

President's Message

Greetings to each of you who faithfully stuck with us and who now share our joy in having the Ameraucana Standard accepted by the American Bantam Association. I certainly hope each of you will join the A.B.A. if you are not already a member. Dues are \$5.00 per year or \$7.00 for two years, to P.O. Box 610, North Amberst, Mass. 01059. When you send in your membership be sure to state that you are a member of the Ameraucana Bantam Club.

Make plans now to attend our Central District Meet October 3rd and 4th at Viroqua, Wisconsin. And don't forget our first National Meet November 28-30 at Bluegrass (near Davenport), Iowa. The awards will be many and the experiences rewarding. For some of you it will be a chance to see and compare the stock from various breeders which represents years of effort. You may wish to place chick or egg orders for next year or even pick up adult breeding stock. Whatever the reason, be sure to join us for fellowship and enjoyment.

I'm sure many of you are familiar with the words of our Lord recorded in Matthew 23:37 "Oh Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Obviously Jesus was familiar with the ways of our feathered friends in his brief life here on this planet. May we always remember his saving grace and strive to live accordingly.

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1980 National Meet Approaches

As president Mike Gilbert indicated, our first National Meet, to be held November 28-30 at Bluegrass, Iowa, promises to be a really worthwhile event. The Eastern Iowa Poultry Association will be our host and you may secure a premium list by contacting Mr. Herbert Holtz, Rt. 2, Muscatine, Iowa 52761. Watch Poultry Press for news of this show.

Thus far, we have \$40 in cash specials pledged and welcome your donation for this important meet. Please send your cash special to either president Mike Gilbert, or to your secretary at the address at the top of the page, but do it soon, as the show dates are rapidly approaching.

In addition to our cash specials, we are offering beautiful club rosettes for Champion and Reserve Champion in Wheaten, Champion and Reserve White, and Champion and Reserve in any other variety. As host, the E.I.P.A. will provide a trophy for Champion Ameraucana Bantam. Make plans to attend and exhibit your birds- you will not want to miss this meet.

Wheaten Ameraucana Bantams

by Don Cable

Wheaten is the most widely bred variety of Ameraucana bantams presently found in the United States. Mike Gilbert is primarily responsible for their present high state of development and foundation stock from his breeding pens may be found scattered not only throughout the mid-west, but have established a secure foothold on the West Coast as well, particularly in California.

The wheaten variety provides a special challenge in that it is like breeding two varieties in one. The males have the familiar black-breasted red pattern, though somewhat lighter in color in certain sections, while the female is totally different in plumage color, being basically a light, creamy wheaten with black restricted to wings and tail. The Standard calls for male hackles and saddles of bright orange red of blazing brilliance, toning off to flashing gold at their extremities, free from dark striping, which is a common defect. This flashy orange red and gold contrasted with lustrous black in breast, wings and tail make for an eye-catching, attractive combination. Females, though certainly less flashy, have a special appeal of their own. The rich wheaten hackles blend softly into a creamy wheaten over-all color contrasting sharply with black in wings and tail. Beard and muffs call for black in males and a very light creamy wheaten in females, which add a certain charm to this colorful variety.

As can be expected, there is some variation in the basic wheaten color pattern, but is most apparent in the female line. Color will run from rich, dark wheaten to an extremely light creamy wheaten approaching white.

The light, creamy wheaten is preferred, assuming the contrasting black in wings and tail remains sound. This required black in wings and tail tends to diminish with age, and birds which retain black make valuable breeders. A sport occasionally produced by wheaten throws white males irregularly marked with buff or red about the head or throat and white females with light lemon hackles. These females are quite attractive. Producing uniform color as required by the Standard is an ongoing challenge to the breeder of this distinctive variety and the vivid color contrast between the sexes adds both interest and appeal to the wheaten Ameraucana bantam.

When hatched, wheaten chicks are a creamy white and virtually indistinguishable from other bantam breeds, save for profuse chick down around the face which will develop into beard and muffs. Chicks feather rapidly and may be readily sexed by color at three to four weeks of age. Pullets as expected, are much lighter in color, being a soft mixture of brown, buff and white, whereas the cockerels, in addition to the above colors, contain varying degrees of black. Sexual maturity is rapid and it is not uncommon to have half a dozen early hatched cockerels squeaking away as they attempt to crow not long after they are out of the brooder! It is not until the final moult that young birds may be judged by color alone, so patience is required, particularly for cockerels, whose beard, muffs and frontal head feathering are the last section to assume the required black color.

When pullets come into lay their shells are a rich, sky-blue which begins to fade only after a sustained lay of several months. In as much as the blue egg shell is a fundamental breed characteristic of the Ameraucana bantam, any deviation from blue must be eliminated by immediate culling.

It has been my practice to let each hen set and bring off a hatch of chicks at the termination of the breeding season as a kind of reward for a job well done. Ameraucana bantams are patient setters and can be trusted to raise a brood or half dozen or so chicks with ease. In order to get by high summer temperatures which can be rough on chicks in a brooder, I let each hen bring up a late hatch which is much easier on the chicks, provides a natural fulfillment for the hens, and provides me with a great deal of personal pleasure just to have them about. The payoff comes when you ease back in your lawn chair with a cool one and enjoy the antics of these little families on a pleasant summer evening. Take a little time to enjoy your bantams.

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Breeding Wheaten

There is very little written information that deals with breeding the wheaten color pattern. The following excerpt is from Bantam Chickens, by Fred Jeffrey,:

"Good quality male and female wheatens can be produced from a single mating. Light colored females are preferred over dark ones for showing. It is best to select light colored females and males with light or flashy hackles and saddles as breeders. The juvenile plumage of wheaten females is an unattractive mixture of black and buff and should not be taken as an index of adult appearance, for each succeeding molt produces a more attractive plumage. It is customary to show wheaten males in the black breasted red class."

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Welcome New Members!!

The following new members have joined our club since the last Bulletin. Keep your Breeder's Directory up to date by adding these newcomers:

Jack Gard	648 N. Lawrence, Yuba City, CA 95991	WHEATEN
Mrs. Joe Hall	16814 Tonkel Rd., Leo, Ind. 46765	
John Johnson	600 Post Oak Dr., Victoria, TX 77901	
Patrick Mockler	Pond Road, Vernon, VT 05354	

There are still many people, perhaps most fanciers, who have never seen an Ameraucana bantam. It was my pleasure to have Jack Gard, our new member from Yuba City, Ca, drop by to see just what Ameraucanas are. Jack left a short time later with a pair of wheatens and we now have another enthusiastic member. Jack got my name, address and breed from the Pacific Poultry Breeders Membership Directory. There is a lesson in this- if your local poultry club publishes an annual directory, be sure that your listing of breeds includes AMERAUCANA BANTAMS. Let's give our breed a chance and spread that stock around.

Under The Mulberry Tree

When Poultry Press arrived the other day I scanned it quickly for Ameraucana bantam news of course, and happily found Mike Gilbert's article nestled inconspicuously near the bottom of page 14. And if the news of A.B.A. acceptance of the Ameraucana bantam is pretty heady stuff to most of us, I suppose that it is really rather small potatoes in the total scheme of things. Never-the-less, editor Bob DeLancey, as the article indicated, has given us a fair shake all along in terms of press coverage- without which this club would never have gotten off of the ground. Furthermore, our little ad in the classified section is worth every penny, as it sustains our membership by reaching every corner of the country. In short, Poultry Press is the wellspring of communication for the entire fancy and as such, deserves not only our recognition and admiration, but our support as an organization and as individuals.

I have been a subscriber to Poultry Press since 1963 and must confess that I have read virtually every issue from front to back- yes, classified ads, too- and have a feeling that many of you do the same. My Press usually arrives on about the tenth of each month and I generally skim for what I find are the most appealing or timely articles. There have been some really great articles over the years, but some of the names that stick in my mind are Ralph Sturgeon, Mort Cooper, and Maurice Wallace that have penned some gems. Although I don't at present own a single waterfowl, Lou Horton- whose quill is mightier than the sword- is my current favorite.

As an inveterate ad reader, I like to prop myself up in bed with my spectacles at the ready and pour over the classified section from Ameraucana Bantams to Wanted. I am always a little awed by the number and variety of poultry kept by many of the advertisers, especially when they are probably paying the same prices for feed that I am. And what names! Plummer McCullough, Granville Geake, Forrest Beauford and my all-time favorite, Porter Pepperdine. People like that just have to be great fanciers!

I still have the 50th anniversary issue, December, 1964, and am a little saddened when I take account of so many great fanciers that have passed away since then and yet the Press goes on. There have not been any serious competitors to Poultry Press since that time, the closest thing, I suppose, was Bantam Newspaper, although in truth, it was more of an adjunct and many such as myself, subscribed more for the peppery pen of editor Fred Riley than for any real news. I have the final issue of Bantam Newspaper under editor Riley and I must say, he went out with a bang. In any case, Poultry Press has set a standard that nobody has been able to match in the past two decades and is as good as ever in its 66th year.

Poultry shows, breed clubs, individual fanciers, fads and trends come and go, rise and fall and rise again over the years and you are witness to the ebb and flow of this marvelously rich and varied fancy through the pages of Poultry Press for the pittance of just seven dollars a year. What a bargain.

Forthcoming Club Meets

Central District Meet, Oct. 3rd & 4th, Viroqua, Wisconsin. Coulee Region Poultry Club's first annual show. A hotbed of competition for Ameraucana bantams. Write for a show catalog from Bernard Kellogg, Box 62, Viroqua, Wisconsin 54665. Act soon on this one!

Eastern District Meet, Oct. 18th & 19th, Sussex County Fairgrounds, NJ. Sussex County Poultry Fanciers Association Fall Show. Premium list available from Eleanor Vinhage, R.D. 1, Box 64E, Augusta, NJ 07822. Ken Carpenter, do your stuff! Easterners, let's get together.

Western District Meet, Oct. 25th & 26th, Pleasanton, California. Golden Gate Bantam Club Fall Show. Show catalog available from Pat Coker, 10750 Calvine Road, Elk Grove, Ca 95624. Site of last year's ABA qualifying meet. Marie Rayher, let's show those birds!

A.B.C. NATIONAL MEET, Nov. 28th-30th, Bluegrass, Iowa. Eastern Iowa Poultry Association Annual Show. For a show catalog, contact Herbert Holtz, Rt. 2, Box 49, Muscatine, Iowa 52761. This is the big one and we still need your support. See page 1 for list of awards so far.

California State Meet, Jan. 31 & Feb. 1, Sacramento, CA. The California National Show sponsored by the Pacific Poultry Breeders at Cal Expo. This is the coming show on the west coast with a great facility. For a premium list, contact Mike Stotts, 302 Bloomfield Rd., Sebastopol, CA 95472.

SUPPORT YOUR MEETS!

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Classified Ad Section?

As a service to members, we will include a classified ad section in future issues of the Bulletin as space permits. If you have stock, eggs, chicks to sell, swap or whatever, send it in and we will include it for no charge, if we have room to spare. You need not limit it to birds, as it can be equipment, books, or whatever, as long as it pertains to poultry. Here is an example:

Wanted: Top price for a good copy of Bantams and Miniature Fowl, by W.H. Silk, First edition only. D. Cable, 6442 Chestnut Ave., Orangevale, CA 95662.
