

Book Review: *Poultry of the World*

by Barry R. Koffler, High Falls, NY

Well folks, I've just had an opportunity to go through Loyl Stromberg's book *Poultry of the World*. I have never found such a collection of bad grammar, typos, misidentified and confusing illustrations, and misinformation gathered together in any book I've ever encountered. As a fairly knowledgeable poultry person, I get chills when I think of the "facts" now being distributed to the unaware public. There are lots of photos, if you don't mind guessing what they are. I'm willing to admit that more than half are probably correctly identified, but when the description of the breed includes a single comb and the photo has a crested bird with no comb visible at all, it sure does make you wonder. There's a really nice photo of a Grey (Sonnerat's) Jungle Fowl--as long as you don't mind that it's labeled Green Jungle Fowl (a different species). In one case there's a crested bird labeled as an Araucana. And in many cases a breed will be mentioned but won't be described in any useful way at all. This book was a very frustrating experience!

The worst thing for me is that I don't feel that I can trust anything in this book. There are so many inaccuracies, in both text and pictures, that if I'm not sure of something I certainly wouldn't look here to get the answer. I can't even recommend spending \$80 on the book for the pictures. As a coffee table book it is sorely lacking also. The majority of the illustrations are neither very clear nor large enough to be interesting to people who don't already know poultry fairly well. I fear that I can't find any good reason to suggest buying this book, and can find a fair number of reasons to go spend your money elsewhere--maybe buy that expensive trio of Buff Cochins you decided you really couldn't afford. It'll make you much happier.

Stromberg admits that he is neither a breeder, nor exhibitor, nor backyarder, yet here he has written a book on all of these areas. He doesn't allow anyone to edit his material, neither an editor who knows the language nor an editor who knows poultry. He publishes through a publisher that doesn't use either an editor, a designer, or a proofreader. I have a bunch of his earlier books, mostly gotten when I was a beginner. I find that they all fit the pattern of being both moderately misinformative and unindexed, so that when you do want to use them you can't find the information anyway. It seems to me that the areas in which he has more solid information are the areas leaning towards commercial poultry, not in the areas of breeds or raising poultry. I'm not trying to bad mouth him, I'm just giving a book review, which happens to be mostly a negative one. I know the man does good things for the poultry fancy, such as the poultry museum, I just wish he'd let other people write the books or at least let someone edit them.

Chickens Everywhere

In the town of Fitzgerald, Georgia, there are chickens that cross the road. It really doesn't matter *why* they are crossing the road, it only matters that they *are* crossing the road. You see, in this town of nearly 8,000 residents, there are chickens everywhere. Not only are there chickens trying to cross the road, but there are chickens walking down the sidewalk, and chickens flying into trees and people's back yards.

Not everybody likes the chickens. Dr. Roy Puckett who is against the chickens said "They're not good for the community. They're not good for people. They're full of fleas. They're full of mites. They're intestines are full of parasites."

The birds apparently descended from escaped jungle fowl brought in from Burma for a wildlife experiment many years ago. The fact that they have no difficulty flying apparently caught the original researchers off guard.

Fortunately, the chickens are not without their supporters. One such supporter is Mary George Bynum. The chickens are welcome in her back yard. "It's just nature and it's wonderful to see how God takes care of something that small" said Mrs. Bynum.

Another town resident, Elsie Graten, claims that the birds are scratching up her garden and ruining it. They have done this several times and always seem to leave a few eggs behind as payment. The problem is that Elsie doesn't eat eggs and would prefer to keep her garden intact. She has put out traps, but you are much more likely to find the birds playing on or scratching beside the trap rather than to find the birds *inside* it.

Chicken opponents have not yet resorted to killing these beautiful birds. They are hoping that because the chickens can fly with no difficulty, they will simply fly away. However, some residents feed the birds in their back yard which angers those who want the chickens to leave. One such resident is Hurley Merritt who is a chicken fancier. She feeds the chickens that visit her back yard regularly, but finds it strange that they won't eat lettuce or cabbage.

Both sides to the town chicken war agree that the birds are useful for eliminating bugs. They also agree that the baby chicks are pretty cute, but the opponents are quick to point out that Fitzgerald is a town and not a barnyard.

Egg Decorating Contest

At the Christmas Party we will hold our annual egg decorating contest. Please bring your decorated eggs to this meeting on December 20, 1996. The categories are Juniors (12 years old and under), Seniors (13 to 18), and Adults (19 and above). Prizes will be awarded by our judges during the Christmas party.

Annual Christmas Party

The annual club Christmas party will take place during the next meeting on Friday December 20, 1996. Normally, the club meetings are held on the 4th Friday, but because that day usually conflicts with Thanksgiving and Christmas, we meet on the 3rd Friday for the months of November and December. We will have a short business meeting at the Christmas party.

The club will be supplying the main course meal for the Christmas party. This includes a turkey (nobody we know) and a ham. It includes all the fixings and about eight pounds of green bean casserole. Please contact Lee Salmon at 561-686-4774 to sign up to bring in a side dish.

Please also bring a new, wrapped gift that is worth approximately \$5 for the raffle table. Because this is a special Christmas raffle, please bring in something nice. Contact Lee for details. Place a label on your package indicating if it is especially for children, adults, specific genders, or any combination of these.

Poultry Show in January

The South Florida Fair is just around the corner. The fair runs from January 17, 1997 to February 2, 1997. As usual, the club will be hosting the Poultry Show. If you are an exhibitor, you will need to get your birds to the fair on the 16th before the fair opens. You are allowed to enter up to 30 birds that can occupy no more than 15 cages. Our judges this year will be Emmette Rachels and Rip Stalvey.

Registration closes December 24, 1996. Please get your registration in as early as possible to Lee. You may mail it or give it to her at the Christmas Party.

Chick Selection

At the November meeting, we decided the number and type of chicks that we will be selling at the fair. We decided to purchase 150 each of barred rocks and white leghorns. All of the chicks that we will be ordering are sexed pullets. Mr. Greggs is coordinating the member hatched chick suppliers. All member hatched chicks are straight run. If you wish to be a chick supplier for the fair, please contact Mr. Greggs at 561-433-8157. Hatch only pure breeds for the fair please. The club will split the selling price of all member supplied chicks with the person who supplied them. There will be no compensation for unsold chicks that were brought in by members. Selling prices will be displayed at the fair.

Photography Contest

At the November meeting we had Maurice Rodriguez speak to us about taking better pictures of our chickens. He was one of the best guest lecturers that we have ever had. If you missed the November meeting, you are definitely at a disadvantage when it comes to our annual photography contest. The photos are due at the Christmas party meeting on Friday, December 20, 1996. Please submit your photos to Arvis Okerson at that time.

Categories

1. Chicken in natural setting
2. Best dressed chicken
3. Best saying to accompany a poultry photo
4. Best Color - judged on composition and color
5. Overall most original
6. Best baby

Photography Contest Rules

1. ALL entries must have the photographers name and category written on the back of the photo.
2. A single photograph may be entered in all categories, however you must supply a separate print for each category.
3. All photos must be submitted on or before December 20, 1996.

Winners will not be announced until the South Florida Fair. Prizes in each category are \$20 for first place, \$10 for second place, and a roll of Kodak film for third place.

Jesus is Watching You

Late one night, a burglar broke into a house that he thought was empty. He tiptoed through the living room but suddenly he froze in his tracks when he heard a loud voice say: "Jesus is watching you!"

Silence returned to the house, so the burglar crept forward again.

"Jesus is watching you," the voice boomed again.

The burglar stopped dead again. He was frightened. Frantically, he looked all around. In a dark corner, he spotted a bird cage and in the cage was a parrot.

He asked the parrot: "Was that you who said Jesus is watching me?"

"Yes", said the parrot.

The burglar breathed a sigh of relief, then he asked the parrot: "What's your name?"

"Clarence," said the bird.

"That's a dumb name for a parrot," sneered the burglar. "What idiot named you Clarence?"

The parrot said, "The same idiot who named the Rottweiler Jesus...Sic'im, Jesus!!"

Removing a Rooster's Spurs

Rooster's spurs can be easily removed by twisting them right off the leg using a pair of vice grips. Fasten the grips tightly enough around the base of the spur so as not to slip, then slowly twist back and forth until the spur snaps off. Hold the leg rigid so you aren't twisting any leg bones. It is a much easier process than cutting. What you will then see is a red spur of much smaller size. The surface hardens, and heals. You may want to disinfect this before you let the bird loose. It will ooze or bleed a bit so be prepared. Its not a bad idea to keep him isolated for a day or two while he heals.

Editor's Note: Several people have reported success with this method and that it results in less blood loss than trimming.

Green Eggs

by Dennis Hawkins

Many people have trouble distinguishing the various breeds that lay green eggs. These are primarily the Araucana and the Ameraucana, but also include the "Easter Egg Chicken" which is a pot-luck Araucana mix. The pure Araucana breed will only lay blue eggs, but is rare. In fact, pure Araucanas have long been assumed to be extinct, although some breeders have come pretty close trying to revive the breed. The Ameraucana was derived from the Araucana and is much easier to breed.

If you order Araucanas from most hatcheries, what you will actually get are Ameraucanas, or worse. Some hatcheries admit that their chicks are not true araucana, but claim that theirs are bred for their colored egg laying ability. Here are some vital specifics:

Araucana

Feather color pattern: Black, black red, golden duckwing, silver duckwing, and white.

Egg color: Always Blue in pure breeds

Tail: No tail, oil gland, or coccyx.

Has ear tufts (not a beard).

Ameraucana

Feather color pattern: Varies greatly - Black, blue, buff, silver, wheaten, and white to name a few.

Egg color: varies from brown to green, sometimes blue and turquoise.

Tail: Has normal tail.

Has a feather beard under the chin.

Easter Egg Chicken

No Standards have been set. Essentially, anything that hatches from a green or blue egg. These birds should, but not necessarily, lay colored eggs.

Halal Chickens

Halal is an Arabic word which actually means *permissible*. Food that is Halal is the Muslim equivalent of *Kosher*. Most Americans are already familiar with what Kosher is, but not that many are familiar with Halal. In order for a Muslim to eat chicken, it must be Halal.

An animal that is dead prior to bleeding is called "dead", or "maytah" in Arabic which is the opposite of Halal. Therefore, Halal chickens must be killed by cutting the throat, and allowed to bleed to death.

Many Muslims might consider Halal to be only that which is slaughtered by a Muslim. However, the religion permits slaughtering by a Jewish or Christian person as well. This is because these religions are "people of the book" in Islam.

Similar to some strict Jewish (Kosher) practices, the chickens should not be fed anything that is "dead". For example, food containing non-Halal meat, meat from pigs, or any type of blood, cannot be fed to chickens that are intended for Halal slaughter. This is not widely practiced because most people do not know that chickens actually eat that kind of stuff.

These customs, both Halal and Kosher, have been practiced for centuries for religious reasons. However, it is interesting that modern American culture is developing non-religious factions that are starting a similar custom - *organic*. While organic poultry processing can be done by persons of any religion, there are very specific rules for feeding, raising, and slaughtering these birds. Most of which are strikingly similar to their religious counterparts.

Raising Chicks With Grit

Generally, if your chicks are being fed only a mash or crumble, they do not need any grit. If you are giving any grain or table scraps then a chick grit would be a good thing. If they run out on grass, then they can pick up dirt and pebbles all by themselves. It is important to know that oyster shell and chick grit are not the same thing. Oyster shell will supply too much calcium and mess up their bone growth.

However, when you do not feed your chicks a commercial chick starter, grit is much more important. Dennis W. Greer did an experiment in 1994 in which he wanted to determine any advantage to feeding chicks grit. He raised 13 barred rocks with grit on top of the food every feeding and 12 without grit. Same food, same water. The 13 with grit were feathered out two weeks before the no grit chicks and looked larger. They also acted more mature. Not a big sample, but enough to show a difference.

About Newcastle Disease

From Cornell University

The virus that causes Newcastle disease has not been found in the United States for a good many years. This virus is capable of causing nervous signs (mesogenic and velogenic strains) in chickens. It has been present only in imported birds, and quickly destroyed by USDA.

Marek's and Similar Diseases

Marek's disease can occur in chickens as young as 3 weeks, although 5 weeks is the earliest commonly reported. Marek's disease virus is found all over the world. The disease is common in flocks that have not been vaccinated and raised under intensive conditions, such as high stocking density. It is a very hardy virus. Once you've got it, you can expect to have some birds come down with the disease. The disease almost always shows up before 1 year of age. Marek's vaccine must be given at the hatchery to be fully effective.

Here's the confusing part. There is another disease that is caused by a different virus that looks almost exactly like Marek's disease. It's called Lymphoid Leukosis (the USDA still calls the diseases Avian Leukosis Complex). This disease does not have a vaccine against it. It is spread from parent to offspring through the DNA (it's a retrovirus). This disease does not occur before 15 weeks of age.

So, you can be sure it is Marek's disease if the bird comes down with it before 15 weeks of age. You can be sure it is Lymphoid Leukosis if the bird comes down with it after 1 year of age. Between 15 and 52 weeks, you have to guess, unless you want to submit the birds to a good avian pathology laboratory.

Both of these diseases are almost always fatal. If the bird recovered, it was very, very, very unlikely to have been either of these diseases.

Eating Poison Ivy

It has been said that the only bad thing about chickens eating poison ivy is that they don't eat enough of it. Chickens and turkeys have been observed eating the evil vine/plant with no ill effects. The only side effect is that they get it on them and then come to their favorite human to be petted. That usually results in a two week regimen of cortisone.

The reason that chickens do not develop any ill effects from eating poison ivy is because avian (bird) histamine and allergic reactions are very different from people and most warm blooded animals. Chickens have nucleated red blood cells and this protects them.

Net Pecking

If you don't already have an Internet Account you can call Sefflin at 233-2600 and request a free one. There are also many commercial Internet Service Providers that provide better service for a fee. These include Prodigy, America Online, AT&T, BellSouth, and CompuServe in addition to several independent local providers. However, if you are just starting out with the Internet, the free account from Sefflin is the best.

Once you have logged on to Sefflin (Internet) for the first time, enter **poultry** at the main menu and you will be taken to the clubs poultry menu. From non-Sefflin Internet accounts, you can get there by going to our poultry web page at the following address:

<http://www.afn.org/~poultry>

To access the poultry newsgroup just enter **poultry** at the main menu of your Sefflin account. For non-Sefflin accounts, you will have to access it by using your newsreader to subscribe to the newsgroup:

sci.agriculture.poultry

To access Sefflin or other Internet Service Providers, you will need a computer, a modem, and a suitable communications program. If this is all greek to you, then it might be best to just visit the library where they have them already set up and ready to go. Every branch of the PBC library system has at least one computer available on a first-come first-served basis.

Classified

FOR SALE:

PBCPFA T-Shirts, excellent quality, beautiful logo. Small, Medium, Large, and X-Large sizes are available for \$10.00 (members), \$12.00 (non-members). Contact Richard Greggs (561) 433-8157. Don't be chicken, get yours today.

Baseball caps with our PBCPFA logo on them. They look fantastic and sell for a low \$5.00! Contact Richard Greggs (561) 433-8157.

Free rooster to a good home. Ameraucana with Columbian plumage is a good breeder but has crooked toes. If interested, call 795-2067.

FOR LOAN OR RENT:

Don't let your flock fall victim to predators! The poultry club owns a trap that members may use free of charge. Your neighbors may rent the trap for a small fee. To reserve your time to use the trap, contact Richard Greggs (561) 433-8157.

WANTED:

Newsletter articles for the PBCPFA newsletter. The deadline is the fourth Friday of the previous month. Submit articles to the editor by mail, email, or in person at the meeting.

Membership Application

SHARE THE EXPERIENCE! The very best way for us to grow is by word of mouth. You hold in your hands the key to our expansion - the membership application. Feel free to copy this form and spread the news.

PALM BEACH COUNTY POULTRY FANCIERS ASSOCIATION (PBCPFA) invites you to join us for a feather filled year of fowl fun! Please fill out this application form completely.

Membership year is from January 1 to December 31. If you join after June 30 you will be eligible for an initial half price rate.

PBCPFA DUES	Yearly*	After June 30**
FAMILY	\$12.00	\$6.00
INDIVIDUAL	\$8.00	\$4.00

I would like to join the Palm Beach County Poultry Fanciers Association (PBCPFA). Enclosed is \$_____ for (check one) New Membership Renewal.

- Mr.
- Mrs.
- Miss
- Ms.

- Mr.
- Mrs.
- Miss
- Ms.

Name

Spouse

Address

Child

Age

Gender

City

State Zip+4

Child

Age

Gender

Phone

If unlisted check

Child

Age

Gender

Make check payable to **PBCPFA** and mail to:

Rose Greggs, PBCPFA Treasurer
8643 El Paso Drive
Lake Worth, FL 33467-1109



Refreshments and a raffle at every meeting!

Meetings held at 8:00PM the 4th Friday of every month (except January, June, November and December) at the pavillion in the garden behind the Mounts building located at 531 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach, Florida (directly across from Palm Beach International Airport approximately 1/4 mile north of Southern Blvd.)

* All renewals are due December 31 and are for one year.

** New Members Only