

Ameraucana Bantam Bulletin

AMERAUCANA BANTAM CLUB, 6442 CHESTNUT AVE., ORANGEVALE, CA 95662

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is really interesting to note the various manifestations of coloring within the wheaten and blue wheaten varieties of Ameraucana bantams. The females, especially, express a wide range of color ranging from light cream with darker hackles to a sort of reddish chestnut. It seems to be easier, of course, to obtain the proper black (or blue as the case may be) coloring in tail and flight feathers with the darker birds. But this leaves room for something the serious breeder can aim for. That is, the standard expressly states the light creamy females are to be preferred; rightly so, for these afford the greatest color contrast with the rich, dark hues of the males. The two combine for an attractive combination which exhibits an extreme case of sexual dimorphism, part of the unique character of these bantams.

Now I have never maintained the wheaten coloring of the Ameraucana should necessarily duplicate that of the Old English Game or of any other breed. Indeed these other breeds have variations of their own. Therefore, I would propose a "summit meeting" of Ameraucana breeders at this year's national meet to find whether a general consensus can be reached on exactly what should constitute the proper Ameraucana wheaten/blue wheaten color expression in both sexes.

With this proposal in mind I will attempt to show birds representing, as near as possible, the full color spectrum in wheaten and blue wheaten. I encourage others to do the same. If agreement can be reached, we can all take a few feather samples home and hopefully begin to raise birds of a greater uniformity than is now the case. This should benefit each of us and the breed as a whole.

Concerning the national meet at Columbus in November, I certainly do hope to be there and meet all of you who also attend. I have learned since becoming a farmer, however, that I cannot often guarantee to be at a certain place some time distant in the future. This past year has certainly brought to light the truth of Proverbs 16:9. "The mind of man plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps."

It seems that truth is truth, no matter where or how it is found out, because the same thought was once expressed by the late John Lennon when he observed that "life is something that happens while you're making other plans."

Mike Gilbert



THE BUFF AMERAUCANA BANTAM

Buff is one of my favorite colors. Buff is the fourth or fifth most popular variety in exhibition poultry. It naturally follows that with the desire to create new varieties of Ameraucana bantams that buff should have priority. In a phone conversation with Mike Gilbert we decided to work unofficially on the buff variety. We also decided, unofficially, that the maintainance of the utility characteristics of the Ameraucana should have high priority.

In fixing the buff color one should go with several breeds having the buff color. I chose the Buff Orpington bantam as my vehicle to introduce the buff color. I choose the Orpington for several reasons: First, the buff color is excellent. Secondly, my Buff Orpingtons came from J. Ralph Brazelton and had been trap-nested and selected for high production. Thirdly, the Orpington bantams are exceptionally gentle- a trait the Ameraucana badly needs.

I proceeded to accomplish my goal by putting three buff Orpington bantam pullets into a breeding pen of wheaten Ameraucana bantams. I rotate cock birds every ten days so had a respectable gene pool. I set some three dozen wheaten Ameraucana X buff Orpington eggs and hatched 27 chicks. The hatchlings were a very light buff color with considerable rust on the head and back. The pullets had dark shanks and the males light shanks. I culled half the males and the females with a lot of rust at hatching. I kept three cockerels and six pullets from this mating.

The F1 generation was hatched in November of 1982 and began to lay in May of 1983. I culled again at the beginning of lay and now have four pullets and two cockerels. The pullets are almost passable Buff Ameraucanas; the cockerels leave a lot to be desired but both Ameraucanas and Orpingtons mature slowly and may come into their own yet. My strategy at this point is to breed the F1 among themselves and try to extract the components of the buff coloration in a pure form.

I now have twelve chicks after discarding the chicks with light shanks. There seems to be no sex-linking factors in this F2 cross. At this stage one culls vigorously- the light shanked birds, beardless birds, rusty birds, etc. So it will be necessary to hatch at least 100 chicks to get any sort of selection and one will have to wait for lay to commence and at that time cull for egg color and quality.

John Fugate

Ed. note: In correspondence with J. Ralph Brazelton mentioned above, he indicated that he, too, worked on a buff variety of Ameraucana over a decade ago. For those not aware, Mr. Brazelton did much of the early work on the white Ameraucana and was the source of this variety for our Central Director, Jerry Segler, of Illinois.

FRANK L. GARY MEMORIAL AWARD

At the upcoming national meet of the American Bantam Association at Columbus, Ohio, in November, cash awards of \$60. will be given for the best of breed and \$40. for the best opposite sex Ameraucana bantam by the Frank L. Gary Memorial. It has been determined that any specimen in the six new varieties which are in the qualifying show will be eligible for this award in addition to the presently recognized varieties. There must be ten or more specimens shown by two or more exhibitors in which there are cocks, hens, cockerels and pullets in each class. The exhibitor must be a member of the American Bantam Association.

Hopefully, I will be on hand to assist in making these awards and will be pleased to have those present to make it a point to meet me.

Kindest regards,
Frank L. Gary

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AMERAUCANA BANTAM CLUB ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Election of officers for 1984-85 is upon us. The last page of the Bulletin is a ballot for this purpose. Please vote for President, Secretary-Treasurer, and the District Director of your district. If you are uncertain of which district your state is a part of, consult the Ameraucana Bantam Handbook on page 15. In addition to officers, we have to ballot on a constitutional ammendment to provide for an honorary vice-president to be chosen by your Board of Directors.

Please mark your ballots and then send them promptly to Election Commissioner Bernard Kellogg, whose address will be found at the bottom of the ballot. The deadline for ballots will be October 15, so please make certain that Bernard Kellogg has yours by that date.

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FORTHCOMING ABC MEETS

- Texas State Meet Texas State Fair Poultry Show, October 6-10. Our first club meet in the Lone Star State. C.L. Donaho, of Fort Worth, will handle our awards on Sunday, October 8.
- Western District Meet Golden Gate Bantam Club Fall Show, Pleasanton, CA, November 5-6. Contact Marie Rayher, Show Secretary, 19822 W. Grantline Rd., Tracy, CA 95376. Always a good one and Marie will hang out the YELLOW RIBBON!
- ABC NATIONAL MEET ABA+APA National Meet at Columbus, Ohio, November 11-13

UNDER THE MULBERRY TREE

There was a chill in the air and the threat of rain today, so I wore a jacket to work for the first time since April. However, the dark clouds passed before noon and I came home this warm autumn afternoon with my jacket under my arm. In spite of a warm, gentle September, the leaves are beginning to drop from the Mulberry tree, so it knows something I don't. The young birds are still full of spunk, squawking and flying about when I let them out of their pens, but the old birds just amble out with quiet dignity before they scratch under the fruit trees looking for just one more grub before the change of seasons.

Since our last winter lasted so long, most of my young birds are about a month later than usual, but after talking with other breeders it seems most of us out here on the coast are about the same. Unfortunately, this is not a good year to be a month behind what with our national meet coming up soon, but then Mike Gilbert has already said it all in the last lines of his president's message. Of mice and men.

I am looking forward to the combined ABA-APA-ABC National Meets in Columbus in November as an opportunity to qualify the Ameraucana bantam for both of the major national organizations for which your Board of Directors has worked so hard these past several years, but most of all, I am anxious to finally meet those of you who have shared this burden and tell you face to face how I have appreciated your loyalty and efforts. We'll have a good time and have a complete report of our meet and meeting in the next issue of the Bulletin.

It was a pleasure to meet with members Marie Rayher, Jane Brooksher and Jaime Ikeda at the Brooksher's rancho outside of Tracy, CA, a couple of weeks back. Although secluded, the place was easy to find, as we arranged to read Marie Rayher's directions backwards, then pretended to see a big yellow ribbon on the Brooksher's mailbox. Jane's husband Cloyce, is a master at the barbeque and Jane is trying to cross an Ameraucana with a green heron- now that's kinky, folks. Jaime hopes to make the national meet with some of his whites, if all goes well.

Welcome to our new members Frank Wilburn, of Alabama, who was put onto us by Southern Director John Fugate, Edgar Foedish, down Arizona way, who waited longer than he should have to hear from me, and Steve Sargent, of Grass Valley, California, who worked with me at the California State Fair last month. Steve has more varieties of Old English Game bantams than a body can shake a stick at and left the State Fair with a trio of wheaten Ameraucana bantams as well.

Jerry Segler would like to request that any person planning to attend and exhibit at our national meet that has a spare black male or two without red in the hackle and with decent pea comb, to bring same. Jerry is looking especially for birds from his strain of blacks with sound hackles, so if you intend to show some blacks, please contact Jerry.

Our forthcoming national meet should be the largest display of Ameraucana bantams ever put together under one roof. We look forward to fine classes in wheaten, blue wheaten, white, black and silver, and lesser numbers in brown red, light brown and blue. It would sure be nice to see some barred there, Harry! There should be a minimum of fifty birds in all.

We did not have much in the way of nominations again this time folks, so I hope that you will take the trouble to vote, especially since we have a constitutional ammendment to vote upon. Please get those ballots to Bernard Kellogg by October 15 and I will look forward to seeing some of you in Columbus for our national meet.