achieve a preferred flavor profile, while retaining moisture in the meat.



High-temperature cooking works best on smaller birds. Much like with a duck or guinea fowl, a high temperature and quick cooking time can help create a crispy skin and a lovely brown coloring, without losing juiciness. This type of cooking requires a longer resting time but is favored by many. However, high heat can be an issue with larger birds, since the surface of the bird is likely to dry out before the center is cooked through.

Despite the differences of opinion, there are some commonly found tips everyone seems to agree on. As with all turkeys, it's important to make certain the bird is completely thawed before prepping and cooking it. With heritage birds, it's especially important to make certain it's been brought to room temperature before cooking, to ensure it cooks evenly. It's also recommended that a heritage breed turkey not be stuffed, for the same reason.

Don't ever put aluminum foil over your turkey. Foil builds up moisture on the inside, making the skin of your bird wet, losing the crispiness. Instead, take your turkey out of the oven when the internal temperature reaches 155 degrees Fahrenheit in the thickest part of the bird. Make sure it has adequate resting time after cooking— usually around 30 minutes. The turkey will need an internal temperature of 165 degrees F before serving, and the juices should run clear when you cut into it. ●

SHERRI TALBOT is the co-owner and operator of Saffron and Honey Homestead in Windsor, Maine. She raises endangered livestock breeds and educates on heritage breeds, sustainable living, and the importance of eating locally.

Cool-Rise CINNAMON BUNS

BY RITA HEIKENFELD

HERE IN OUR LITTLE patch of heaven in southwestern Ohio, autumn is a time to prepare the vegetable and herb gardens for their winter "rest" and stack firewood near the house for our wood-burning stove. Translation? We're busy outdoors!

The weekends find our kids and grandkids coming over to help with chores. A real treat for them (and us) is a pan of cinnamon buns, eaten warm from the oven.

Regardless of the time of day — morning, afternoon, or toward evening, cinnamon buns are a hit.

What I love most about this recipe is the fact that it's super versatile. Prepare the dough one day, then let it do a slow, cool rise in the refrigerator before rolling and finishing the buns the following day.

Or prepare the buns up to the point of the second rise, then put them in the refrigerator to finish rising overnight.

All you do then is enjoy the cinnamon, yeasty aroma as these spiral-shaped pastries bake.

I've even divided the dough in half so we could enjoy warm cinnamon buns two days in a row!

You'll note the recipe calls for buttermilk along with two leavening ingredients — both yeast and baking soda. The buttermilk, with its bit of a tang, produces a softer-textured, flavorful bun, and having double leaveners ensures a good rise even after a day in the refrigerator.

I'm so happy to share this special recipe with you and hope you try it. These cinnamon buns are nice for holiday brunch, as well. Guests coming over? Prepare the dough the night before and let them help with the rolling and filling the next morning. Oh, and have the recipe ready for them to take — I have a feeling you'll get requests for it.

Making the Buns

The dough and frosting can be made entirely by hand, or in a mixer.

BUN INGREDIENTS

2 packages active dry yeast, not quick rise or instant

A pinch of sugar

¼ cup warm water, 110 to 115 degrees F

1½ cups whole buttermilk

¼ cup neutral vegetable oil or melted butter

1½ teaspoons vanilla

4½ cups all-purpose flour

¼ cup sugar

¾ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon baking soda

FILLING INGREDIENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Mix together:

½ cup unsalted or salted butter, melted

1⅓ cups light or dark brown sugar, packed

2 teaspoons cinnamon

VANILLA GLAZE INGREDIENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Whisk together until smooth:

2 cups confectioner's sugar,

2 teaspoons vanilla

3 to 4 tablespoons warm water

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BUNS

Grease (or spray) a large cookie sheet.

Dissolve yeast in water and add a pinch of sugar to "feed" the yeast. Let sit a few minutes until foamy.

Meanwhile, heat buttermilk, oil, and vanilla until warm, but not hot.

Pour yeast mixture into mixing bowl and add buttermilk mixture. Mix well.

Whisk together flour, sugar, salt, and baking soda.

Pour flour mixture into yeast and buttermilk mixture 1 cup at a time, mixing until soft dough forms. Dough may be lumpy, but no worries. You'll knead the lumps out.

Turn out onto very lightly floured surface and knead until dough is smooth and soft, like a baby's bottom. Bless the dough!

Place in buttered bowl, turning dough all over to coat with butter. Cover with plastic wrap.

Let rise in refrigerator until doubled in size. You have several choices here. You can check after 4 hours and proceed if dough has doubled, or dough can be kept in refrigerator overnight or even up to 24 hours.

Remove dough from refrigerator and uncover.

Let dough come to room temperature and then proceed with rolling. I like to pat dough into a rectangle for easier rolling.

Roll out onto lightly floured surface into a 15-inch by 10-inch rectangle. A bit smaller or larger is okay.

ADD FILLING

Spread filling over dough, as close to the edges as you can.

Starting on long side, roll up into log, pressing lightly as you go to prevent air pockets, then pinch seams to seal and place seam side down.

Sometimes my ends look skinny. If that happens, I use the palms of my hands to gently push ends inward. That not only takes care of the skinny ends, but helps even up the roll.

SLICE INTO BUNS

Slice into 1-inch pieces, using a sawing motion to prevent dough from squishing down.

Place side by side on baking sheet. If buns bulge a bit in the center, pat down gently.

Cover and let rise 30 minutes or until almost doubled in size, or refrigerate overnight.

BAKE

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Don't overbake or buns may turn out dry.

FROST AND SERVE

Cool and frost. See tips below for a thin, glass-like glaze, or a thicker coat of frosting. Your choice!

When ready to serve, use a spatula to remove buns, since filling may ooze out a little during baking, and cause some sticking on the bottom.

Yield: 12 to 16 or so rolls.

A TRIO OF TIPS FOR FROSTING

• Drizzle or spread the frosting on while buns are still a bit warm. This allows some of the frosting to melt into the buns and creates a shiny glaze. Personally, that's my favorite.

• You can also do a double coating of frosting. Spread about ¼ of the frosting on the warm buns, then wait until glaze sets and spread the rest of the frosting on top.

• Or simply wait until the buns cool completely before frosting. This results in a thicker coating.

SWAP OUT FILLING

• Substitute apple pie spice or pumpkin pie spice for the cinnamon.

CINNABON FROSTING HACK

Make a cream cheese frosting like Cinnabon:

Cream together ½ cup softened butter with 4 ounces softened, full fat cream cheese, add 1 cup confectioner's sugar and 1½ teaspoons vanilla, and beat until fluffy. If you have lemon juice on hand, add 1 teaspoon.

Tips

BUTTERMILK SUBSTITUTION

• Pour 1 tablespoon white or cider vinegar or lemon juice into a 1 cup measure. Add enough whole milk to equal 1 cup. Stir. It will look a little curdled.

FREEZE BUNS

• Let unfrosted buns cool completely at room temperature. Freeze up to 6 months.

• If you like, you can warm them up before proceeding with frosting. Wrap tightly in foil, then warm up in 350-degree oven for 10 or so minutes, or until buns are thawed and warmed through.

RITA HEIKENFELD comes from a family of wise women in tune with nature. She's a certified modern herbalist, culinary educator, author, and national media personality. Most importantly, she is a wife, mom, and grandma. Rita lives on a little patch of heaven overlooking the East Fork River in Clermont County, Ohio. She is a former adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati, where she developed a comprehensive herbal course.

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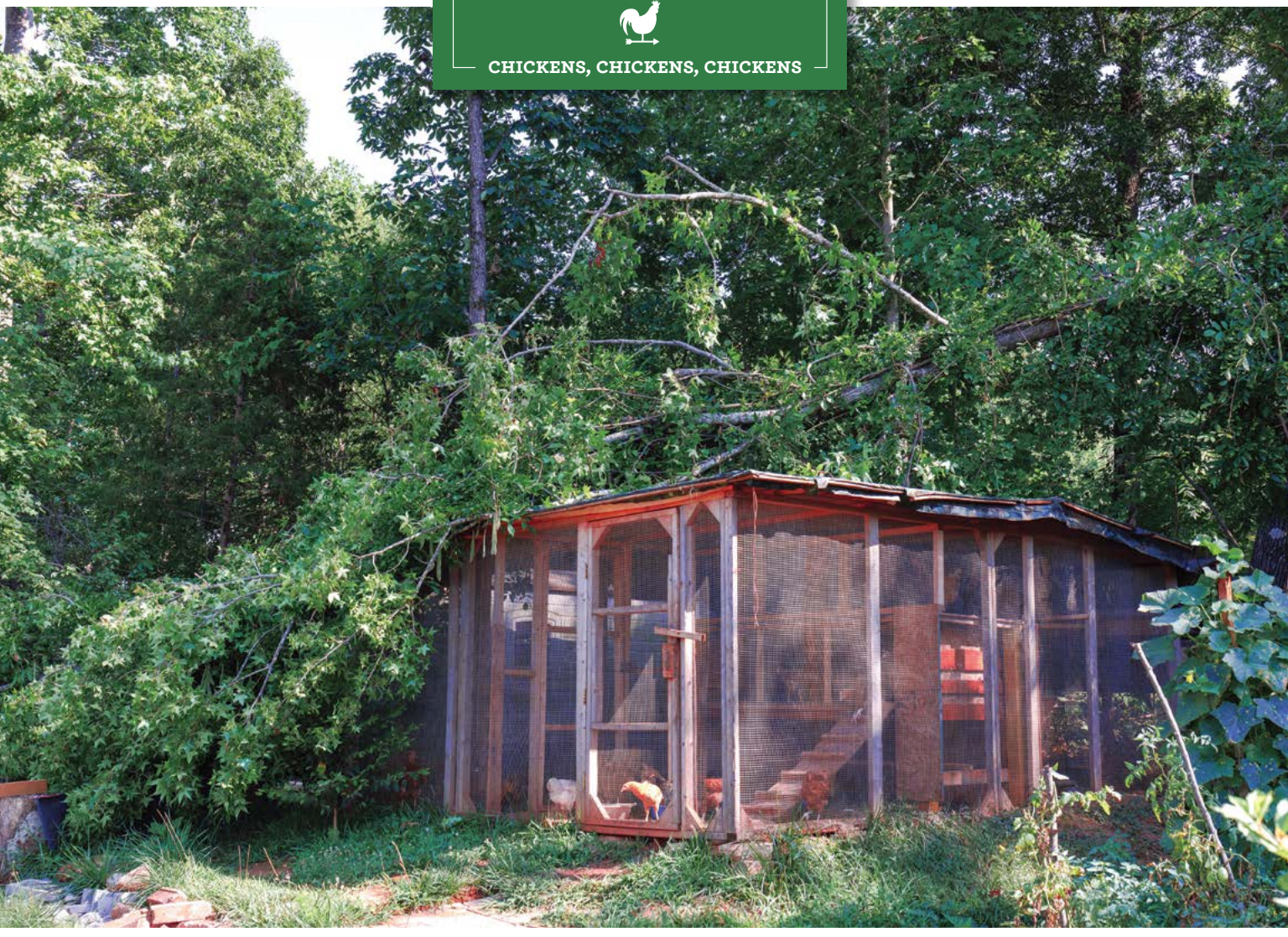

Preparing Your Flock for SEVERE WEATHER

BY HEATHER LEVIN

YEARS AGO, WE LOST power for more than a week in early spring when a tornado tore through our homestead. I had a brooder full of tiny chicks in the laundry room, all huddled under a brooder plate, and suddenly no way to keep them warm.

Thankfully, I was prepared. I wrapped the brooder in a heavy-duty emergency blanket that I normally keep in the car and opened a few Hot Hands pocket warmers and put them in the corner of the brooder. I added more bedding to help them stay warm and crossed my fingers.

All of them survived, even though the house was chilly and we had no heat. But if I hadn't had the supplies I needed, I don't know if they would've made it through.

No matter where you live, chances are that you face some risk of severe weather. Where I live in Tennessee, we have it all — severe storms and tornadoes, extreme heat, flash flooding, and occasional ice storms in the winter.

The good news is that no matter what severe weather threat you face, preparing your flock will look pretty much the same.

Analyze Your Local Risk

Start by thinking about what the highest risk is for your area. Possible severe weather hazards include:

- Hurricanes/tropical storms
- Tornadoes or severe storms
- Blizzards or ice storms
- Extreme heat
- Flash floods
- Wildfires

A reliable way to receive weather and news reports if the power or internet goes out is a must. We have a hand-crank radio that has NOAA weather alerts, as well as a hand-held HAM radio device, which we use for updates during power outages.

Stock Up on Feed

It's always a good idea to have an extra bag of feed on hand, because you never know when you're going to need it. I keep several extra bags of feed in a temp-controlled supply shed on our homestead, and there've been so many times I was grateful to have a back stock of feed to lean on when I needed it.

Think about it. If a line of severe storms hits your area, or a hurricane comes through, power could be out for days or longer. Roads could be washed out or impassable due to downed trees, which means supply trucks might not easily get in to make deliveries of feed, bedding, or medical supplies.

Even if you can get out to the store after a storm, supplies could be picked over by everyone who wasn't prepared and rushed out to buy feed, too.

Keep in mind that feed quality degrades over time, so if you do purchase extra bags of feed, you need to rotate them to ensure they stay fresh.

It's also important to look at how your feed is stored. Will it remain dry in heavy rain? Try to store it in watertight containers, at least 6 inches off the ground.

Consider Water

Next, look at your water situation. If you depend on city services, how will you water your flock if you lose access to water?

Identify local water sources you could possibly use during an emergency, such as a local creek or stream, a rain barrel on your property, or even potable water stored in jugs or water cubes inside your home.

Bedding

Chickens need dry bedding, and having an extra supply is important, especially if the bedding in the coop is soaked by overly heavy rain or high winds that drive in the rain (this happens in my coop during storms). Thicker bedding is also essential

during winter cold snaps, blizzards, and ice storms.

Build a Chicken First Aid Kit

Look carefully at your chicken first aid kit. Do you have everything you need to handle an emergency with your animals?

Some basic first aid supplies you'll need include:

✓ Vetericyn or iodine/betadine solution
✓ Saline wash
✓ Vet wrap and non-stick gauze
✓ Vet RX and Nutri-drench
✓ Electrolytes and probiotics
✓ Epsom salts
✓ Styptic powder (helps stop bleeding)
✓ Baby aspirin
✓ General first aid supplies (such as scissors, tweezers, a headlamp, oral syringes, nitrile gloves, etc.)

Secure Your Coop

Next, look at your coop. Is it strong and tight enough to stand up to high winds and heavy rain? Is it anchored to the ground with earth anchors or concrete, so it won't blow away? If you're not confident it is, could you bring your flock indoors, or to a garage or studier shed, during a severe storm?

Look at the area around your coop and run. Are there low branches that could possibly break off and damage the coop or fencing? Do any trees or bushes need to be cut back?

It's important to have the tools and supplies to make any repairs to your coop such as tarps, zip ties, nails, plywood, duct tape, and maybe even a roll of bird netting. You'll also want to have a temporary shelter plan just in case your primary coop is destroyed or damaged during a storm. So, spend some time imagining that your coop is suddenly no longer usable. Where could you safely house your flock while you repair or rebuild their coop?

Prepare for Winter Weather

If your area is at risk for extreme cold and blizzards, think about how you'd keep your flock alive if winter weather really turned severe.

For example, several years ago, a cold front swept through the eastern and southern United States, dropping temps to 20 degrees below zero Fahrenheit and colder, and creating blizzard conditions around much of the country. Knowing that these storms were coming, a chicken keeper I know in Pennsylvania created a temporary coop in her basement using hay bales, screen, and an old door she had in her garage.

The temperature in her basement stayed at a balmy 55 degrees F while the storms raged outside, and her chickens stayed safe and warm for over a week until the weather improved.

So, look at where you might be able to move your flock if temperatures were to plummet, or heavy snow, ice, or high winds make it difficult or unsafe for you to venture out to the coop to check on them.

Consider the Impacts of Stress

Think about the stress your chickens will likely be under during a severe weather event. Stock up now on nervine herbs like lemon balm, lavender, chamomile, or catnip. You can mix these fresh or dried herbs in with their feed or cooked treats or put them in the coop and nesting boxes. To save time and make things even easier, you can also purchase pre-blended, stress-relieving herbal teas.

These herbs and teas are great to give your chicks, and your flock, during and after a severe weather event to help them de-stress.

HEATHER LEVIN is an educator, herbalist, and chicken wrangler of 30+ chickens. She's also the founder of The Backyard Chickens Summit and Chicken Health Academy, a pioneering online learning academy that teaches natural and emergency chicken care strategies. Find out more about her program at *www.ChickenHealthAcademy.com*.

Everything You Need to Know

Before Bringing Home a Rooster

BY ERIN SNYDER

Make sure owning a rooster is legal in your community before acquiring one. Photo Credit: Sean Bernstein Unsplash.com.

ADDING A ROOSTER TO YOUR flock may sound daunting, but knowing what to expect before embarking on the journey can make the transition smoother. So, if you're thinking of bringing home a rooster, here are a few things you should know.

Check Your Local Municipality

Before acquiring a rooster, be sure to check with your local municipality to see if owning a rooster is legal in your neighborhood. Just because you can legally own hens doesn't always guarantee you can own a rooster.

Some neighborhoods have a strict "no rooster" policy, while others may require a certain amount of land to own one. If you can legally own a rooster, check to see if there are additional regulations you need to follow, i.e., not letting him out of the coop until after 8:00 a.m., etc.

Day-Long Crowing

Roosters don't just crow in the morning. In fact, roosters can crow throughout the day and even at night, if disturbed.

The amount of crowing throughout the day will depend on the individual rooster, breed, and if something isn't right with the flock (for example, if a flock member has recently passed away or a hen has disappeared when free-ranging), or if danger is lurking close by. Roosters in free-range flocks will crow more than those in confined flocks.

Early Risers

Roosters are notorious for their early rising and crowing at dawn. Although, I've found from personal experience that roosters crow before dawn — with my earliest riser starting at 3 a.m. each morning.

Know Your Breed

Consider what you're looking for in a rooster before bringing one home. Some chicken keepers hope for a beloved flock member that's gentle with children, while others prefer

a feistier breed to help protect the hens from danger.

The latter option isn't the best reason to consider adding a rooster to your flock, as roosters should never be used as a "sacrificial lamb." Your best bet to protect against predators is to confine your flock to a completely predator-proofed coop and run.

If owning a pet rooster is on your bucket list, do your research and contact your preferred hatchery to see if they have any breed selections for a friendly breed choice.

Roosters crow throughout the day and even at night. Photo credit: Sarah Halliday Unsplash.com.

Knowing your rooster's body language is essential for a good handler/rooster relationship. Photo Credit: Mattias Unsplash.com.

Stay clear of high-strung, aggressive, or skittish breeds, and instead focus on a calm breed, such as a Brahma, Cochin, or Orpington, for the best pet roosters.

Rooster Body Language

Roosters have their own body language that varies from that of the hens. From courtship displays to showing signs of aggression, understanding your rooster's body language can be extremely helpful.

If a rooster frequently flaps his wings when you approach, he's asserting his dominance over you. Many roosters who display this behavior are harmless, but just keep a close eye out for other aggressive behaviors just in case.

A cockeyed rooster is never a good sign, as roosters displaying this behavior are sizing you up for an attack. Cockeyed roosters approach slowly, often pecking at the ground as a cover-up, while tilting their head with one eye up before attacking.

Other aggressive signs include chasing, flogging a human with their wings, and spurring.

Note: When choosing an adult rooster, be sure to watch him closely for signs of aggression before agreeing to purchase him.

Watch the Spurs

Spurs are a rooster's weapon against the world and, as many chicken owners can attest, they can inflict a lot of damage.

Even non-aggressive roosters can spur their handlers if they think they or their hens are in danger. If your normally calm rooster does attack you, take some time to consider what may have sparked his aggression and how you can prevent it in the future.

How Many Hens Does a Rooster Need?

This depends on the individual rooster and breed. Typically, a good ratio is 10 hens per rooster. Be aware that too few hens may lead to over-mating and can cause injury, feather loss, and stress.

Top Bird

As flock defenders, roosters are often considered to be the top chicken in the pecking order. Roosters don't fall under the same pecking order as hens, so having one shouldn't disturb the pecking order too much. Since they aren't part of the hens' social hierarchy, roosters don't usually pose a problem when being introduced to an all-hen flock.

Henpecked

Older hens who are higher in the pecking order may try to push the rooster around and literally henpeck him. If a hen becomes too aggressive, remove her from the flock for a few days before trying to reintroduce her.

When introducing any chickens to your flock, be sure to keep a close eye on all of them to make sure none are being picked on.

A Mutual Respect

The most important lesson I learned when owning a rooster is the need for a mutual respect. Just as the rooster should respect the handler, the handler needs to respect the rooster.

Learning how to work with your rooster includes learning what triggers his aggression. This doesn't mean tiptoeing around the coop and yard, afraid to anger him — but learning to work with him. If whenever he sees the wheelbarrow in the yard he tries to attack it, you know that he should be confined to the run before bringing the wheelbarrow out to the garden.

By knowing your rooster, you can help him learn to trust you. A trusting rooster is much less likely to behave in an aggressive manner, making him easier to work with.

Owning a rooster may not be for everyone, but for those willing to put in the extra time and effort, having a rooster can be a rewarding experience.

ERIN SNYDER and her family have raised chickens and ducks for nearly two decades. She is passionate about all things poultry but is especially interested in poultry nutrition, predator protection, egg-laying disorders, and helping chickens live their best lives well into their golden years. You can follow her chicken adventures on her newly hatched Instagram page: *www.instagram.com/TheHenHouseHygge/*

RESOURCES

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MIND YOUR BEAK!

BY SUE NORRIS

A CHICKEN'S BEAK — we know that they use it for feeding, probing, defense, parasite control, and communication for the most part, but what else does it do?

The purpose here is to let you see how vital the beak is to any bird — not just chickens — and show the amazing versatility of this piece of unique engineering. The loss or partial destruction of the beak may condemn a bird to starvation in the wild.

The beak has a vital dual-purpose role in both the alimentary and respiratory systems. It's also a multi-purpose tool for the bird and is used for a variety of needs, so let's take a closer look.

Beak Anatomy

The beak starts to develop on day three of incubation; by day 10, it'll harden into its accepted form.

The beak is made of bone, part of the skull, which is then covered in keratin — a fibrous protein that's durable, renewable, and grows continuously, much like our fingernails. Chickens can be observed filing down their beaks to keep them at a proper length and remove sharp edges; this is known as beak wiping.

The beak lining contains a significant network of nerves and sensory receptors, which is why beak trimming (called debeaking) in the poultry industry is such a barbaric practice. It can cause both short- and long-term pain and discomfort for the bird — imagine having a long, protracted toothache! It affects feeding practices and the ability to preen for parasites and keep feathers in good condition.

Trimming is done primarily to prevent feather plucking and other undesirable habits, all of which are generally caused by overcrowding and stress in the unnatural environment. Thankfully, many countries have now banned this practice and more are following. The U.S. is sadly lagging in humane practice.

Our feathered companions are quite capable of keeping their beaks at an optimum length by "filing" them down on stones, bricks, or other hard surfaces, where available, but birds that are kept indoors or in a soft environment, may need the beak to be gently trimmed, carefully Dremelled, or filed down periodically. When the beak becomes too long (parrot beak), it may affect their ability to eat properly.

Some birds have a condition known as crossbeak, which requires special treatment. Crossbeak, or scissor beak, is an anatomical bone deformity, so it can't be fixed. Birds with this condition will need regular beak trimming, as they'll be unable to do it effectively themselves.

Deformities to the beak are common. Genetics play a large role, and repeated inbreeding of birds will cause this to happen more frequently. It can also happen accidentally or because of severe or improper trimming of a beak.

Inside the beak is the mouth cavity, or oro pharynx cavity. The beak has an upper palette that's lined with epithelial cells containing salivary glands and taste bud papillae.

There are also papillae on the tongue. These finger-like structures help to smoothly move food to the esophagus and into the digestive tract.

In the roof of the mouth is choanal cleft. It's a direct passage to the nares (nostrils) and closes automatically when the bird is eating. The nares are protected externally from environmental particles in the air by the opercular plate. This filters large particles from the air, keeping them out of the lungs and air sacs.

The infundibular cleft is located behind the choanal cleft and communicates with the middle ear.

Uses of the beak: Respiration

The beak is the organ by which air enters the lungs and air sacs of the bird. The air flows into the nares, through the choanal slit, and down the trachea into the lungs/air sacs. Because birds have a unique and extremely efficient respiratory system, inhaled air is exhaled only every second breath, which maximizes oxygen usage.

Feeding and Tasting

Recent studies seem to suggest that the epithelial tissue lining of the beak contains many more taste buds than originally thought. Unlike human taste buds, which are located on our tongues, chicken taste buds are scattered throughout the epithelial linings of the beak and mouth, as well as on the tongue. It used to be thought that chickens had a poor sense of taste, and, while it's not as extensive as that of humans (8 to 10,000 taste buds), it's larger than originally supposed — around 350 taste buds.

The beak is the tool the bird uses to ingest food and water, as well as explore new things, testing whether something is edible or not.

Communication

Chickens use their beaks to vocalize the chicken language. They're also used as a tool of discipline. Hens that step out of line are usually given a sharp peck with the beak to "put them in their place" — hence the pecking order.

Chicken language is extensive and is verbalized via the syrinx, with the sounds emitted via the beak. Note that chickens don't have vocal cords. If you listen to your birds closely, you'll soon be able to "speak chicken."

Defense/ Fighting

A good, hearty peck will deter most minor pests, including humans! Ever tried looking under that broody hen when she's not in the mood? She can leave marks and draw blood. Roosters that tussle, even in play, will likely have bloodied peck marks on the comb or wattles.

When used in defense or fear, that beak can be a formidable tool. It can tear flesh relatively easily. Combs, wattles, and eyes are the primary targets when roosters are seriously fighting. They should be separated before significant damage can be done, as serious, even fatal, injuries can occur.

The beak is also used as a preening tool, to remove lice and mites, and spread oil from the preen gland over the feathers to keep them in great condition.

Mating

During the brief mating act, the rooster uses his beak to hold onto the hen while he's balancing on her back. The ladies can look quite bald by the end of the season, especially if they're favorites!

Nest Building

Our modern-day hens seem pretty content to lay in provided nest boxes, but some will occasionally decide they want to build a nest somewhere else. Although not as elaborate or intricate as some built by wild birds, they can be quite extensive. The only tool she has is her beak, and she'll carry straw or grass (occasionally she'll pile the straw on her back for transport) to her nest and spend a lot of time arranging it to her satisfaction. Sometimes, a considerate rooster will do this for her.

Temperature Control

The beak, in conjunction with panting and gular fluttering, can remove up to 20% of excessive heat when the bird is overheated.

Other

Chickens aren't as dexterous or smart as the Corvid family, which have been shown to purposefully use tools, but the humble chicken can still use her beak to grasp things (think pulling worms) or manipulate objects. One chicken used in a research project surprised the researchers when she opened a lock using only her beak, without being shown how.

Beak Problems

Occasionally, a beak can suffer significant damage and require some attention and first aid.

Trauma

This can occur in a predator attack or in an accidental way, such as getting the beak trapped in a door or in a similar situation. Depending on the level of damage, repair can be minor or involved.

With the advent of 3D printing, it's now possible to reconstruct a beak for many avians, including chickens.

Fracture

A complete fracture of the beak may require extensive work and veterinary visits. The cost of such repairs may be prohibitive, in which case a decision will have to be made as to the long-term care of the bird.

Cracking

Cracks in the beak are usually reasonably simple to repair. Many people use adhesive strip wound closures and Super Glue to effect a quick repair. Online videos can easily be found to guide repairs. This isn't without danger though — care will need to be taken not to glue the beak together or let the bird eat/inhale the toxic glue. Sharp edges will need to be filed down.

Disease

Diseases such as fowl pox can cause minor deformities of the beak. Cancer also may cause beak deformities.

A canker inside the mouth can cause eating, drinking, and respiratory problems, and if left untreated, it can kill the bird. It's easily treatable, but is infectious, so affected birds should be isolated and all feeders and waterers should be disinfected.

Ducklings hatched from infected eggs may have beak deformities, among other problems.

As a multi-purpose tool, the beak is truly invaluable to a bird, enabling a wide variety of behaviors and tasks required in everyday survival.

Be Aware of the Beak

To a bird, a beak is an essential tool for living. With special care and attention, chickens with deformities such as cross beak or partial amputation can live a full and happy life, unlike their wild cousins who may succumb

to starvation because of their inability to eat sufficient food.

Simple maintenance care of your chicken's beak should be undertaken as needed. Many birds will never need you to do anything, but some may need the occasional beak trim or minor repair. When you do your regular health checks with them, pay attention to the beak. Look inside the mouth to ensure it's clear and free from problems. As always, prevention is better than cure.

SUE NORRIS was born and raised in the U.K. She traveled around the world as a registered nurse and settled in New York state with her partner about 25 years ago. She currently lives on 15 rural acres with 40-ish chickens, four rabbits, two dogs, and three cats, and assorted wildlife. Sue is happily retired and enjoying the serenity.

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Disinfectants That Work on Avian Influenza

BY KENNY COOGAN

AVIAN INFLUENZA HAS been devastating to the poultry industry and many backyard homesteaders. With the onslaught of information and disinformation regarding disinfectants and home remedies, we spoke to an expert to learn what's most effective against avian influenza.

"Fortunately, avian influenza viruses are quite susceptible to many disinfectant products, when used as directed on the label," says Glenda Dvorak, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, assistant director and lead public health veterinarian at Iowa State University, College of Veterinary Medicine. Dvorak is part of the Center for Food Security and Public Health (CFSPH) at the University, where they study and publish reports on zoonotic diseases and prevention, farm biosecurity, organic animal health, creating preparedness and response protocols, and much more.

"Effective disinfectant products will list microorganisms they're effective against (e.g., kill claims) on their product label," Dvorak says. You can find a list of EPA approved disinfectant products for avian influenza at the following link: *www.EPA.gov/Pesticide-Registration/EPAS-Registered-Antimicrobial-Products-Effective-Against-Avian-Influenza.* Bleach, hydrogen peroxide, and citric acid are just some of the approved products, whereas vinegar isn't listed. At the bottom of that page, you can find a searchable listing. Active ingredients and product names are included. Surface type, such as porous and nonporous materials, as well as locations, such as animal housing, residential, or veterinary use are clearly marked.

"It's best to use these EPA-registered products, as they've been tested for efficacy against avian influenza virus," Dvorak explains. "Only EPA-registered products (i.e., those with an EPA number on the label) should be used, and directions listed on the label should be followed."

Every product varies in the best concentration, contact time, and even surfaces it can or can't be used on. Some have human or animal health risks.

Dvorak adds, "While many disinfectants are effective, often the cleaning and disinfection process itself isn't done correctly, and therefore disinfection is less than adequate."

Many disinfectant products are inactivated or reduced in activity by organic material such as bedding, feces, etc. Bleach and other chlorine-based products are especially sensitive to organic matter. "So, you can't just spray disinfectant on things and expect it to work," Dvorak says. "You have to clean surfaces first by removing visible debris, then wash

with soap or detergent and water, rinse and, if possible, allow it to dry to prevent overdilution of the disinfectant from the rinse water. Then the disinfectant should be applied to surfaces or items."

Contact time is another critical element for effective disinfection. You must allow the product time to do its job. This time varies with the product used; 5 to 10 minutes of contact time is common. Some disinfectants will need to be rinsed or dried completely before the item and surface can be used with animals.

It's also important to note that disinfectants generally are tested and approved for non-porous surfaces. Disinfecting porous surfaces, such as wood, can be challenging or unachievable. When searching disinfectants from the listed link, the EPA clearly states if the product works on porous surfaces.

"As a side note, direct sunlight is an effective method to kill some pathogens, so placing objects — especially those that've been cleaned and disinfected — in direct sunlight can be a valuable tool," Dvorak says.

Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine's CFSPH published a 43-page document titled Disinfection 101, which is available here: *cfsph.iastate.edu/Disinfection/Assets/Disinfection101.pdf.*

The Disinfection 101 document, under the 'acid' section, mentions 95% and 4 to 5% acetic acid, which are your cleaning and household vinegars respectively. They write "Acetic acid is typically applied by spraying, misting, or immersing an item in a diluted solution. Acetic acid has poor activity in organic material. Acetic acid has been routinely used by the USDA (under a FIFRA quarantine exemption) to wipe down the coats of horses arriving from FMD virus-positive countries." However, they don't claim that this works for avian influenza.

Another helpful link on the CFSPH Disinfection page is *www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Infection-Control/Disinfection,* which has many articles, ranging from how to read disinfect product labels to how to clean eggs.

A useful table on the same link — titled Animal Virus Families, Diseases, and Species — lists different types of viruses in alphabetical order, with illustrations of the virus, the common name, and the animal species affected. This relates to disinfecting because, according to the table, viruses vary in their susceptibility to chemical disinfectants.

This outbreak of avian influenza can be a scary time for backyard poultry caregivers. We hope you use the above websites and resources to help keep your flock safe.

A Work of Art: *The Poultry Eggshell*

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY MARK HALL

IN THE YEAR 2019, A BANANA duct-taped to a wall by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan sold at auction in New York for $6.2 million. Entitled "Comedian," the unusual piece became a hotly debated sensation. Whatever our inclinations, someone must have considered the supremely simplistic display an exquisite work of art.

In my view, if a simple banana taped to a wall can be considered an expensive work of art, then how about one with a poultry egg taped to it? Surely an egg taped to a wall should be considered priceless by comparison. I mean no disrespect for bananas (I love bananas!), but the peel would soon turn black and look extremely unappealing within a matter of days. On the other hand, an eggshell (whether brown, white, blue, or green) would look very nice for quite some time.

Impressively, the shell consists almost entirely of calcium carbonate, a mineral found in rocks, such as limestone, marble, and chalk.

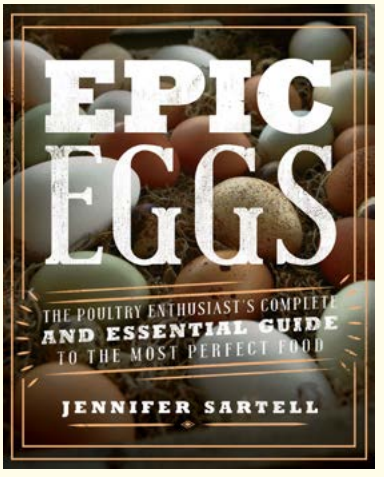
However, the poultry eggshell does a lot more than sit around and look good. It provides a tiny, helpless embryo with the perfect environment in which to safely grow and mature. This cozy germination space is maintained by the shell in many ways.

For starters, the shape of the shell is protective of the embryo. Like countless domes and arches found in architecture, the curved shape of the eggshell is designed to endure pressure from without, shielding its precious contents from physical damage.

The hardness of the eggshell plays a critical role in protecting the embryo. Impressively, the shell consists almost entirely of calcium carbonate, a mineral found in rocks, such as limestone, marble, and chalk. A component in shells, skeletons, and exoskeletons of numerous aquatic organisms as well, this solidifying substance is found in corals, sea urchins, pearls, and other sea creatures. In fact, calcium carbonate is an integral part of all bones — poultry, human, marine or otherwise — promoting skeletal strength and structure.

These tough poultry eggshells are formed in a part of the female's reproductive tract that is commonly referred to as the shell gland, or the uterus. Here, the developing egg will remain for about 20 hours, while a

MUST READ!



Epic Eggs

The Poultry Enthusiast's Complete and Essential Guide to the Most Perfect Food

This isn't a typical egg cookbook or guide to raising chickens; *Epic Eggs* takes a deep dive into the eggs themselves and tells you how to raise birds that will produce the best eggs you've ever seen. It may be true that most poultry found on small homesteads or in backyards especially are viewed as pets, but they are inarguably pets with benefits — namely eggs. In *Epic Eggs*, homesteader and writer Jennifer Sartell looks at the eggs of the most common types of poultry you'd find in your backyard: chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, guineas, and quail. Don't jump to conclusions! This isn't an egg cookbook or a guide to raising poultry. Sartell delves into the eggs and explains reproductive systems, anatomy, and how and why different colors are distributed to egg shells.

Sartell will show you a variety of bird breeds and what sizes, shapes, and even colors of the egg they produce, from white to blue, brown, chocolate, olive, and speckled, plus heritage breeds and how to breed for specific colors. Illustrated with fantastic color photography of eggs and their birds, *Epic Eggs* goes on to address how to optimize living conditions and diet for the healthiest and most-flavorful eggs, the process of grading and storing eggs, and the eternal washing debate. There's also discussion of nutrition, baking, cooking, preserving, pickling, and dehydrating. The book ends with advice for homesteaders looking to create business plans and a section on troubleshooting. **Item #8612, $21.99**

solution high in calcium carbonate is secreted onto its outer membrane. During this process, a protein transforms the calcium carbonate into crystals, which expand and grow onto one another to form a solid shell.

The shell protects the developing poultry embryo not only from physical harm, but also from microbial contamination. On the outside of the shell, a thin, semi-permeable coating, called the cuticle, is deposited before the egg moves out of the shell gland. Known additionally as the bloom, this layer blocks bacteria from passing through thousands of tiny pores which exist between the shell's calcium crystals. Two semi-permeable membranes positioned immediately underneath the shell also help protect the contents of the egg from bacteria. Composed mainly of interconnected protein fibers, the inner and outer membranes are strong and flexible.

Besides providing the egg with both physical and microbial protection, the shell also allows for the essential exchange of gases between the egg and its environment. To survive, the embryo requires the entry of oxygen into the shell, along with the exit of carbon dioxide and water vapor. As soon as the egg is laid, the cuticle very slowly starts to uncover pores, and the trade of gases begins. Again, the semi-permeability of the inner and outer membranes assists, ensuring that internal moisture isn't lost too quickly.

As the embryo grows, there's an ever-increasing need for greater gas exchange. In meeting this need, more pores in the shell are uncovered. Also, an ever-expanding pocket of air, called an air cell, is formed between the two membranes. Shortly before hatch, the fully developed embryo will rupture the inner membrane and take its first breath.

Finally, the poultry eggshell provides much-needed calcium for the developing embryo. While the yolk is its primary source, the embryo

receives calcium from the shell, as well. This is mostly through a process called chorioallantoic membrane (CAM) transport, in which the highly specialized CAM serves as a system for absorbing calcium from the eggshell and transferring it into the embryo's circulation. Still not fully understood by scientists, complex interactions between enzymes, proteins, and possibly other factors provide an uninterrupted supply of calcium throughout the embryo's development.

The poultry eggshell so intricately protects the tiny, vulnerable embryo that I can't help but be amazed. Then, as I consider the long list of other uses people have found for eggshells, such as compost, fertilizer, bird food, cleaning powder, and more, the eggshell strikes me as nothing less than a priceless work of art … Say, that gives me an idea! ●

MARK M. HALL lives with his wife, their three daughters, and numerous pets on a four-acre slice of paradise in rural Ohio. Mark is a veteran small-scale chicken farmer and an avid observer of nature. As a freelance writer, he endeavors to share his life experiences in a manner that is both informative and entertaining. You can find him at *ThePoultryChronicles.com*

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Kelp for Poultry

Produce Healthier Birds With This Natural Feed Additive

BY CHERYL K. SMITH

COMMERCIAL POULTRY growers, for both meat and eggs, are regularly looking for ways to improve on various aspects of health, growth, and meat quality. While the addition of different types of seaweeds to chickens' feed have been investigated, this article reviews the results of studies on the use of the brown seaweed, kelp (*Ascophyllum nodosum)*. It's the most common seaweed used as a livestock feed additive and is a rich source of iodine and other minerals, as well as vitamins. It also contains polysaccharides, which can help prevent inflammation, viruses, tumor growth, and more. The plant has also been found to improve the gut environment and enhance growth.

Most studies have been on broiler chickens, but much of the research can also be applied to egg-layers and other types of poultry, such as turkeys and ducks. One advantage to using kelp is that it's a natural product, as opposed to many of the human-made compounds (some now banned) and antibiotics that've previously been used to make poultry more productive.

Kelp can be added to the poultry feed ration in the form of kelp meal or extract powder. Kelp meal can be purchased in smaller quantities online, in larger quantities directly form the producer (shipping is expensive due to the weight), or in feed stores. A local feed store where I live used to special order it for me, but I can't find any willing to do so since they closed, so I've had to resort to ordering it online.

BENEFITS OF KELP

Decreasing Heat Stress

Heat stress in poultry may lead to decreased egg quality and production, health problems, loss of weight, and death. This is more of an issue in birds that are housed indoors in large factory-style operations. However, with increasing heat events resulting from climate change, small-farm chickens can also be impacted. Several studies have found that chickens given small amounts of kelp meal were better able to withstand prolonged heat events, without any effect on their growth.

Improving Growth

With the addition of just 2% of their feed, kelp meal was found

in one study to improve both the growth and meat quality of bronze turkeys. Another study found both an increase in weight, as well as reduction in fat, in broilers fed kelp, noting that previous studies had shown a decrease in fat but no gain in body weight. In addition to these benefits, the mortality rate was noted to be lower.

Improving Egg Production

A 2020 study feeding layer hens kelp trademarked Tasco® at 0.25% and 0.5% of their ration found that it "significantly enhanced egg weight, shell weight, and yolk colour[sic]." Interestingly, the chickens given the smaller amount of the seaweed meal had larger eggs and shell weights. Based on this and other research on poultry, the producer of Tasco® recommends adding it to their feed ration at a rate of 0.25 to 0.5% of feed.

Reducing Odor

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, another interesting study found that fermented kelp fed to chickens decreased ammonia production in their droppings. This is a less of an issue for small flocks, especially if they free-range.

A Step Toward Better Birds

For a modest investment, backyard poultry farmers can add kelp meal to the feed ration of their chickens and expect improvement in their overall health and growth. ●

CHERYL K. SMITH has raised chickens and goats in the coast range of Oregon since 1998. She is an author of several goat books, a freelance writer, and an editor for Ogden Publications.

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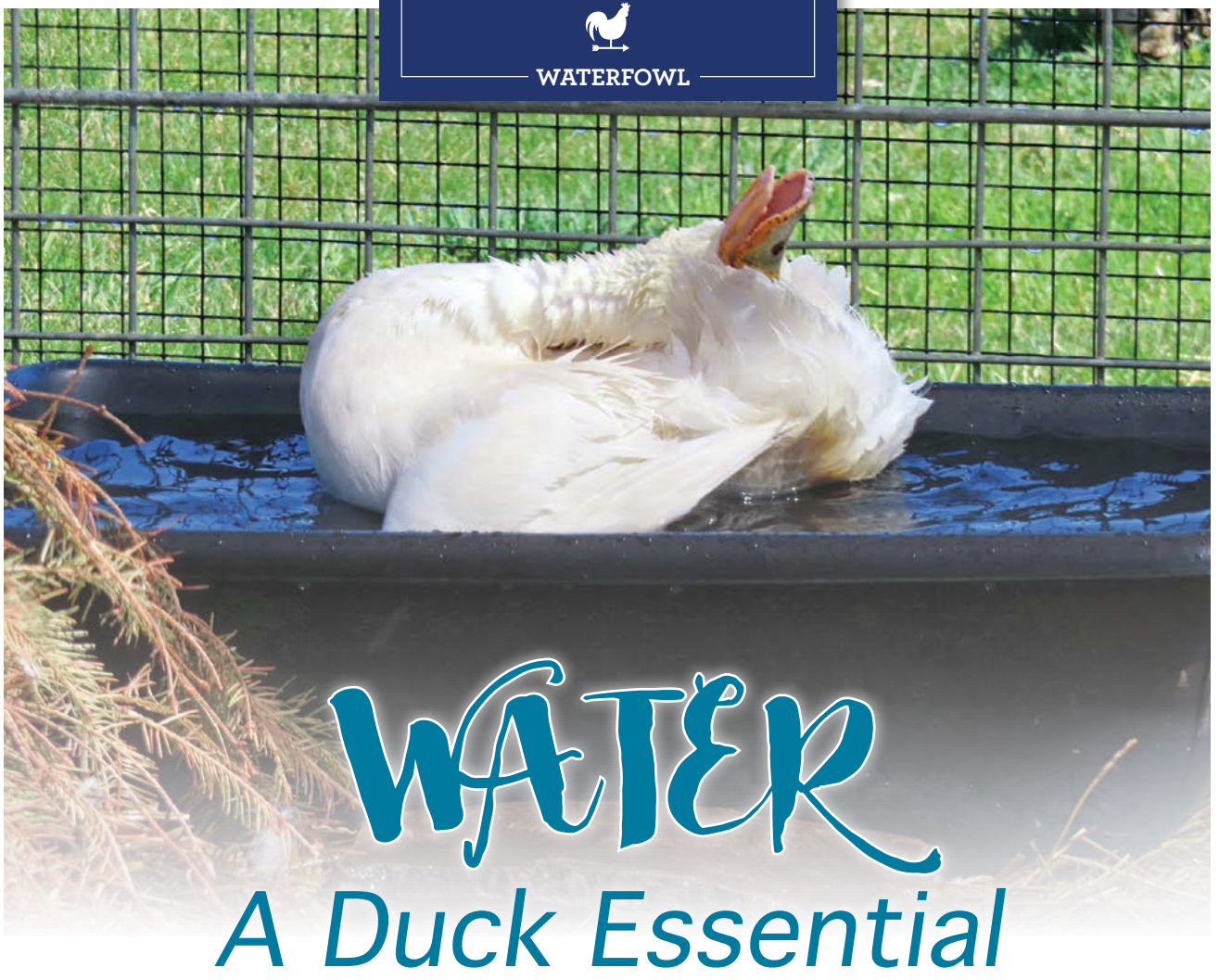

Pekin duck is spreading oil from the oil gland over her feathers.

WATER
A Duck Essential

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY ERIN SNYDER

IT'S EASY TO THINK DUCKS just enjoy splashing in the water, but ducks need water for almost every aspect of their lives. Let's look at how ducks need water not only to stay hydrated but to stay healthy, too.

Drinking Water

Ducks require access to water 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Unlike chickens, which can go overnight without water in the coop, leaving ducks without water can be detrimental to their health.

Clean drinking water must be available for a duck's digestive tract to run smoothly. Without proper hydration, the digestive tract can "clog," until the duck is once again well-hydrated. Without water, ducks quickly become dehydrated, especially during warmer weather. Ducks also rely on water to help maintain body temperature and avoid overheating.

Keeping the Coop Dry

Providing ducks with water inside the coop can prove problematic, but it doesn't have to be. While ducks will always be wetter and messier than chickens, there are several tricks to keep the coop drier.

Over the years of raising ducks, my family has found that providing our flock with a two-gallon water bucket and placing the bucket in a Tuff Stuff Rubber Feeder Pan has worked immensely in keeping bedding dryer.

Frequent spot cleaning where bedding has become sodden, helps keep ducks' bedding clean and dry.

Feeding Time

Domestic ducks fall under the term "dabblers." Dabblers are a family of ducks (both wild and domestic) that dabble with their bills in the water in search for food.

Feeding our flocks formulated feed eliminates the need for them to search for food in water by dabbling. Have you ever wondered why, when eating, your ducks hurry back and forth from feeder to water bucket and back again? This is because ducks need to dabble their food in the water to digest it properly and avoid choking on the dry feed. While your ducks may appear to be playing "look for food in the water," they're allowing the food to soften and absorbing water for easier digestion.

Eye Cleaner

Ducks clean their eyes by dunking their heads in water. Since submerging their heads is the only way ducks can clean their eyes, waterfowl must be provided with access to deep water, i.e., a kiddie pool or water bucket daily.

When ducks are deprived of deep water, their eyes become dirty and start to water. This causes the feathers around the eye to become wet, and dirty, giving a duck the appearance of being unhealthy. Ducks given access to deep water should always have clean, dry facial feathers, and bright, healthy eyes.

Strange, but True

Ducks have a strange water behavior that sets them apart from other poultry, excluding geese. They need water to clean their nostrils. This behavior looks a little funny, as ducks dunk their heads quickly in and out of the water, submerging their nostrils (also called nares). As they dip their heads up and down, ducks will sneeze into the water, cleaning their airways from dirt and dust.

Without the ability to clean their nostrils, ducks can quickly start to exhibit respiratory problems. Always allow your flock daily access to a fresh bucket of water to ensure they can clean both their eyes and nostrils properly.

Waterproof Feathers

Did you know? Ducks need water to maintain their feathers and keep them waterproof. Ducks have an oil gland at the base of their tails that works to keep their feathers waterproof and help them float. When preening, ducks rub the waxy oil from the gland over all their feathers, sealing them in a protective oil and helping them float in the water.

When denied access to clean swimming water, however, this oil gland won't function properly. Without a functioning oil gland, ducks can become chilled, catch pneumonia, and even drown. Ensure your flock has access to clean swimming water via a kiddie pool, stock tank, or mixing tub to keep the oil gland working and feathers in tiptop condition.

Water buckets are deep enough for ducks to dunk their heads and clean out their eyes and nostrils.

Healthy ducks with access to fresh water daily should sport a clean face, eyes, and nostrils like the duck in this photo.

Ducks enjoy dabbling for food to eat in shallow feed containers.

Duck Water Myth Busters
DUCKS NEED ACCESS TO A POND: This is a common misconception, as many waterfowl owners believe their flocks will be happiest on a pond. However, ducks seem to prefer shallow water such as a kiddie pool in the run, where they can be better protected against predators and can touch the bottom with their feet.

DUCKS DON'T NEED SWIMMING WATER IN WINTER: Winter is one of the most critical times to provide ducks with swimming water or water buckets to splash in. Without access to clean bathing water, a duck's feathers will deteriorate, and ducks will become chilled and sick.

DUCKLINGS NEED TO SWIM: Ducklings should never be allowed to swim, unless being raised and brooded by a mother duck. Ducklings don't have waterproof feathers, can float only for a few minutes at a time, and can quickly become chilled or even drown.

Two Extraordinary Breeds

The following two duck breeds are unique, as one breed requires swimming water more than any other breed, while the other can thrive without swimming water.

Pekins

Due to their open-feather style, Pekin ducks rely on swimming water even more than other breeds. Their soft feathers are more susceptible to wear and tear, external parasites, flystrike, and dirt becoming entrapped in the feathers. Allow Pekins access to swimming water several times a week to maintain feather health and cleanliness.

Khaki Campbells

Khaki Campbells are the only duck breed that can thrive without swimming water. While they do require water to splash in, such as a bucket bath, these hardy ducks are often the ideal breed for those living in hot, dry conditions. Even though they still enjoy splashing and dabbling in water, Khaki Campbells aren't as fond of swimming as other breeds.

Whether cleaning their feathers or feeding, ducks depend on water for every aspect of their lives. Providing ducks with clean, fresh water daily will help to promote good health and happy ducks.

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BREED PROFILE:
LA FLÈCHE
A Striking French Heritage Breed

BY KENNY COOGAN

WITH ITS DRAMATIC V-SHAPED COMB, glossy black plumage, and storied culinary past, the La Flèche chicken is one of the most visually distinctive and historically significant poultry breeds in the world. Once celebrated in French markets for its fine meat and elegant appearance, the La Flèche has become a rare gem in North America — now listed as critically endangered by The Livestock Conservancy.

Today, a small but passionate group of breeders is working to restore this breed to its former glory, one carefully selected chick at a time.

Breed Origins and Historical Significance

The La Flèche chicken hails from the town of La Flèche in the Sarthe department of France's Pays de la Loire region. Its name, meaning "the arrow," refers both to its place of origin and its signature V-shaped comb. According to The Livestock Conservancy, the breed was developed as early as the 5th century and became renowned for producing "magnificent capons and poulardes that were celebrated in the Paris and Anjou markets."

The breed was first imported to the United States in the 1850s and recognized by the American Poultry Association in 1874. However, its delicate constitution and slow growth rate led to its decline in favor of hardier, faster-growing breeds.

Physical Characteristics

La Flèche chickens are medium-sized, dual-purpose birds with a deceptively sleek appearance. Males weigh approximately 8 pounds and females about 6.5 pounds. Their tight-fitting black feathers give them a lean look, but they're heavier than they appear. The breed features dark slate legs, white earlobes, a red face and wattles, and a prominent V-comb that gives them their "devil bird" nickname.

"They're the only APA-accepted chicken breed with a V-shaped comb but no crest," notes 17-year-old Alessandra Matteo, who loves discussing La Flèche chickens. Alessandra and her mom Suzanne, operate Black Witch Chickens in West Middlesex, Pennsylvania.

"That gives their skull a unique shape … their tall arrow comb makes them wicked-looking — a must-have on our farm."

Despite their fierce appearance, La Flèche are known for their calm and docile temperament.

Egg and Meat Production

La Flèche hens lay between 140 and 220 large white eggs annually. They're non-broody and considered poor mothers, making artificial incubation or brooding by other hens necessary for flock expansion.

For a meat bird, the breed was once considered the pinnacle of French table poultry. The Livestock Conservancy describes their flesh as "tender, juicy, delicate, and short-grained," with fat distributed evenly across the body. However, modern breeders have mixed experiences with meat production.

"They aren't meaty birds," says Michigan-based breeder Christine McGoron. "I'm sure they would be fleshier if I fed them more, but our focus is minimal input from us and raising them in a more 'natural' manner."

Climate Adaptability and Health Considerations

La Flèche chickens are moderately hardy but may struggle in extreme climates. Christine, who raises her flock in Perry, Michigan, notes that egg production drops significantly in the colder months.

"If I don't have young layers, they basically shut down production in the winter," she explains. "They survive just fine but don't lay in the winter when they're older."

Conversely, the Matteo family, in a milder climate, reports better year-round performance. The breed is susceptible to Marek's disease, so the family vaccinates the chicks.

"It was a choice we had to make rather than take the survival-of-the-fittest approach," Alessandra says. "Once vaccinated, they do very well — even in winter."

Breeding and Conservation Challenges

One of the greatest hurdles in preserving the La Flèche is its limited fertility and hatchability. Christine reports a 50% hatch rate as typical, even with varied feeding programs and incubation methods.

"We're still keeping our breeding numbers fairly small," says Suzanne Matteo. "We're breeding to preserve a quality bird, not just for population."

This selective approach is echoed by The Livestock Conservancy, which emphasizes the importance of maintaining genetic diversity while improving breed traits. According to the organization, "La Flèche chickens were found by producers to be delicate in constitution … and were soon abandoned for newly arriving, hardier breeds." Today, reversing that trend requires careful stewardship and collaboration among breeders.

Why Raise La Flèche?

Despite their challenges, La Flèche chickens offer unique rewards. They're excellent foragers, require minimal feed during snow-free months, and bring a striking presence to any flock.

"They're beautiful, unusual, hardy, well-mannered, and not big eaters," Christine says. "With the rarity of this breed, you can usually get a good price if you decide to sell some stock."

The Livestock Conservancy encourages poultry keepers to consider heritage breeds like the La Flèche not only for their utility but for their role in preserving agricultural biodiversity.

"Heritage breeds are a vital part of our agricultural history and future," the organization states. "By choosing to raise them, you help ensure their survival for generations to come."

A Breed Worth Preserving

The La Flèche chicken isn't a breed for everyone. It requires patience, attention to detail, and a willingness to work through setbacks. But for those who value history, aesthetics, and the satisfaction of meaningful conservation work, the La Flèche offers a deeply rewarding experience.

Whether you're drawn to their gothic charm, their culinary legacy, or their role in preserving genetic diversity, these birds are a breed worth knowing — and saving.

TRAGOPANS

Introducing a group of beautiful pheasants From Asia, India, and the Himalayas

BY DOUG OTTINGER

WHEN ONE HEARS THE word pheasant, the first image that often comes to mind is the beautiful and well-known ring-necked pheasant. Lovers of exotic poultry might also envision species such as the Chinese Golden or the Lady Amherst. The pheasant family Phasianidae is quite large. Not only does it include numerous species of actual pheasants, but is also includes our beloved chickens, grouse, partridges, quail, and peafowl.

Within the Phasianidae family, there are 13 separate genera of pheasants, two genera of peafowl, and the genus *Gallus*, which includes the jungle fowls and our domestic chickens. These 16 genera are divided into more than 50 individual species. There are numerous subspecies, as well. Native to regions of Asia or Eurasia, most, but not all pheasants are ground-dwelling birds. Males are often admired for their beautiful and bright, showy colors.

One group of pheasants, the Tragopans, are unique in the fact that they're arboreal or tree-dwelling. Comprised of five distinct species, the *Tragopan* genus is found in the upland Himalayan forests of India, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, and far-northern Myanmar. Male Tragopans are thought by many ornithologists to rank among the most beautiful and colorful birds in the world.

Tragopans are often called horned pheasants because of two small, brightly-colored, fleshy horns on the sides of the males' heads. Made of vascular, erectile tissue, the horns lengthen and become erect when the male is sexually excited and performs his elaborate courtship dance for a female. The horns are tubular in structure, with each horn having a short, tendon-like structure, attached to the skull, inside its base. This small, solid base often keeps the horns partially erect and showing, even when the male isn't sexually aroused. Males also have two lappets, or brightly colored wattles on the throat that fold out during courtship, revealing gorgeous designs of bright, clear

colors that look as if they'd been painted by an artist.

Females are skilled at making nests out of sticks, leaves, feathers, and grass in the cracks and crevices of trees and tall shrubs. In captivity, female Tragopans are often supplied with elevated nesting boxes, in aviaries that contain thick plantings of shrubs, trees, and bamboo. Tragopans tend to bond and mate in pairs. Attempting to breed Tragopans in trio matings is often counter-productive, as the females can be territorial and will often fight each other. While these birds bond and mate in pairs, the female is the one that provides all of the incubation, brooding, and care for the chicks.

Hens normally lay only one clutch of eggs each year. Clutches usually contain 2 to 6 eggs, the size of small or medium chicken eggs. In captivity, more eggs can be procured for incubation by removing them on a daily basis. According to James Pfarr, a renowned expert on pheasants and gallinaceous birds, Tragopan clutches can often be increased to 8 or 10 eggs with daily removal.

Like those of most pheasants, Tragopan eggs hatch after 28 days of incubation. In the wild, as well as in captivity, Tragopan hens are known to be very attentive mothers. In captivity, however, eggs are often incubated artificially. Tragopan chicks are precocious hatching with well-developed flight feathers. The chicks can fly soon after hatching. Brooders must have lids or top covers, so the chicks don't fly out and escape. When incubated naturally and cared for by the hen, the chicks will often stay underneath the mother for the first two or three days after hatching, even though they have the ability to fly. Being native to mountainous regions, Tragopans thrive better in cool, or even cold, weather than in warm or tropical areas.

The five species of these rare and gorgeous pheasants include the Temminck's tragopan (*T. temminckii*), the Satyr tragopan (*T. satyra*), Cabot's tragopan (*T. Caboti*), the Western tragopan (*T. melancephalus*), and Blyth's tragopan (*T. blythii*). Of the five species, only the first three, the Temminck, the Satyr, and the Cabot are normally found in aviaries in North America. Temmink's tragopan is the most commonly kept species, with the Satyr running a close second. Both the Western and Blyth's tragopans are considered endangered and face a high risk of extinction. The Cabot's tragopan is also facing a high risk of extinction in the wild. A permit must be obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to legally procure or possess Cabot's tragopans in the United States.

Temmink's tragopans are native to the mountainous forests of northeast India, northern Myanmar, northwest Vietnam, and central China. Males are identifiable by their bright reddish-orange feathers, with white spots that are circled with a small ring of black. The heads are black, and faces and horns are a beautiful sky blue. Tail feathers tend to be shorter than some other species. Females are a reddish-brown with white spots, able to blend in with the vegetation as a protection while incubating eggs and brooding the young.

Satyr tragopan males also have reddish-orange feathers with white spots circled in black. The head is black with a beautiful blue face and horns. Females are brown with a black and white pattern on the plumage. Satyrs are native to the Himalayan regions of India, Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Western, Blyth's, and Cabot's tragopan males are equally beautiful, with their own gorgeous array of color and unique patterns on the lappets. Females have subdued shades of brown plumage with spots, offering protection for the hen as well as her young chicks. The Western tragopan is native to mountainous regions of northern Pakistan and northwest India. Blyth's tragopan is native to

northeast India and surrounding regions, while Cabot's tragopan is native to mountain ranges in southeast China.

There are several reputable breeders of tragopans in both the United States and Canada. Two breeders who truly stand out, both for knowledge plus a willingness to share information and educate others, are Alex Levitsky and James Pfarr. Both breeders maintain beautiful, educational websites. Alex (*www.BlueCreekAviaries.com*) is a young veterinarian from upstate New York, who's raised these birds for over a decade. He's currently completing a residency in specialized veterinary medicine, so is temporarily putting much of his work with the birds on hold. Through Alex, I was introduced to James Pfarr, a world-renowned aviculturist and author, who's an expert on pheasants and other gallinaceous birds. James and his business partner own and operate the Avian Research Institute and Conservation Center (ARIC Center) in Florida (*www.AricCenter.org*). The ARIC Center houses one of the largest collections of rare gallinaceous birds in the world. The center works closely with zoos and aviaries around the world, supplying rare and beautiful fowl for others to enjoy.

Tragopans can be found in many larger zoos and aviaries across the United States. Next time you head out on a visit to a large zoo or aviary, be sure to look for them. They're truly gorgeous fowl that you won't want to miss.

DOUG OTTINGER lives, works, and writes from his small hobby farm in northwest Minnesota. His educational background is in agriculture with an emphasis in poultry and avian science.

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Coop Inspiration

Jules' Fluffy Butt Hut

BY JULIE FYFFE

WHEN WE DECIDED TO BUILD OUR COOP, we looked at a lot of designs. Nothing seemed to fit our wants and needs. My husband put together a blueprint of everything we wanted and created this coop design.

We decided on a 20-foot by 20-foot building with 10 completely separated pens that are 4 feet by 8 feet, with a catwalk down the inside center. Each pen is ½-inch hardware cloth from floor to ceiling.

There 20 doors in total: 10 outside and 10 inside, so we can access each pen from the inside and outside of the building.

Ventilation during winter also was important when considering our building plans. Polycarbonate panels are used during the winter months on the outside doors and on the front and back of the coop. We use R-panel corrugated metal to help insulate from the winds.

The steeped roof pulls a draft from the outside doors out the top. We added a ventilation fan to the back of the building. There's a solar light inside and out at the front entrance and we added gutters to drain into two rain barrels to help recycle for waterers.

For the inside of the pens, we use construction sand. This design has helped us tremendously to make cleanup a simple chore.

The Coming Events listing is gathered and provided by **poultryshowcentral.com**. Add your show listing on their website or send to: **Coming Events, Backyard Poultry, 1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609** or email: editor@backyardpoultrymag.com. To be included in the *Backyard Poultry* magazine listing, event details must be sent **90 days in advance**.

ATTENTION: Due to the avian influenza outbreak, some events may be canceled. Contact event coordinators to confirm before show dates. Poultry Show Central is working hard to stay updated, but changes are being made daily and these events may end up being canceled.

ALABAMA

October 4, 2025
Fayette, Alabama
Griffin/Griffith Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Griffith_Griffith_Poultry_Show.html

October 25, 2025
Anniston, Alabama
Heart of Dixie Poultry Club Fall Double Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Heart_of_Dixie_Bantam_Show.html

ARIZONA

October 2, 2025
Phoenix, Arizona
Arizona State Fair
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Arizona_State_Fair.html

October 24, 2025
St. Johns, Arizona
Apache County Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Apache_County_Poultry_Show.html

November 29, 2025
Tuscon, Arizona
Tuscon Poultry, Pigeon & Fancy Fowl Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Tuscon_Fancy_Fowl_Show.html

ARKANSAS

October 10, 2025
Little Rock, Arkansas
Arkansas State Fair Fall Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Arkansas_State_Fair.html

November 1, 2025
Fayetteville, Arkansas
Heart of the Ozarks Poultry Association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Heart_of_the_Ozarks_Poultry_Club.html

CALIFORNIA

October 18, 2025
Watsonville, California
Great Western Pigeon Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Great_Western_Pigeon_Show.html

November 22, 2025
Perris, California
Southern California Poultry Club
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Southern_California_Poultry_Club.html

COLORADO

November 9, 2025
Keenesburg, Colorado
Front Range Small Animal Swap
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Front_Range_Poultry_Swap.html

CONNECTICUT

November 29, 2025
Ansonia, Connecticut
Faircount Pigeon & Dove Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Faircount_Pigeon_Dove_Show.html

DELAWARE

November 1, 2025
Harrington, Delaware
Delmarva Poultry Fanciers Club
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Delmarva.html

FLORIDA

November 1, 2025
Stuart, Florida
Kick'n Chick'n Youth Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Kickn_Chickn_Youth_Poultry_Show.html

November 6, 2025
Tallahassee, Florida
North Florida Fair
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/North_Florida_Fair.html

November 22, 2025
Aradia, Florida
AgFest Youth Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/AgFest_Youth_Poultry_Show.html

GEORGIA

November 8, 2025
Jefferson, Georgia
Appalachian Bantam Club Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Appalachian_Bantam_Club_Show.html

November 29, 2025
Dalton, Georgia
Carpet City Bantam Club
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Carpet_City_Bantam_Club.html

IDAHO

October 18, 2025
Caldwell, Idaho
Bird Breeders of Idaho Clucktoberfest
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Bird_Breeders_of_Idaho_Clucktoberfest.html

ILLINOIS

October 5, 2025
Kankakee, Illinois
Tri-K Pigeon & Bantam Club Pigeon Fair
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/TriK_Pigeon_Bantam_Fair.html

November 8, 2025
Jacksonville, Illinois
Jacksonville Area Pigeon Club All-Breed Pigeon Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Jacksonville_Area_Pigeon_Club_Annual_All_Breed_Show.html

November 29, 2025
Bloomington, Illinois
Central Illinois Poultry Club
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Central_Illinois_Poultry_Club.html

INDIANA

October 12, 2025
Knox, Indiana
Golden Horseshoe Saddle Club Swap Meet
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Golden_Horseshoe_Saddle_Club_Swap.html

October 18, 2025
Lebanon, Indiana
Central Indiana Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Central_Indiana_Poultry_Show.html

October 18, 2025
Shipshewana, Indiana
Shipshewana Swap Meet
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Newbury_Square_Swap_Meet_Flea_Market.html

IOWA

October 4, 2025
Iowa City, Iowa
Eastern Iowa Poultry Association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Eastern_Iowa_Poultry.html

November 22, 2025
Webster City, Iowa
The Masters Cup
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/The_Masters_Cup.html

KANSAS

November 29, 2025
Hutchinson, Kansas
Kansas Mini Mega Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Heart_of_America.html

KENTUCKY

November 1, 2025
Louisville, Kentucky
National Young Bird Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/National_Young_Bird_Show.html

November 15, 2025
Morehead, Kentucky
Appalachian Classic
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Appalachian_Classic.html

MAINE

October 5, 2025
Windsor, Maine
Central Maine Bird Fanciers Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Central_Maine.html

MARYLAND

October 11, 2025
Centerville, Maryland
Delmarva Pigeon Club Young Bird Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Delmarva_Pigeon_Club.html

MASSACHUSETTS

October 19, 2025
Carver, Massachusetts
New England Bantam Club Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/New_England_Bantam_Club_Fall_Show.html

October 25, 2025
Boston, Massachusetts
Boston Poultry Expo
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Boston_Poultry_Expo.html

MICHIGAN

October 4, 2025
Bay City, Michigan
Bay City Pigeon Fanciers Young Bird Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Bay_City_Pigeon_Fanciers_Show.html

October 4, 2025
Imlay City, Michigan
Michigan Bird & Game Breeders Assoc. Sale — Imlay City
http://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Michigan_Game_Breeders_Swap_Imlay.html

October 11-12, 2025
Chesaning, Michigan
Michigan Poultry Fanciers Fowl Fest - Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Fowl_Fest_Fall.html

November 15, 2025
Newport, Michigan
Michigan Pigeon Club Annual Winter Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Michigan_Pigeon_Club_Annual_Winter_Show.html

MINNESOTA

October 18, 2025
New Ulm, Minnesota
New Ulm Pigeon Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/New_Ulm_Pigeon_Show.html

October 25, 2025
Hutchinson, Minnesota
Minnesota State Poultry Association Show https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Minnesota_State_Poultry_Association.html

November 8, 2025
Hutchinson, Minnesota
North Star Classic Show and Sale
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/North_Star_Classic.html

MISSOURI

October 3, 2025
Lebanon, Missouri
"Fall in Love with Chicks" Annual Festival
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Cackle_Hatchery_Annual_Festival.html

October 25, 2025
Sedalia, Missouri
Missouri State Poultry Association Swap and Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Missouri_State_Poultry_Association.html

MONTANA

October 4, 2025
Great Falls, Montana
Rocky Mountain Poultry Fanciers Big Sky Poultry Exposition
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Big_Sky_Poultry_Exposition.html

NEBRASKA

November 8, 2025
Norfolk, Nebraska
Nelson Alternative Livestock Auction
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Nelson_Alternative_Livestock_Auction.html

November 15, 2025
Lincoln, Nebraska
Nebraska State Poultry Association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Nebraska_State_Poultry_Association.html

NEVADA

November 1, 2025
Reno, Nevada
Northern Nevada Poultry Fanciers Association Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Northern_Nevada_Poultry.html

NEW YORK

October 4, 2025
Mumford, New York
Rochester Poultry Association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Rochester_Poultry_Association.html

October 12, 2025
Syracuse, New York
Yankee Fall Classic
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Yankee_Fall_Classic.html

October 18, 2025
West Babylon, New York
Long Island Classic Young Bird Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Nassau_Suffolk_Pigeon_Club.html

November 15, 2025
West Babylon, New York
Long Island Classic Open Pigeon Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Nassau_Suffolk_Pigeon_Club.html

NORTH CAROLINA

October 3, 2025
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Carolina Classic Fair
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Dixie_Classic_Fair.html

October 16, 2025
Raleigh, North Carolina
North Carolina State Fair
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/North_Carolina_State_Fair.html

October 25, 2025
Morganton, North Carolina
Friendship Poultry Club Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Friendship_Poultry_Club.html

November 1, 2025
Salisbury, North Carolina
Old English Game Bantam Club of NC — Old English Jamboree
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Old_English_Bantam_Club_Jamboree.html

November 29, 2025
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Forsyth Fowl Fanciers Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Forsyth_Fowl_Fanciers.html

OHIO

October 3, 2025
Chillicothe, Ohio
Chillicothe Trade Days
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Southern_Ohio_Poultry_Association_Swap_Meet.html

October 4, 2025
Greenville, Ohio
Dayton Fancy Feather Club
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Dayton_Fancy_Feather_Club.html

October 17, 2025
Mt Hope, Ohio
Mid Ohio Swap Meet
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Mid_Ohio_Swap.html

November 8, 2025
Columbus, Ohio
Ohio National Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Ohio_National.html

OKLAHOMA

October 11, 2025
Newcastle, Oklahoma
Newcastle Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Newcastle_Poultry_Show.html

October 12, 2025
Newcastle, Oklahoma
Texas All Game Bantam Club — "The All Game Show"
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Texas_All_Game_Bantam_Club.html

October 18, 2025
Marietta, Oklahoma
Red River Bantam Club Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Red_River_Bantam_Club.html

October 18, 2025
Pryor, Oklahoma
Bluestem Classic Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Bluestem_Classic_Poultry_Show.html

October 19, 2025
Marietta, Oklahoma
Love of Feathers Bantam Club
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Love_of_Feathers_Bantam_Club.html

October 25, 2025
Kellyville, Oklahoma
Junior Poultry Spooktacular
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Junior_Poultry_Spooktacular.html

November 1, 2025
Norman, Oklahoma
Canadian Valley Poultry Club Mega Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Canadian_Valley_Poultry_Club_Show.html

November 1, 2025
Tahlequah, Oklahoma
Tahlequah FFA Junior Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Tahlequah_FFA_Junior_Poultry_Show.html

November 8, 2025
Atoka, Oklahoma
All Bantam Fall Classic
http://www.poultryshowcentral.com/All_Bantam_Fall_Classic.html

November 15, 2025
Atoka, Oklahoma
Red River Shootout
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Red_River_Shootout.html

November 22, 2025
Antlers, Oklahoma
4-H Fall Classic Junior Open Rabbit and Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/4-H_Fall_Classic_Junior_Open_Rabbit_and_Poultry_Show.html

November 29, 2025
Anadarko, Oklahoma
South-Central Poultry Club Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/South_Central_Poultry_Club.html

PENNSYLVANIA

October 4, 2025
Mercersburg, Pennsylvania
Snider's Elevator Poultry Swap B-S-T
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Sniders_Elevator_Poultry_Swap_B-S-T.html

October 18, 2025
Dunbar, Pennsylvania
Uniontown Poultry and farm products association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Uniontown_Poultry_Association.html

October 19, 2025
Dunbar, Pennsylvania
Uniontown Poultry and farm products association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Uniontown_Poultry_Association.html

November 2, 2025
Manchester, Pennsylvania
White Rose Pigeon Association Winter Old and Young Bird Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/White_Rose_Pigeon_Association.html

November 16, 2025
Dunbar, Pennsylvania
Uniontown Poultry and farm products association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Uniontown_Poultry_Association.html

RHODE ISLAND

October 12, 2025
Richmond, Rhode Island
Little Rhody Poultry Fanciers Annual Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Little_Rhody_Poultry_Fanciers.html

SOUTH CAROLINA

October 8, 2025
Columbia, South Carolina
South Carolina State Fair
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/South_Carolina_State_Fair.html

November 15, 2025
Clemson, South Carolina
Anderson Poultry Club Fall Classic
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Anderson.html

TENNESSEE

October 11, 2025
Dickson, Tennessee
Volunteer State Poultry Club Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Volunteer_State_Poultry.html

October 18, 2025
Alexandria, Tennessee
Middle TN Poultry/Bird/Animal Swap
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Middle_TN_Poultry-Bird-Rabbit_Swap.html

November 8, 2025
Lawrenceburg, Tennessee
Lawrence County Poultry Club Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Lawrence_County_Poultry_Club.html

TEXAS

October 25, 2025
Abilene, Texas
Abilene Poultry Association Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Abilene_Poultry_Association.html

November 1, 2025
Comanche, Texas
Comanche Crossroads
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Comanche_Crossroads.html

UTAH

October 9, 2025
Ogden, Utah
Utah Fancy Poultry Association
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Utah_Fancy_Poultry_Association_Show.html

VIRGINIA

November 22, 2025
Doswell, Virginia
Virginia Pigeon and Dove Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Virginia_Pigeon_Dove_Assoc.html

November 22, 2025
Ruther Glen, Virginia
Virginia Poultry Breeders Association Fall Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Virginia_Poultry_Breeders.html

WASHINGTON

October 11, 2025
Chehalis, Washington
NW Serama Club Tabletop Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/NW_Serama_Club.html

November 15, 2025
Stevenson, Washington
The Stevenson Poultry Classic
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/The_Stevenson_Poultry_Classic.html

WISCONSIN

October 4, 2025
Menomonie, Wisconsin
West Central Wis. Pigeon & Poultry Club "Red Cedar Showdown"
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Red_Cedar_Showdown.html

October 4, 2025
Amherst, Wisconsin
PK Small Animal Swap & Flea Market
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/PK_Small_Animal_Auction.html

October 4, 2025
Elk Mound, Wisconsin
Elk Mound Animal Swap
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Elk_Mound_Animal_Swap.html

October 11, 2025
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin
Beaver Pigeon and Bantam Poultry Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Beaver_Pigeon_Bantam.html

October 18, 2025
Amherst, Wisconsin
PK Small Animal Swap & Flea Market
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/PK_Small_Animal_Auction.html

October 25, 2025
Fond du lac, Wisconsin
Wisconsin Bird & Game Breeder Fall Swap
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Wisconsin_Bird_Game_Breeder.html

October 25, 2025
Medford, Wisconsin
Taylor County Swap
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Taylor_County_Swap.html

November 29, 2025
Jefferson, Wisconsin
Watertown Pigeon Club Annual Winter Show
https://www.poultryshowcentral.com/Watertown_Pigeon_Club_Annual_Pet_Swap.html

BACKYARD POULTRY RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS

HEATED POULTRY WATERER

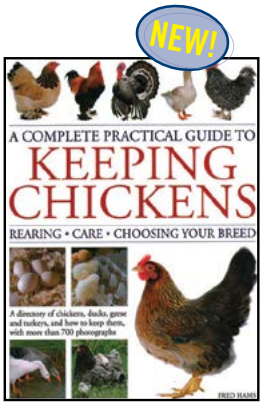
This item's built-in internal heater keeps water flowing in temperatures as low as minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit. The 3-gallon waterer features an interlocking lid, a heavy-duty handle for carrying and hanging, as well as a detachable cord for nonwinter use. *Please allow two weeks for delivery. Available for shipment to continental U.S. addresses only.*

#9343 $62.00

A COMPLETE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO KEEPING CHICKENS

This is your source for expert advice on choosing, buying, rearing, breeding and exhibiting domestic fowl, with step-by-step techniques and 700 photographs. Included is a comprehensive visual encyclopedia of the world's pure breeds of chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese, describing the key characteristics of each. Information is provided on poultry housing, maintenance, feeding, security, health and hygiene. You'll also find advice on preparing birds and eggs for competitive exhibition.

#12642 $25.00 Sale Price: $21.25



STITCHIN' CHICKEN EMBROIDERY KIT

Celebrate the charm of chickens with 10 embroidery patterns featuring adorable hens and chicks and the materials to make any two of the projects. Designed for all skill levels, this collection contains an overview of basic embroidery stitches, original patterns, and instructions for creating each design. Patterns provided include mama chicken and chick, folk art weathervane, speckled chicken, chicken in the rain, barnyard chickens, and more.

#12650 $22.99 Sale Price: $19.54

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FREE SHIPPING on book orders of $50 or more!
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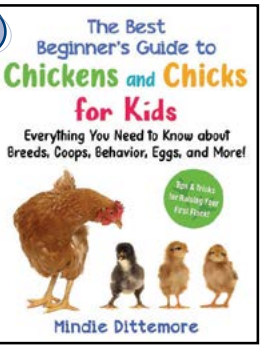
THE BEST BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CHICKENS AND CHICKS FOR KIDS

These are the best homesteading tips for kids to raise happy, healthy chickens! You'll find information on top breed picks for kids, what should be in a coop and how to clean it, when to expect your first egg, how to train your chickens to be more friendly (and even do tricks!), fun chicken crafts, and so much more.

#12674 $14.99 Sale Price: $12.74



LIVING WITH CHICKENS

Straightforward prose and dozens of clear, detailed illustrations give you the tools you needs to successfully raise a flock, from step-by-step instructions on building the coop to a brief background on chicken biology; from hints on getting high-quality eggs from the hens to methods for butchering. Full-color photographs of the birds and their landscape round out this comprehensive book.

#12643 $14.95 Sale Price: $12.71

MY CHICKEN FAMILY

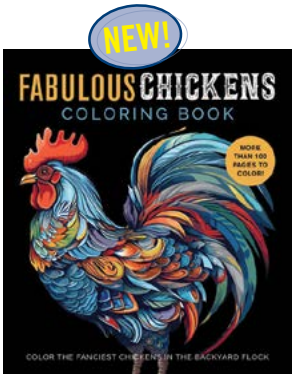
With *My Chicken Family*, Melissa Caughey has created a unique keepsake album that invites chicken owners to create a lasting record of their chicken adventures, with spots for adding photos of their favorite flock members and write-in prompts customized to every phrase of the chicken-keeping experience. Featuring charming chicken-themed art borders, every page invites users to chronicle an aspect of their chickens' lives.

#11922 $16.99 Sale Price: $8.49

FABULOUS CHICKENS COLORING BOOK

Calling all chicken enthusiasts, bird watchers, and nature lovers! It's time to roost and relax with the *Fabulous Chickens Coloring Book*. Paired with your favorite feathered friends, on the back of each page is a meditative pattern for you to color. Step away from your everyday concerns and spend some time with these eccentric birds. Though these ornamental beauties are often colorful in their own right, with your artistic additions, you just might create a new, unique breed.

#12647 $10.99 Sale Price: $9.34



CHICKENS!

Venture through farms and fields with *Chickens!* — a coloring and activity book for young kids who love chickens and life on the farm. Follow along with Penny, one of the more popular chickens on the farm, and complete the activities on these pages to help Penny achieve her goals and have some fun along the way! Activities include mazes, word searches, coloring pages, connect the dots, word puzzles, spot the difference, and so much more.

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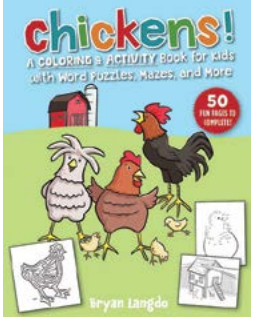
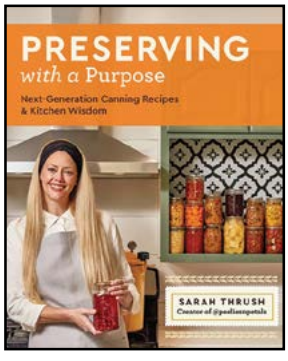


MOTHER EARTH NEWS GUIDE TO SOAP-MAKING

The *Mother Earth News Guide to Soap-Making* by Melanie Teegarden offers readers a guide to making soap at home. The book dispels any fears of making soap at home and provides readers with knowledge of base oils, colorants, and fragrances through classic recipes. It provides simple, step-by-step instructions for creating bars such as Spiced Orange-Pomander Soap, Cherry-Almond Soap, and Lemon-Lavender Soap. It is perfect for anyone wanting to either gift or sell their handmade soap.

#12217 $17.99 Sale Price: $15.29



PRESERVING WITH A PURPOSE

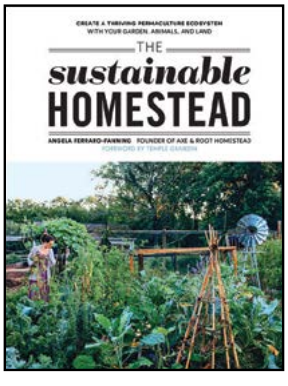
This is not your mama's or grandma's canning and preserving book. In this next-gen guide you'll get all of the classic techniques and recipes plus global flavors, meal-prep tips, and green living wisdom for today's world. Featuring 125 of Sarah Thrush's favorite recipes, many of which are not available online, this is the perfect guide for every experience level of today's home canners.

#12570 $27.99 Sale Price: $23.79

SIMPLE COUNTRY LIVING

Join homesteader and founder of Azure Farm, Annette Thurmon, to connect with nature on a deeper level. In *Simple Country Living*, you'll find a sampler covering homesteading techniques that can be put to work no matter where you live. Recipes, tips, tricks, and family activities will help you reduce waste, save money, and harness new skills.

#12636 $25.00 Sale Price: $21.25



THE SUSTAINABLE HOMESTEAD

New and veteran homesteaders alike can find detailed information to put to use this year, this month, even this week! Angela, popular author and co-host of the HOMESTEADucation podcast, has spent more than a decade building and strengthening her small acreage homestead and shares the lessons learned chapter by chapter. Working with Angela, you'll learn how to create synergy on your property and make the most of your land by working with it, not against it.

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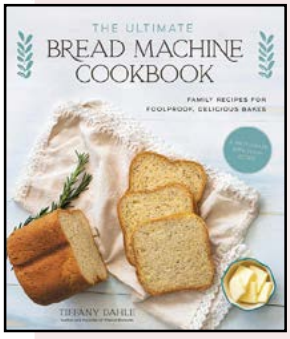

THE ULTIMATE BREAD MACHINE COOKBOOK

Tiffany Dahle's flavor-packed recipes will get you more excited to bake bread than you thought possible. With this beautifully photographed modern guide, enjoy everything from bakery-style loaves to breads featuring unique fruity fillings, savory mix-ins, and streusel swirls. Whatever the craving or occasion, there's a mouthwatering bake just waiting to be devoured.

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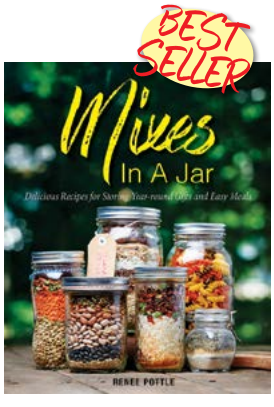
#12514 $111.99



MIXES IN A JAR

Mixes in a Jar is a culmination of author Renee Pottle's years-long search for the perfect convenience food. In Renee's collection of 106 mix recipes, you'll find the perfect spice blend for a pot of award-winning chili or a delicious minestrone; recipes for meals as diverse as Mulligatawny Soup and Creamy Ravioletti Salad; breakfast favorites such as Buckwheat Pancakes; breads for every meal, including Mulled Wine Muffins; and desserts for every sweet tooth.

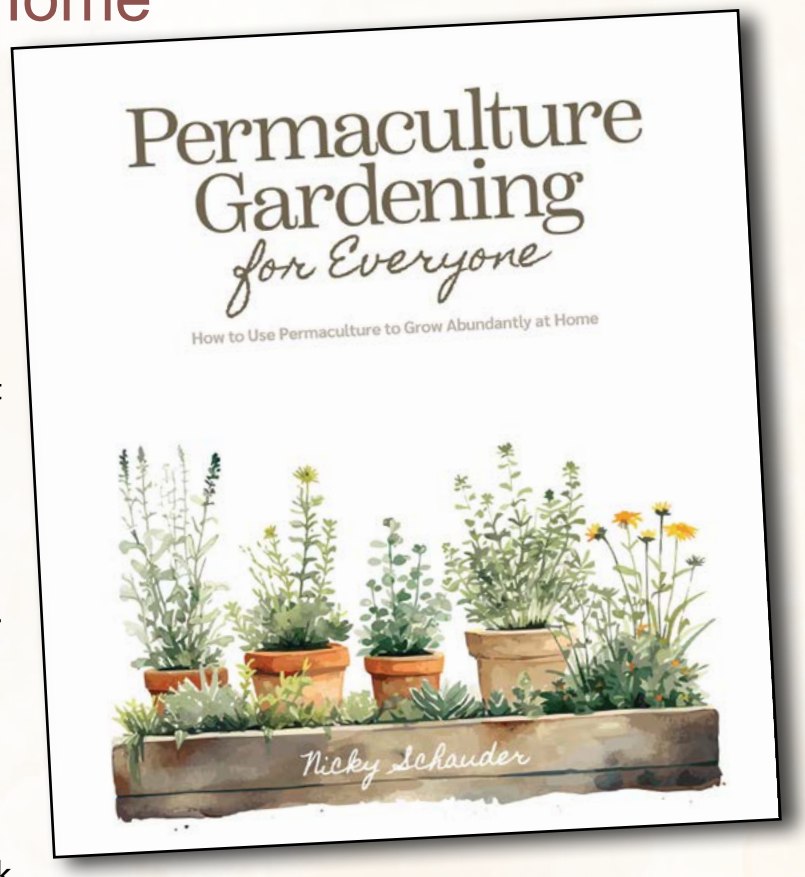
#11145 $24.95 Sale Price: $21.21

CHICKEN WISDOM: 50 INSPIRATIONAL PRINTS TO PUT YOU IN A FRESH FRAME OF MIND

In *Chicken Wisdom*, Melissa Caughey delivers the chicken's charm for all to enjoy, anywhere a dose of inspiration might be needed. Sage sentiments meet delightful chicken photography on 50 individual cards, and with a pull-out table-top frame included, you can display your favorite card or easily swap it out for one that fits the mood or suits the moment. It's an all-in-one package that delivers the joy of keeping chickens — without having to clean the coop!

#10116 $14.95 Sale Price: $12.71

How to Use Permaculture to **Grow Abundantly** at Home



Having been there and done that, Nicky Schauder offers her insights in *Permaculture Gardening for Everyone* with the intention of making the concept user-friendly for any level of gardening skill.

After two of their children were diagnosed with severe allergies, Nicky and her husband, Dave, started researching ways to combat the problem. They decided to grow their own food.

It took a while, but the couple were able to overcome the obstacles in their path, not only using the permaculture techniques they learned to increase the harvest from their own gardens, but to offer assistance to others wanting to walk the same path. With this book, Nicky has combined the couple's lessons in permaculture with personal insights, photos, and illustrations to help anyone facing similar roadblocks to better health.

She starts by defining permaculture, then goes on to offer advice on designing a garden, choosing your plants, starting your seeds, designing a garden plot, transplanting the seedlings, maintaining your plot, and harvesting the bounty.

As Nicky says, "You and I have a chance to intentionally design one, maybe two, maybe more permaculture gardens in our lifetimes. Little patches of well-designed land, which, coupled with hard work and perhaps a bit of prayer, can indeed renew the face of the earth."

Take the opportunity this book provides to start your own journey on growing food to help keep your family happy and healthy while becoming more self-sufficient and less reliant on a commercial food chain. **#12618, $17.99**

Find out more at Shop.IAmCountryside.com or call 970-392-4419.

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Backyard Poultry

BACKYARD POULTRY STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

(Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685; Published in Oct/Nov 2025 *BACKYARD POULTRY*)

1. Title of Publication: *Backyard Poultry*. 2. Publication No. 023-374. 3. Date of Filing: September 30, 2025. 4. Frequency of Issue: Bimonthly. 5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 6. 6. Annual Subscription Price: $39.97. 7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, Shawnee, KS 66609-1265. 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, Shawnee, KS 66609-1265. 9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher, Editor and Managing Editor: Publisher – Bill Uhler; Ogden Publications, Inc., 1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, KS 66609-1265; Lead Editor – Ann Tom; Ogden Publications, Inc., 1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, KS 66609-1265; Associate Editor – Audra Trosper; Ogden Publications, Inc., 1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, KS 66609-1265. 10. Owner: Ogden Publications, Inc., 1503 SW 42nd St., Topeka, KS 66609-1265. Stockholder is: The Nutting Newspapers, Inc., 1500 Main Street, Wheeling, WV 26003. 11. N/A. 12. N/A. 13: Publication Title: *Backyard Poultry*. 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: Oct/Nov 2024-Aug/Sep 2025.

15. Average No. of Copies of Each Issue During the Preceding 12 Months

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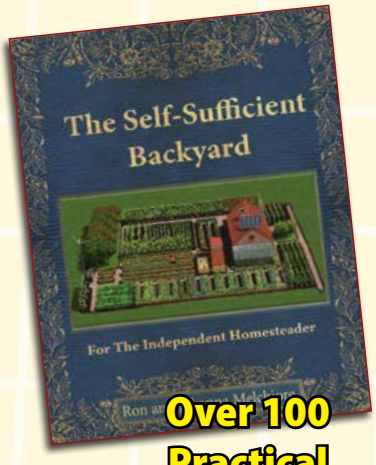

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Backyard Poultry Word Search, October/November 2025

Have fun completing this word scramble! Most of the words are found in this issue of *Backyard Poultry*.

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A B C H D O E K X Y D E O E Y X R M E L A D J G
C L A E R A L M V P E Y B B F V R O G T S D C A
I P A W L W N D V H E O W V R L Y Y S K H H V U
N S T N T F E R L R R R B W A R A T A X E T M G
N N A E Y W A I O V B I C B B K R R T U I L U N
A A T C I M U L Y T O R H M C E I S U C Q B P A
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O O I E G S H I J W K T V S P W Y P T F A X P Y
N G R N S H B S I V Z R D C S H T L Q P Z N F D
B A F E K R G N A Z N E U L F N I N A I V A O O
U R B N D O G B A R G X S T A K N G S T F I G B
N T W O X O G U U Z Y E K R U T E G A T I R E H
S X S I Z M T E J I S C F Z X N X A N Q G G I P
O R C T F S K Z G Y Z R F Q H H T P L B T P I G
I R G A E Y X F B G A W E Q R G S O Z T W B P R
X U V R I W Z R L X S Y M T M C O D O D Q Z L V
Q N G I G R G A I J Y H J A S F P D E F E N S E
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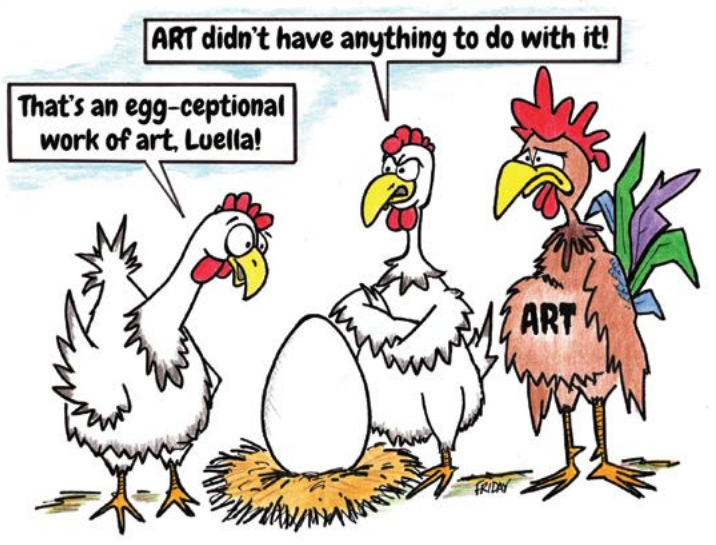

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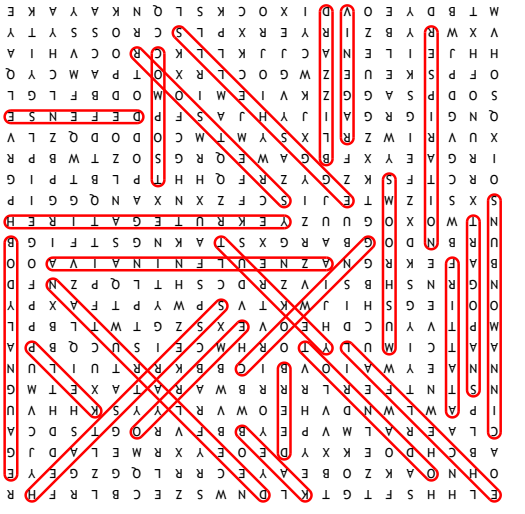

Show us your art skills by coloring this picture!

Enjoy this coloring page! Once you're done, snap a picture and send it to us via email at editor@backyardpoultrymag.com or via snail mail at *Backyard Poultry*, Attn: Coloring Pages, 1503 SW 42nd St, Topeka, KS 66609.

A colorful selection of art submitted by our readers!

Color the picture on the previous page and your picture could be published in the next issue!

1. Alexander Beker, age 10; **2.** Andrew Allwein, age 9;
3. Ava Heppe, age 12; **4.** Evelyn C., age 8;
5. Francesca Jones, age 6; **6.** Harper Mattmiller, age 5;
7. Jane Rozell, age 10; **8.** Joseph Eastburn, age 9;
9. Katie, age 7; **10.** Piper Fischer, age 7;
11. Ruetta Sullivan, age 84; **12.** Andrew Cecil, age 13

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