



# Heartland News ©

Newsletter of Heart of America Game Breeders' Association

Volume 35 Number 2 March-April, 2019

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## *Redhead Ducks*

by Bob Young  
Bartlesville, OK

Reprinted from the May, 2003 NL

[Editor's note: At the time this article was written, Bob was actively raising waterfowl and brought many pairs of Red Head Ducks, Black East Indies, and bantam Mottled Cochins which were sold at the club auction.]

First of all, I am not an expert on raising waterfowl, but I have found some things that work for me. The America Redhead, which requires a federal permit, is one of my favorite ducks. It is a diving duck, enjoys a lot of water, makes very little noise, and is very gentle. They also mix well with other wild ducks and Call Ducks. The Red Head lays a clutch of 6 to 9 blue-green eggs. I let the hens set on the eggs, but I take the babies on the first day. The hens will usually lay a second clutch of eggs. I've had good luck putting baby Calls with my wild ducks to teach them to eat.

I start feeding the ducklings 20% crumbles until I think they can handle 20% pellets. I start by mixing the pellets with the crumbles 50-50. Once they start eating more pellets than crumbles, I feed all pellets.

Once they are feathered, they are moved outside where they have access to grit. Later, I mix some grain with the pellets. After they get adjusted to the outside, they are moved to deeper water down by the lake.

**Pens** - The Redhead spends approximately 90% of its time on the water. All my wild duck pens have running water which is pumped from a private lake. There is a water canal that is 2 feet to 4 feet deep and lined with rock which keeps the water clear. The size of the water areas is from 8 feet x 15 feet to 15 feet by 30 feet. There are feeding and grazing areas. There are 12 pens; the perimeter fences are chain link with one inch poultry wire cemented into the ground. An electric fence also surrounds the pens. The top of the pens is covered with two inch poultry wire. There are also plenty of shade trees. In all, I have 27 pens and 125 nesting boxes.

**Nesting Boxes** - There are some nesting boxes at the water's edge with a walkway over the water on a float. Other nesting boxes are on the ground away from the water. The Redheads use both types of boxes. The ground nest boxes are 14" x 21" x 12" high with a pass through partition. The nesting area is 11" x 14". The water nesting boxes (Wood Duck boxes) are 12" x 12" x 17". All box lids are covered with Hardy Plank (cement board). This makes the lids waterproof and gives them weight so the wind does not blow the lids up. Wood shaving are used for nesting material. I put golf balls in each nest. If a black snake gets a nest of eggs, he will also swallow the golf ball and it will be the last nest of eggs he will swallow. Last year I killed 6 black snakes and 4 of them had already swallowed a golf ball.

**Feeders** - The feeders I use are 4 gallon buckets that I get from the local donut shop. I cut a round hole about 3 inches in diameter and 5 inches from the bottom of the bucket. I put a lid on the top that extends over the hole to keep the feed dry. It also works as a self feeder. If the bucket comes with a handle, be sure to remove it. I put a weight on top of the lid to keep the wind from flowing it off. The weight is

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made by cutting a 3/4 inch hole in the bottom of a Cool Whip container. Use a 3/4 inch PVC tee with a 3 inch length of PVD. Glue the PVD pipe into the tee and place it in the hole in the Cool Whip container. Drill a hole through the end of the pipe, place a nail in the PVC pipe, and fill the container with cement. The nail will hold the tee in the cement.

**Feed** - I have a grain elevator mix my grains - wheat, milo, cracked corn, soybean meal and vitamins. All is sprayed with molasses. I mix this mixture with 20% egg pellets. During the non-breeding season, I mix 2 parts grain with 1 part pellets. During the breeding season, around March 1, I mix 50-50.

**Duck Nursery** - My duck nursery is a room 20 feet x 25 feet. It is sheet rocked and has central heat and air. It is also equipped with an underground fresh air system. A 14 inch plastic pipe is buried 5 feet for 250 feet. The room and system were once used as part of my chinchilla business. Fresh air is pulled in and stale air is exhausted out. There is another room the same size and also equipped with the air system that I use for my incubator, hatcher, and baby chickens. I have 4 foot x 4 foot x 23 inches tall wooden boxes to brood the baby ducks. I also use some cardboard boxes. Straw or hay is used as bedding, and the boxes are cleaned every day. I never use papers for bedding. Papers are slick and will cause leg problems.

**Outside Pens for Young Ducks** - The outside pens for the young ducks are same as the others, but they are equipped with a 4 foot x 4 foot cement pond in each pen. Each pond has a 4 inch underground drain which carries the dirty water away from the pens. The water is changed every day in the summer and every two days in the winter. I add 1/2 cup Clorox to each pond in the summer to keep out the algae. On cold nights an electric stock tank heater is used. There are 15 of these pens, and they are used for breeder Call Ducks until the young wild ducks are ready to go outside. All pens have a small shed to shelter and protect the ducks.

In addition to the Redheads, I have 16 other different species of wild ducks (64 breeders) plus East Indies (9 breeders) and 5 different colors of Call Ducks (45 breeders). Of the 22 different species only one species needs to be vent sexed.

#### **A Quick Look at Some Facts about Redhead Ducks** compiled by Terry Smith

**Family:** *Anatidae*

**Tribe:** *Aythiini* - Pochards

**Scientific name:** *Aythya Americana*

**Description:** The male has a reddish-brown and upper part of the neck. Fine blackish-brown vermiculations

whitish colored feathers give the body and wings an overall medium grey appearance. The under body varies from white to pale buff even silver-gray with vermiculations\* of a slightly darker shade. The bill is dark with a broad band of slate grey. The iris is lemon-yellow; the legs and feet are yellowish grey with dusky grey webs. Their legs are placed farther back on the body, which makes walking on land difficult. In eclipse the male is a browner and duller version. The adult female has a dark tan to brown head and neck. The breast is brown, the belly is white and the rest of the body is a grey to brown. The female bill is slate colored with a dark tip that is separated by a blue ring. Females remain the same color year round. \*vermiculations - fine, wavy pigmentation patterns on feathers that or wormlike in appearance

**Sub-species and Range:** There are no recognized subspecies. I have seen Silver Redheads in some collections. They breed in North America from central Canada south to southern California, New Mexico, Nebraska, and Minnesota. Winters from Washington east to the middle Atlantic states and south to the Gulf Coast of Mexico and Guatemala.

**Habitat and Foods:** The preferred breeding habitat of Redheads consists of pot holes and marshes with water that is deep enough to provide tall, standing vegetation for nesting. These breeding grounds contain pondweeds and small invertebrates such as insect larvae, mollusks, and crustaceans which the ducks dive for and feed on.

**Breeding:** Although pair bonds are formed shortly after the birds reach the breeding grounds, yearling females are less inclined to nest and may breed later than mature hens. The initial pair-forming behavior occurs on the water; aerial chasing follows later in the spring.

**Nesting:** In late April and early May, a bulky but well-concealed nest is built among reeds or rushes usually in shallow water.

**Clutch size:** 6 to 9 greyish-green eggs which vary in tone from hen to hen. The exact clutch size is difficult to determine because of two ducks laying in the same nest. Many eggs and ducklings are lost to predators - mainly Crows and Raccoons.

**Incubation:** 24 to 26 days. Males abandon their mates during the early incubation period to gather on traditional molting lakes.

**Fledging:** 55 to 75 days.

**Predators:** Adults can be preyed upon by northern river otters, red-tailed hawks, great horned owls, bald eagles, golden eagles and mink. Most predation comes in the form of duckling predation and egg foraging. Northern pike and snapping turtles are known to eat ducklings whereas skunks, minks, crows and magpies will steal and eat Redhead eggs. Adult Redheads are most likely to die of

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## Coming Events for 2019

March 31 **BIRD & ANIMAL SWAP & SALE DAYS** Monroe County Fairgrounds, Waterloo, IL, Hwy 156 West. Gate opens 5:30 A. M. Closes 11 or earlier as vendors sell out. Swap sponsored by Midwest Bird & Animal Breeders Association, For info., call Walter Rau @ 618-939-6809 or go to [www.mbaba.org](http://www.mbaba.org) Out of state sellers must obtain a port of entry number by calling 217-782-4944. Poultry must be Pullorum-Typhoid clean before being exhibited or sold. 2019 dates: April 28, May 26, Aug. 25, Sept. 29, & Oct.27.

April 4-7 **JACOB'S CAVE SPRING SWAPPING DAYS** located between Versailles & Gravois Mills, MO on state road TT off Hwy 5. Thurs, Fri. & Sat. 6 A. M. till 10 P. M. & Sun. 6 A. M. till noon. Out of state sellers of birds & animals must contact the Missouri Division of Animal Health at 573-751-3377 prior to coming to the swap. Admission \$5.00 per vehicle per day. For additional fees, go to [www.jacobscave.com](http://www.jacobscave.com), email: [jacobscave@earthlink.net](mailto:jacobscave@earthlink.net) or Ph. 573-378-4374. Other swap dates: May 30-31, June 1-2, Oct. 4-6.

April 6-7 **SOUTHWEST IOWA ANIMAL SWAP**, Westfair Fairgrounds, 22984 Highway 6, Council Bluffs, IA 51503, 2 miles east of I-80 on Hwy 6 (exit 8) \$5.00 admission covers both days. Gates open 7 a. m. Sat. & close noon Sun. All poultry, game birds, & waterfowl should be PT tested within 90 days of the swap. For more event details visit facebook page: Southwest Iowa Animal Swap or call Ted Golka at 402-657-3676. Fall swap: September 21 & 22.

April 7 **SWAP & TRADE DAYS** sponsored by Tri-K Pigeon & Bantam Club, Kankakee, IL Fairgrounds 213 W. 4000 S. Rd. Doors open at 5 a. m. Poultry & game birds must have proof of being Pullorum-Typhoid clean & Parrot-type birds must be tested for Newcastle Disease. Out of state sellers must obtain a port of entry number within 48 hours prior to entry by calling 217-782-4944. Sellers must complete a sales record listing the seller's name, address, ph. #, the swap date, and an app. number of birds or animals brought to the swap. For inf., call Brian Malone, 815-697-2980, Dave Malone 815-953-4511, or Alex Ramirez 708-516-9722. Permits are required for wildlife. Call Dave Buza @ 815-933-5218 for permit info. 2019 dates: May 5, June 2, Sept. 1, and Oct. 6.

April 13-14 **EXOTIC BIRD & ANIMAL SWAP** 6 A. M. Waverly Sales Company Grounds, 2212 5th Avenue NW, Waverly, IA. (Exit 208 off Hwy. 218) Admission \$5.00 per person over 12. Gates open at noon Sat. All poultry, including waterfowl, should be tested within 90 days before the swap. For inf., call Michael Cheever at 319-939-5894. Other swap dates: June 22-23 & Sept. 7-8.

April 13-14 **KANSAS CLASSIC FALL SHOW** Kansas State Fairgrounds, Hutchison, KS, For info., call Ryan Carey, ph. 620-245-7469 Out of state birds need a 9-3 Form from your state. Heart of America Bantam club is hosting the APA District National at which Bonita Miller and Tony Perryman from Missouri will be honored.

April 14 **MADISON CONSIGNMENT BIRD & ANIMAL AUCTION**, 401 W 6th St., Madison, NE. For more info. & schedule go to [nelsonlivestockauctions.com](http://nelsonlivestockauctions.com) or contact Chris Nelson ph. 402-640-7283; [cnelson21575@gmail.com](mailto:cnelson21575@gmail.com) Out of state sellers need a health certificate from vet.

April 20-21 **AFTON, OK POULTRY SWAP**, 53991 E 59 Hwy. (3 miles south of Buffalo Ranch on Hwy. 59.) Free overnight camping. Concession, plenty of shade. Set-up \$2.00 per vehicle per day. For inf., web site: [www.aftonpoultryswap.com](http://www.aftonpoultryswap.com) or call 918-257-4651 or 918-257-3436. Swaps held the third Saturday and Sunday of each month through November.

April 21 **TSC ANIMAL SWAP** 8 A. M. to ?, Tractor Supply, North Topeka on Hwy. 24. Buyers free, no set-up for sellers. For info. & space availability, call Andy @785-845-0040. Watch for dates on Craigslist. Swaps held the 3rd Sunday of the month.

April 27-28 **GRUNDY COUNTY BIRD & ANIMAL SWAP** 1308 4th St. Grundy Center, IA. Gates open 10 am. Sat and close 1 p. m. Sun. For inf. Call Shawn Krenz ph. 319-830-5799 or email [shawnkrz@gmail.com](mailto:shawnkrz@gmail.com).

April 27 **SWAP MEET**, 7 a. m. to noon Rain or shine!, Premiere Farm & Home, 900 SW University Avenue, Topeka, KS. (Go south on Topeka Blvd, then go west on University Blvd. Across from Forbes Field.) Buyers & sellers free. Owners are responsible for testing all poultry. No goats. For info, call Karl Sauvage 785-547-5046 or Dee Sauvage 785-207-0779. Swap held last Saturday of the month: May 25, June 29, July 27, Aug. 31, Sept. 28, Oct. 26.

May 4 **WOLF LAKE SWAP**, 6 a.m. to 1 p. m. 6397 W. Albion Rd. Legionier, IN (29 miles N of Fort Wayne, IN on US 33, than 1/2 mi. E on Albion Rd. \$5.00 admission, \$20.00 per seller per 25' x19' space. For info., call 260-635-2147 or 260-894-5392. 2019 swap dates: June 1, July 7, & Aug. 18

May 10 **BIRD SWAP** 7 a.m. to 11 a. m. sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Pheasant & Waterfowl Association, Agfinity, 55 W Bromlry Ln, Brighton, CO. For more info go to [Rockymtnpheasant.com](http://Rockymtnpheasant.com) or email [rmpwa@hotmail.com](mailto:rmpwa@hotmail.com). Other swap dates: July 14 & other dates to be announced.

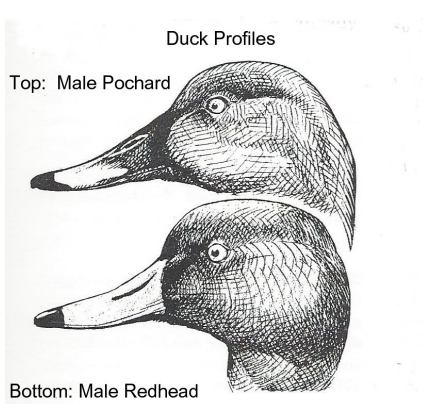
May 17-18 **MID-OHIO SWAP MEET** 8076 St. Rt. 241, Mt. Hope, OH. For info., call 330-674-7661. Other Swap dates: July 17-20, Oct. 18-19

*Redhead Facts continued from p. 2*

disease or indirect human impact.

#### Population Status:

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan for Redheads is 760,000 North American birds. The population size has increased in the past few decades to well over 1.4 million birds. Redheads make up 2% of North America's duck population and only 1% of its harvested ducks. Populations may be stable because of restrictive bag limits for the species. In addition, the species uses semi-permanent and permanent wetlands to breed and these habitats are less likely to be affected by drought. For future management of the species, organizations including Ducks Unlimited are looking into wetland conservation.



#### References

- Johnsgard, Paul A. *Ducks, Geese, and Swans of the World*, Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1978, pp. 287-290.
- Soothill, Eric and Peter Whitehead. *Wildfowl of the World*, London: Blandford Press, Ltd., 1978, pp. 214-215.
- Wikimedia The Free Encyclopedia

#### Helpful Hints

compiled by Terry Smith

1. I found this information about crooked toes in Leland Hayes' *Gamebird Journal*, p. 9 August 15, 1998, at the end of an article on Vulturine Guinea fowl. "We run our incubators at 99.75° F, dry bulb and 81-83° F. wet bulb. This is somewhat drier than most birds but if the humidity is too high, the chick embryo grows too big and cannot turn in the shell to hatch out. When they pip, you can tell if they are too big or just right by the way the pip looks. If they are normal, a triangle will be opened in the side of the egg. This means they are just right. If the pip is a hole near the top of the egg, they will probably have trouble and have to be helped out of the shell. If the chick is allowed to breath oxygen for too long while still in the egg, its toes will be set and it will be crooked toed. To avoid this I always go ahead and carefully hatch them out provided the membrane is clear and not bloody."

2. To improve the percentage of chicks, goslings, or ducklings you hatch, examine the eggs that didn't hatch to

ascertain the age at death. Death during the first third of the embryonic development can be caused by: parental genetics, vitamin E deficiency, chilling or overheating of eggs prior to their being collected, improper storage temperature, holding eggs too long before setting them, failure to turn the eggs during storage, rough handling of eggs, virus infections, high incubation temperature, chilling, inadequate turning of eggs, and improper sterilization methods. Unless the incubator thermometer is not accurate giving faulty readings, death during this stage tends to be something other than an incubator problem. Often times embryos which survive the first stage of incubation are weak and will die during the second stage, but many will survive only to die prior to hatching.

High mortalities during the second third of the incubation process can be caused by: inadequate incubator ventilation, serious vitamin deficiencies in the feed, infection within the incubator, improper incubator settings, chilling or overheating eggs when they are candled, and improper humidity.

Embryonic deaths occurring before the chick's beak has broken through the air cell can usually be traced to heredity, egg storage techniques, improper diet of breeder birds, infection, incubation sanitation, and adverse incubator settings. If there is a high incidence of chicks that died prior to pipping and of those that died after starting to breath, there is usually an incubator problem. These incubator management problems include: temperature set too high or too low, wide temperature fluctuations, bringing stored eggs up to incubation temperature too quickly, too much or too little humidity, poor ventilation, and improper egg turning. Death during this stage can also be traced to chilling or jolting the eggs when moving them to the hatching tray. When there is insufficient moisture in the hatcher, eggs will be chipped most of the way around, but the chick died because it was trapped by a tough dry membrane that would not split allowing the chick to hatch.

Too much moisture during the early stages of incubation causes the chicks to be large and soft with unabsorbed albumen. When the chick pierces the shell, it can not withdraw its beak or bill to make another chip because the sticky albumen leaks through the shell and sets up. This type of death can also be caused by temperature fluctuations, but is exaggerated by not enough moisture during the hatch.

When the temperature has been too high all the way during incubation, chicks will be small, their beaks will have penetrated the air cell, and not all of the yolk sac will have been absorbed. Chicks may feel sticky. Infected eggs have a bad odor and the fluid around the embryo will be discolored.

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3. Even though hens are fed feed which contains calcium and phosphorus and they have access to oyster shell, they can lay soft shelled eggs if they do not receive enough vitamin D. Vitamin D, which is usually absorbed by the body from the sun's rays, is necessary for the absorption of calcium and phosphorus. When soft shelled eggs are laid, mix some fish or fish liver oil with a little grain and give it to the hen.

4. We keep on hand a good stock of rubberized shelf lining. It is sold under various names including "Easy Liner". I have used this for many years when hatching chicks. I cut pieces to line the bottom of the hatching trays so the chicks can't get their hocks or toes caught in the wire, and we put a piece under the hatching tray so that any chicks that hatch early in the turning trays and end up in the bottom of the incubator won't become spraddled-legged. When I have chicks with leg problems, I line part of the brooder box with it so they have sure footing. The matting can be soaked in warm, soapy water to remove droppings, washed, dried and reused.

5. Low humidity contributes to, but is not completely responsible for spraddled-leg chicks, star gazers, and chicks that cannot stand, walk, or orient themselves to find food and water.

6. Geese are grazing birds feeding on grasses which are approximately 17% or less. If goslings are fed a high protein diet, they grow too fast and their wings can droop because they are too heavy for their muscles, or they can develop leg problems. To avoid these problems, do not feed prepared feed with a high protein level and add plenty of greens to the diet. If you detect leg problems, restrict movement by placing the gosling in a cage in a semi-dark area. Drooping wings can be taped for a short period of time. Allowing the tape to remain in place too long can result in restricted use of the wings.

7. Pheasant eggs require greater humidity at the beginning of their incubation period rather than toward the end of the period. The reverse is true for quail eggs. Because the shell surface is greater in proportion to the egg content and because small eggs tend to lose weight more rapidly than larger eggs, small eggs require a higher humidity toward the end of the incubation period and especially during the time they are in the hatcher. I found this idea in Practical Incubation by Rob Harvey. Thick-shelled eggs need lower humidity; thin-shelled eggs need higher humidity.

8. One of the common causes of egg binding is hypocalcemia, a lack of calcium in the bloodstream. When the diet is deficient in calcium, the hen draws on her body reserves to produce eggs. When the calcium reserve is depleted, egg binding occurs. An egg-bound hen will appear

weak, will have a fluffed-up appearance, will appear to be straining, and will have a swollen abdomen. Often times, the hen cannot defecate because the egg obstructs the cloaca and compresses the ureters of the kidneys causing a buildup of toxic wastes in the system which results in the hen's death. An egg fails to move through the oviduct for one of two reasons: lack of normal muscle tone or insufficient lubrication, both of which are directly related to a calcium deficiency. Misshaped eggs which result from insufficient calcium in the shell, soft-shelled eggs, and over-sized eggs are examples of the types of eggs which can cause egg binding. Egg binding is life-threatening. Veterinarians can give injections of calcium and drugs to stimulate the contractions of the uterus. If the injections don't work, the egg will need to be manually or surgically manipulated to help it move through the oviduct.

With birds that are housed outdoors, egg binding is most likely to occur when the weather turns suddenly cold. Handle an egg-bound hen with great care. If the egg is broken inside her, she will most likely die. Put her in a pen, and using a standard heat lamp bring her temperature up to 85° F. Soak some wheat in a good digestible oil such as wheat germ oil, cod liver oil, or mineral oil. Feed only the oil-coated wheat for two days. Usually she will pass the egg.

## Buy, Sell, Trade

Ad Policy for HOAGBA members: **The first 50 words are free.** Additional words are 10¢ each. Payment is due at the time the ad is placed. E-mail ads to smithkct@centurylink.net or fax them to 913-533-2497. Consider others. Change or cancel the ad when items in the ad sell. Neither the club nor its officers guarantee the integrity of advertisers nor will they get involved in any transactions or misunderstandings between a buyer and a seller. Due dates for ads & other information for each of the 6 newsletters: issue 1: January-February - January 10, issue 2: March-April - March 10, issue 3 May-June - May 10, issue 4: July - August June 10, issue 5: September-October - September 10, issue 6: November-December - November 10. Newsletters will be mailed by the first of the second month. i.e. Issue - January-February will be mailed by the first of February.

**FOR SALE** 4 BB Red OE Game Bantam pullets - \$30.00 ea. or all 4 for \$100.00. 1 Black OE cockerel, 3 Black OE pullets - \$30.00 ea. or all 4 for \$100.00. Benny Dean ph. 785-542-3135. (KS) (3/4/19)

**FOR SALE Pheasants:** Lady Amherst, Edwards, Golden, and Yellow Golden. Grey Junglefowl, Brazilian Teal, Marble Teal, and Mandarins. Al Novasad, ph. 979-836-8991. (TX) (3-4/19)

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**FOR SALE or TRADE** 2 2018 hatch Silver hens - \$30.00 ea., 1 Red Golden cock - \$25.00, 1 Yellow Golden - \$30.00, Valley quail - \$6.00 ea. **WANTED** 1 Silver Pheasant male, 2 Blue Scale Quail males, & 1 Erkel Francolin male. Jim Morelli, ph. 509-476-2831. (WA) (3-4/19)

**WANTED** Gray Junglefowl hens. John Smith, ph. 913-879-2587. (KS) 1-2/19)

**FOR SALE** 2018 hatch Iowa Blues, Black Sumatras, Dark & Black Brahmas, Spangled Russian Orloffs, Swedish Flower hens, Buff, Birchen, & Black English Orpingtons, Salmon Favorelles, Silver Spitzhaubens. Also selling my breeder Dark Brahmas, Birchen English Orpingtons, & Salmon Favorelles. Scott Gray, Bethany MO, 660-868-1450, [grayfarms@hotmail.com](mailto:grayfarms@hotmail.com) (3-4/19)

**FOR SALE** Birds of all kinds: Finches, Softbills and more. Over 30 species of finches, Quail, Exotic Doves, and a variety of parrots. Request a current list from [ksfinchman@yahoo.com](mailto:ksfinchman@yahoo.com) or call Mike Langerot at 620-429-1872. Shipping available. (KS) (12/19)

**Visit The Game Bird & Waterfowl Pages**, the online game bird and waterfowl since 1997. Located at [www.gbwf.org](http://www.gbwf.org) & the HOAGBA site at <http://www.gbwf.org/hoagba/index.html> (12/19)

Our 2019 **catalog** prices have been posted on our web site [www.poultrysupplies.com](http://www.poultrysupplies.com) (12/19)

### **This 'N' That** by Terry Smith

You may have noticed the words RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED above the address label. The post office requires this on all bulk mailings. The PO will correct an address if possible and return the newsletter to me with a 55¢ postage due memo and the reason why it was returned. If you have a change of address due to your moving from one place to another or from a new address being assigned due to 911, please notify me with the new address prior to the 22nd of the month so I can make the change on the mailer. It costs .302¢ to mail a newsletter bulk mail. If it is returned to me, there is a 55¢ charge for the return and address correction plus it costs an additional 55¢ to mail it first class to the new address. Please save the club \$1.10 by sending address corrections to me.

Several people in our HOAGBA family have some health issues so please keep them in your thoughts and prayers. . Herb Bastion, one of our members from Colorado had a knee replaced. That has put a damper on his hunting activities and traveling with Roger Graham to the swaps and auctions. Bob O'Malley, who has clerked the outdoor arena sales for many years had triple bypass

heart surgery on March 3. He is up and about and worked in the office at the March 16 auction.

Our deepest condolences are extended to the family of Victor Lickteig who died March 16. He was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer in early February and was hospitalized for about a week in late February, but went home where LaDonna and visiting nurses cared for him. I talked to him on March 10, and he was talkative and seemed stronger than he had when I had talked to him earlier. Cindy Hoffman helped LaDonna get her cages ready to sell her Silkies at the auction and Randy Winterbarger helped LaDonna box up her birds and transported them to the sale. Friends help friends in time of need.

On February 28, I received the following information about the Newcastle outbreak in California from Jennifer Ukena at the Kansas Department of Animal who forwarded an email regarding the quarantine notice and requirements and permitting issued by the California Department of Agriculture in order to ship in California: "Please note below the new vND quarantine areas and import requirements for live poultry/hatching eggs from state veterinarian Dr. Annette Jones, California Department of Agriculture. The quarantine notice and maps links can be found on the right side of the webpage. Any shippers from your state who want to ship into LA County and the western part of San Bernardino County and Riverside County must contact CDFA for more information about requirements and permitting before shipping."

vND webpage updates: [https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal\\_Health/Newcastle\\_Disease\\_Info.html](https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/Newcastle_Disease_Info.html)

This link is the official notice:  
[https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal\\_Health/pdfs/VND\\_RegionalQuarantine\\_1.pdf](https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/pdfs/VND_RegionalQuarantine_1.pdf)

Thank you for your cooperation. Please decline any digital VS 9-3 forms coming through your system if the shipment address is in any of the new quarantine zones, unless the shipper has a special permit issued by CDFA.

Monica Della Maggiore, California Poultry Federation  
California Poultry Health Board Administrator/NPIP  
4640 Spyres Way Suite 4  
Modesto, CA 95356  
(209) 576-6355  
[www.cpif.org](http://www.cpif.org)

It was a good auction. Particulars will appear in the next NL. **THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY.**

The article on page 7 is reprinted from the April, 1992, Heartland News. The article was originally printed in the Jan., 1992 newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Pheasant & Waterfowl Association. The author who was a member of HOAGBA & RMP&W gave me permission to print the article.

## Humidity

by Stan Skinger

This is a difficult subject and concept. There are so many variable that I even hesitate to begin. Examples: A spring rain will change humidity differently than a spring snow. A cool day has a different effect than a hot one, and a hot, raining day is different again.

We can control some factors and have to live with others.

- For placement of the incubator, find a secluded location which is as undisturbed as possible, perhaps a basement room.
- Use a wet bulb system to measure the humidity. A "wet bulb" means the probe of a thermometer is encased in a wet sleeve where the evaporation off of the sleeve lowers the measured temperature by a certain number of degrees. This reading can be converted, by using a chart, to determine the actual humidity preset. Using the temperature  $99\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  F, a wet bulb reading of  $81^{\circ}$  indicates a relative humidity of 45%,  $83^{\circ}$  equals 50%,  $85^{\circ}$  equals 55%, and  $87^{\circ}$  equals 60%. I suggest an initial goal of 83 to  $85^{\circ}$ . I would also recommend that you do Not experiment further in the first year, but concentrate on obtaining consistency throughout the entire hatching season. Remember, this is an area where the ultimate you may obtain is stability and not total control. Currently, you may have no stability and no control.

Some problems with wet bulb hygrometers:

- The sleeve/wick must have a constant source of moisture which requires a reservoir.
- This reservoir will be drawn dry, which means it will have to be refilled on a constant basis.
- The moisture on the wick will evaporate leaving a crust composed of the minerals in the water. This crust will waterproof the wick rendering it useless.
- To refill the reservoir or to read the hygrometer, the incubator must be opened, thus destroying, for a time, the humidity and the temperature. If the cabinet is opened to read the hygrometer and reservoir is empty, the reservoir must be filled, the wick re-hydrated, and the cabinet must be closed for a time sufficient to stabilize the interior. This quickly becomes an intolerable pain.

Some possible solutions to some of the problems:

- Install a plastic door on the incubator to allowing viewing without opening up the cabinet.
- Install a stand permitting ease of viewing, and while doing so attach a reservoir in a position to observe the water level.
- Place a refill tube from the reservoir which extends outside the cabinet to allow refilling without opening the

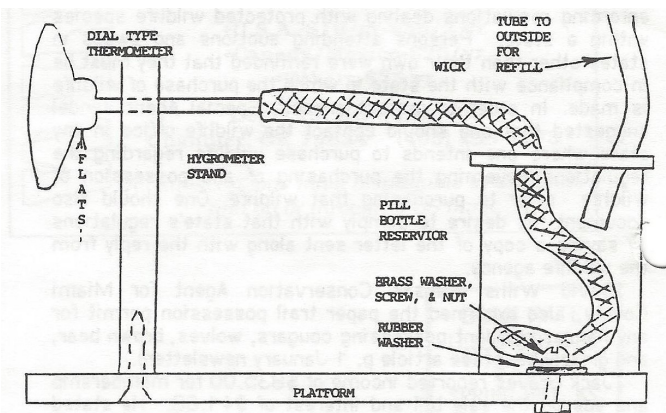
cabinet.

- Use ONLY DISTILLED WATER with the hygrometer in order to extend the life of the wick. The wick will last the entire season.

Additional Suggestions:

- Install an automatically refilling humidity tray in the incubator. Use a plastic sliding top on the interior tray to adjust the surface area. This allows you to have greater control over the humidity.
- Make sure that door seal really seals.
- Inspect the entire incubator for cracks, gaps, and holes. The only openings on the incubator should be the vent holes.
- Open the incubator as little as possible, BUT when it is open, accomplish as much as possible - set eggs, candle eggs, move eggs to hatching tray, remove chicks, adjust items as necessary, do a quick cleanup and sanitize.

The vents on the back of the cabinet are for the purpose of adjusting fresh air. (Read the operating manual for instructions on opening or partially closing the vents.) Oxygen is critically important for the developing embryo and the hatching chicks. Keep in mind that oxygen is the first priority and use the vents for humidity control only as the last resort.



The thermometers used here are the dial/stem type. These are quite accurate when calibrated correctly. At the back of the dial where the stem joins the base, there are two "flats". Using a small wrench to grip the flats, give a gentle turning to move the indicator to the desired setting. In order to establish an accurate setting, start with something known to be accurate and adjust the thermometers to agree with it. Using a fever thermometer, fill a glass with warm water and adjust the water temperature to  $100^{\circ}$ . (The larger the glass, the longer it will hold the heat.) Adjust each dial thermometer as this will allow the thermometers to be checked against each other to double-check the accuracy. The thermometer should be rechecked periodically during the hatching season. With the addition of a wick and water, this thermometer becomes a wet-bulb hygrometer.

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