



Bantams

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Note

This publication is a supplemental reference for members of 4-H poultry projects as well as providing information for others interested in bantam chickens.

A Message to Parents

You have several opportunities to help children with their poultry projects.

- Become familiar with the material in this publication.
- Help children set realistic goals.
- Help select equipment and supplies which are needed and which can be obtained.
- Help children understand and learn the tasks required to complete the plan. Do not do their work for them.
- Assist in scheduling time.
- Periodically discuss their progress with them.
- Help them recognize achievement and, when necessary, encourage them to do better.
- Praise them for a job well done. Praise from you, one of the most important persons in their lives, is among the highest rewards.
- Help them understand what might be improved.
- Help them understand their capabilities, strengths and weaknesses and encourage them to fully utilize their individual abilities.
- Help children evaluate their achievements and progress toward goals. Don't compare children's progress. Each person is unique and should be treated as an individual.

Introduction

Man's interest in chickens began at least 3,000 years ago, the date of the earliest records which concern domesticated birds. We don't know the early history of bantams, although earliest reports indicate they came from the Orient. The Japanese, tireless breeders in developing the extremes of form and feather, have done much to perfect bantams.

The word bantam means a small, miniature fowl. Today the word encompasses any one of nearly 350 breeds and varieties of miniature chickens. Most but not all of these miniatures resemble a larger variety of domestic chicken.

The word "bantie" is often used to describe any and all "small" chickens. Such a general term may have been satisfactory when most dwarf chickens were a general mixture of many shapes and colors. Today, however, careful breeding has resulted in many different types and color patterns of bantams which must be identified by breed and variety.



Value & Purpose of Bantams

Generally bantams are bred for color and form rather than the ability to produce eggs or meat. However, bantams can be and often are reasonably good egg producers. Bantams need not be and should not be freaks, unhealthy midgets or unproductive dwarfs.

Frequently bantams are kept as pets. They make excellent pets since they are easily tamed, contented in small areas and require simple, inexpensive facilities. Their initial cost is reasonable. Bantams will eat inexpensive, available feeds and are easy to maintain.

Characteristics of Bantams

Size Bantams should be small. Generally, adult bantams will weigh between 16 and 30 ounces. Size varies somewhat within and among breeds.

The introduction of new blood lines and growth-promoting diets have tended to increase the size of each generation. As a result, smaller specimens are desirable for breeding purposes to ensure that small size continues to be an inherited trait. However, do not keep freaks, runts, or unthrifty birds as breeders just because they are small.

Growth Each breed's growth habits will vary. Usually the tight-feathered breeds mature in about 6 months while the loose-feathered breeds take 9 months or more. All bantams tend to be a little more massive and somewhat heavier in their second year than their first.

Spurs, the hard bony growth on the inside of each normal male's legs, appear about the time he reaches maturity and continue to grow throughout the bird's life. They usually tend to curve upward and often become very sharp-pointed. Spurs were originally one of wild male birds defense mechanisms. Hens may also occasionally show some spur development.

Bantams usually feather quite rapidly. Feather color often changes as birds mature. Therefore, beginners should be patient and not attempt to evaluate their birds too early.

The true type of some breeds does not become evident until the second or third year.

Egg Production Even though bantams have not been selected or bred especially for egg production, most breeds are fairly good egg producers if cared for properly. Bantam eggs are about two-thirds the size of eggs from large fowl and often weigh from 15 to 20 ounces per dozen. The shell color of bantam eggs varies with the breed. The range of color is from white for the miniatures of the Mediterranean breeds to a light brown for miniatures of the Asiatic breeds. Generally, bantams have not been bred or selected for egg shell color. Araucanas are an exception. Color of their egg shells may vary but is usually blue to green.

The first few eggs a bantam hen lays will probably be somewhat smaller than her normal eggs. Color of the egg shell usually becomes lighter after the hen has been in production for a long time.

Broodiness Broodiness is the inherited tendency of a hen to remain on the nest to incubate eggs. Most bantam hens eventually become broody but Mediterranean varieties and certain other breeds which lay white eggs tend to frequently desert their nests, thus resulting in chilling and death of the unhatched embryos.

Many miniatures of the heavy breeds (especially the feather-legged breeds) are exceptionally good setters and mothers. Cochins and Silkie bantam hens are persistent setters and careful mothers. They are often used as foster mothers for other breeds of bantams or game birds.

Eating Quality Bantam meat has a very fine texture and flavor. Their small carcasses can't compete on the commercial market but surplus birds can be eaten at home. The meat from older birds may be firmer, require longer to cook and be somewhat darker than meat from young birds. In these cases, moist heat cookery is suggested.

Tendency to Get Larger Even though bantams are inherently small, some tend to become larger than desired due to today's growth-promoting feeds and good care. Out-crossing or bringing new blood in from another flock also tends to increase bird size. Larger birds should be culled and slaughtered.

Some breeders hatch eggs late in the season because late-hatched chicks tend to mature sooner and be smaller than chicks hatched earlier. However, late-hatched chicks will eventually grow nearly as large as chicks hatched earlier. It is best to obtain small-sized breeding stock when you start. Raise a good number of young and keep the medium- to small-sized healthy, normal individuals as breeders.

Breeds & Varieties

There are many breeds of bantams. Most breeds have more than one variety. Bantams are identified by breed the same as other fowl and livestock. Breed differences are those of shape, body outline and "type." Variety differences usually consist of differences in color pattern or special distinguishing features. The following table lists most of the recognized breeds and the most common varieties in each breed.

There is no one "best" breed. The variety of shapes, features and colors is so great that there is literally "something for everyone." The following guidelines may be helpful in selecting breeds:

- Games and Cornish need plenty of exercise to develop the desired hard feathering and muscle tone.
- Cochins do well in confinement.
- Crested breeds such as Polish and Houdans should not be allowed to get their heads wet in cool or cold weather.
- Don't let feather-legged breeds run in wet or tall grass or extremely muddy areas.
- All white varieties tend to become "brassy colored" if kept in direct sunlight, especially if they eat a lot of green grass or yellow corn.
- It is easier to produce good specimens of black or white varieties than of the parti-colored varieties, although some prefer the appearance of the parti-colored varieties.
- Adult Modern and Old English Game males must be dubbed (comb and wattles removed).

BREED	VARIETIES	SPECIAL DISTINGUISHING FEATURES
<i>Game</i>		
Modern Games	Birchen, Black, Black Breasted Red, Blue, Blue Breasted Red, Brown Red, Golden Duckwing, Lemon Blue, Red Pyle, Silver Duckwing, Wheaten, White	Adult male must be dubbed
Old-English Games	Birchen, Black, Black Breasted Red, Blue, Blue Breasted Red, Blue Golden Duckwing, Blue Silver Duckwing, Brown Red, Crele, Cuckoo, Golden Duckwing, Lemon Blue, Red Pyle, Self Blue, Silver Duckwing, Spangled, Wheaten, White	Adult males to be dubbed, tall
<i>Rose Comb, Clean Legged</i>		
Antwerp Belgians	Black, Blue, Cuckoo, Mille Fleur, Mottled, Porcelain, Quail, Self Blue, White	Bearded, short body, small
Dominiques		
Dorkings	White	White skin and shanks, 5 toes
Hamburgs	Black, Golden Penciled, Golden Spangled, Silver Penciled, Silver Spangled, White	
Leghorns	Black, Buff, Dark Brown, Light Brown, Silver, White	
Redcaps		Large rose comb
Rhode Island Whites		
Rosecombs	Black, Blue, White	Large disc-like white earlobe



BREED

VARIETIES

SPECIAL DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

Rose Comb, Clean Legged (com.)

Sebrights	Golden, Silver	Hen feathered males
Wyandottes	Black, Blue, Buff, Buff Columbian, Columbian, White, Golden Laced, Partridge, Silver Laced, Silver Penciled	Curvy, rounded bodies

Single Comb, Clean Legged

Anconas*		
Australorps	Black	White skin and foot pads, beetle-green sheen to feathers
Andalusians	Blue	
Catalanas	Buff	
Campines	Golden, Silver	Males appear somewhat hen feathered.
Delawares		
Dorkings*	Colored, Silver Gray	White skin, 5 toes
Frizzles	Clean legged, Feather legged	Reverse curl to all feathers
Hollands	White, Barred	
Japanese	Black, Black Tailed Buff, Black Tailed White, Gray, Mottled, White	Very short legs, large vertical tails
Java's	Black, Mottled	
Jersey Giants	Black, White	Yellow skin and foot pad
Lakenvelders		
Lamonas	White	
Leghorns*	Black, Black Tailed Red, Buff, Columbian, Dark Brown, Light Brown, Silver, Golden Duckwing, Red, White	Small, trim and stylish
Minorcas*	Black, White, Buff	White skin and shanks, large single comb
Naked Necks	Buff, Red, Black, White	Bare necks and no cape, reduced number of feathers over entire body
New Hampshires	Red	Light red plumage
Orpingtons	Black, Blue, Buff, White	White skin and shanks, loosely feathered
Phoenix	Silver, Golden	Long tails
Plymouth Rocks	Barred, Blue, Buff, Columbian, Partridge, Silver Penciled, White	Wide, flat backs
Rhode Island Red*		Dark red plumage
Sussex	Light, Red, Speckled	White skin and shanks
Spanish	White Faced Black	Extensive whitening of facial skin

*Also exists in rose comb for some varieties

BREED

VARIETIES

SPECIAL DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

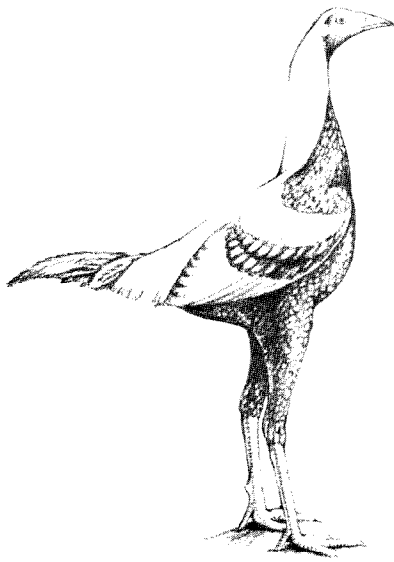
Any Other Comb, Clean Legged

Araucanas	Black, Black Red, Golden Duckwing, Silver Duckwing, White	Lays eggs with blue-green shells, often tufted
Aseels	Dark, Spangled, Wheaten, White	Tall, cruel expression
Buckeyes		
Chanteclers	Partridge, White	
Cornish	Blue Laced Red, Buff, Dark, White, White Laced Red	Tightly feathered, solid muscled, short heavy legs, broad body
Crevecoeurs	Black	
Cubalayas	White, Black Breasted Red,	Tall, long and droopy tails
Houdans	Mottled, White	Bearded, crested, 5 toes
La Fleche	Black	Comb consists of two side by side fleshy spires
Malays	Black, Black Breasted Red, Spangled, White	Strawberry comb, very tall and long legged
Polish	Bearded and Non-Bearded; Buff Laced, Golden, Silver, White, White Crested Black, White Crested Blue	Crested
Shamos	Black, Dark, Wheaten	Tall upright body carriage
Sicilian Buttercups		Cup shaped comb
Sumatras	Black	Multiple spurs, beetle-green sheen, dark faces
Yokohamas	Red Shouldered, White	Long tail

Feather Legged

Booted	Bearded: Mille Fleur, Porcelain, White Non-Bearded: Mille Fleur, Porcelain, White	Vulture hocks
Brahmas	Buff, Dark, Light	Small pea comb and wattles
Cochins	Barred, Birchen, Black, Blue, Brown, Buff, Columbian, Red, Golden Laced, Partridge, Mottled, Silver Laced, White	Soft, fluffy feathers and rounded contours
Faverolles	Salmon, White	Bearded, 5 toes
Frizzles	Feather legged	Reverse curl to feathers
Langshans	Black, White	
Silkie	Bearded: Black, White Non-Bearded: Black, White	Crested, 5 toes, black skin, hair-like feathers
Sultans	White	Vulture hocks

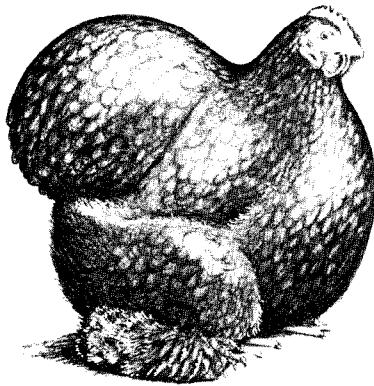




Modern Game Bantam Male



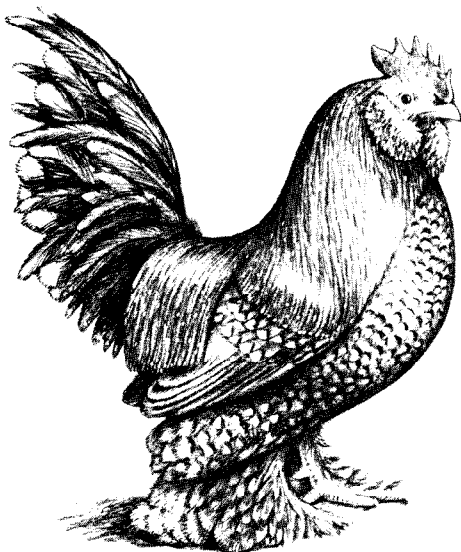
Gray Japanese Male



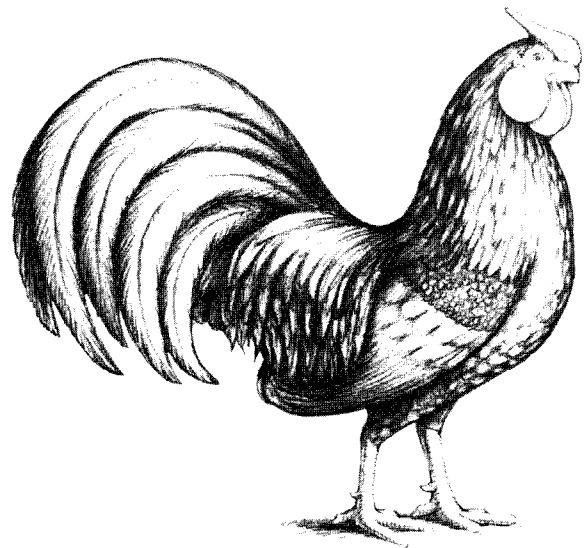
Black Cochin Female



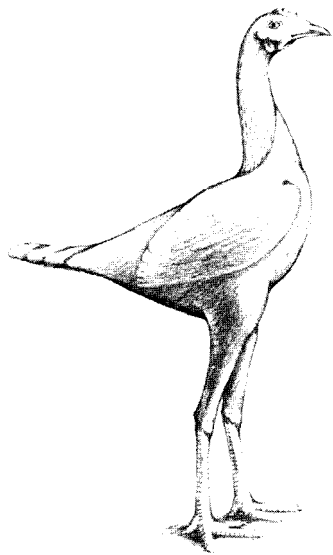
Silkie Female



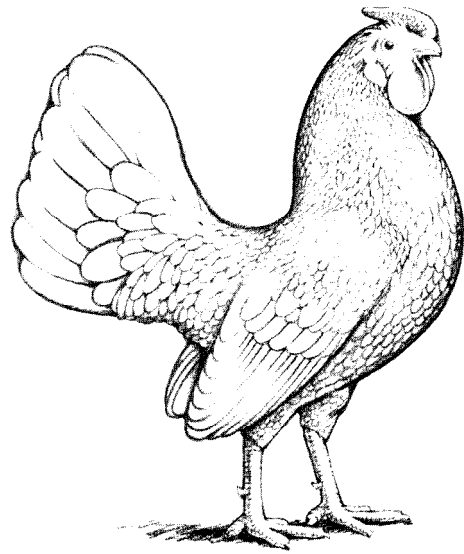
Bearded Mille Fleur Bantam Male



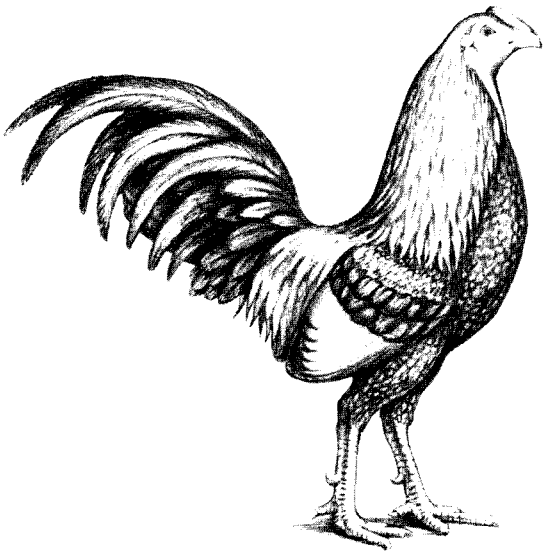
Rose Comb Black Male



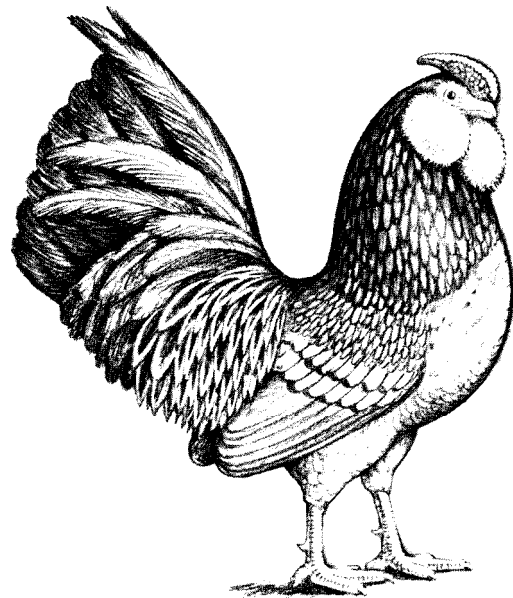
Black Breasted Red Modern Game Female



Silver Sebright Male



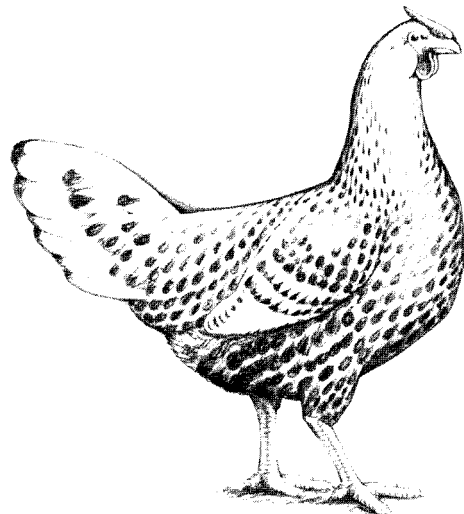
Black Breasted Red Old English Game Male



Quail Belgian Male



Single Light Brown Comb Leghorn Male



Silver Spangled Hamburg Female

Getting Started with Bantams

Start with at least three birds (a trio-one male and two females) of a breed and variety recognized in the **Standard of Perfection**. Three birds per variety is the minimum number recommended. Separate adult birds by varieties.

- Maintain birds in comfortable quarters. Provide feed, water and reasonable protection at all times.
- Keep a record of management practices such as type and dates of vaccinations, when birds were checked for parasites, dates artificial lights were turned on, etc.
- Try to rear several birds from each adult trio (six per adult female is a good goal).
- Maintain accurate and complete records on purchases, sales, egg production and hatching for each variety.
- Attend a major poultry exhibition (showing is encouraged but not required).
- Don't overcrowd your facilities. There are many attractive breeds and varieties of bantams but limit your choices according to equipment and available time.

Securing Breeding Stock

Start with good, young, vigorous breeding stock. Purchase breeding stock from an established breeder whose strains of birds are uniform. Remember that price is not always a good indicator of quality.

Try to visit one or more bantam breeders. Have them explain the characteristics of varieties. Then compare birds to illustrations, including those in the **Standard of Perfection** and select the variety which appeals to you. Check with the poultry science department of your state university and read advertisements in poultry publications (see p. 14) to learn where you can purchase birds.

Many breeds and varieties of bantams are available in most areas. It's best to deal with local suppliers whom you can contact for advice. Birds raised locally will be better acclimatized.

Selection & Mating

It is best to have only one male per mating pen. More than one male can be allowed in large pens or yards if fighting is not a problem. Usually,

however, more than one male is not recommended since they interfere with each other during mating and fewer fertile eggs result.

Allow two to eight females per each young, vigorous male. It's best to allow only one to five females per male if males are more than 2 years old.

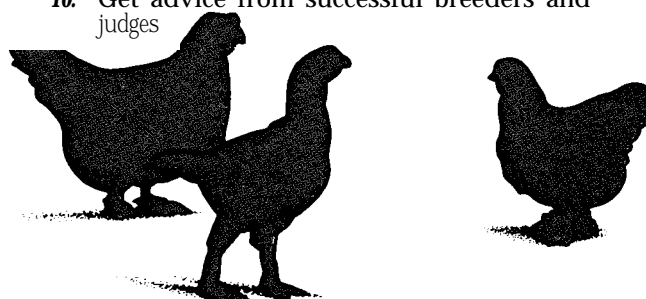
Except for old Cornish and exceptionally loose-feathered Cochins, bantams are usually fertile and relatively easy to breed. Before saving eggs for hatching, it is a good policy to clip some of the feathers around the vent area of male and female Cochins and other heavily feathered birds.

Artificial Insemination

The body confirmation or profuse feathering in certain breeds results in mating problems. Artificial insemination for these and old birds may prove beneficial. County Extension offices usually have publications which explain artificial insemination in poultry.

The following are some important considerations in selecting and mating bantams:

1. Breed only healthy stock.
2. Reproduce only from the best individuals.
3. Do not breed birds with serious defects or disqualifications.
4. Do not attempt to hatch eggs in late fall or winter unless you have a satisfactory place to rear chicks.
5. Make as many combinations as possible from the parent stock. Mate only the best birds to individuals of the same variety.
6. Raise as many as chicks as can be cared for properly. This will let you to be very selective when deciding which birds to keep next year.
7. Do not introduce new stock every year. A good plan is to bring in new stock from the original source every 2 to 4 years.
8. Start with good breeding stock.
9. Keep a record of and identify the offspring from each mating. Identify chicks by toe punching, web clipping or banding.
10. Get advice from successful breeders and judges



Incubation

Bantam eggs are incubated for 21 days. Seasonal effects, incubating conditions, or strain differences may increase or decrease the incubation period by one day.

There are three satisfactory methods of incubation:

- Broody hens.
- Your own incubator.
- Custom hatching.

The incubation method you select often depends on choices available in your area. Many commercial hatcheries are reluctant to accept eggs for custom hatching.

Several publications have plans for building a simple incubator and operating instructions. These publications or addresses for obtaining them can usually be obtained from your county Extension offices.

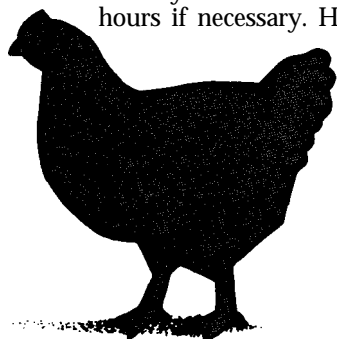
Don't overlook the broody hen, nature's oldest incubator. She can brood chicks as well as hatch eggs. Consider the following factors when relying on hens to hatch eggs:

- Provide a darkened nest which is easy for the hen to enter.
- Do not allow any other chickens in the same pen with the setting hen. Other chickens tend to annoy the setting hen.
- Make sure the hen is free from external parasites (lice and mites) before she sets and again before eggs hatch. Apply a good poultry louse powder if there's any sign of lice.
- Do not give the hen more eggs than she can completely cover (usually eight to eleven eggs).
- Provide a supply of fresh feed and water for the setting hen each day. She will normally leave the nest to feed for a few minutes each day. Feed all grain or mostly grain because mash tends to result in loose droppings which may soil eggs.

Rearing the Young

Handle bantam chicks the same as other young chickens. Newly hatched chicks can live on the unabsorbed yolk in their bodies for about 72 hours if necessary. However, chicks with

access to feed and water will begin to eat and drink when less than one day of age.



Bantams can be started on wire, cloth or litter. The feet of young chicks are small and tender. Use 1/3-inch mesh wire as bantams tend to catch their feet and legs in 1/2-inch mesh. Many fanciers prefer to start their birds on coarse cloth such as burlap to provide a soft surface which is rough enough for good footing.

Brooders should maintain a temperature of 95° F (taken at one inch above the floor level, the height of the chick's back) during the first week. Possible heat sources include:

1. Hover type brooders (electric, gas or oil)
2. Electric heat lamps
3. Battery brooders (electrically heated)
4. Brooder boxes heated by light bulbs
5. A mother hen

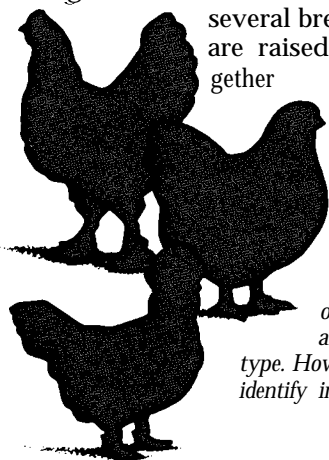
A large cardboard box with a couple of 25 or 40 watt light bulbs arranged near one end works very well if you raise only a few birds. Check the temperature with a thermometer and cover the box so cats, dogs and small children can't harm or bother the tiny chicks.

Make sure chicks have easy access to feed and water. As the birds grow, arrange feeders and waterers to limit spillage and prevent contamination. Clean fruit jar lids make good feeders and waterers for baby bantams. These must be filled frequently. In a few days they can be replaced with tuna fish cans or commercial feeders and waterers.

Dampness provides favorable conditions for the development of molds and disease organisms. Keep feed and water clean and make sure the litter on the floor is clean and dry.

The brooding temperature can be reduced about 5 degrees per week. Also provide more space as birds grow. Roosts a few inches off the floor can be provided at 4 to 6 weeks of age.

Each breed of bantams has a unique temperament and does best if raised with its own kind. Some birds are bullied and cannibalism and feather picking tend to increase when several breeds are raised together.



Type means body outline or shape. Breeds are characterized by their type. How many breeds can you identify in these drawings.



Feeding Bantams

Bantams require very small amounts of feed. Feed need not be expensive but must meet birds' nutritional needs. Professionals may use feeds formulated specially for bantams but the following feeding program will give good results.

Baby Bantams Use a good commercial chicken starter mash which contains 18 to 20 per cent protein. Feed this in granular form or as crumbles. Use no other feed. Make sure bantams always have access to feed for the first 6 to 8 weeks.

Growing Bantams Bantams more than 8 weeks of age can be fed starter mash plus some chick scratch. Gradually increase the amount of scratch offered until it represents about one-half of the total feed at 16 weeks of age. Growing mash can be substituted for the starter mash when chicks are more than 10 weeks of age.

Mature Bantams A feed consisting of about one-half hen scratch and one-half laying mash is satisfactory for males and adult hens not in egg production. Feed laying hens all the egg mash they want plus a small amount of grain and provide oyster shells.

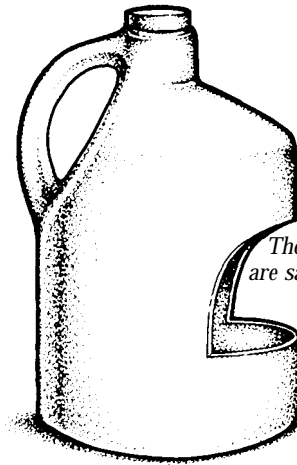
Breeding Birds Bantam hens expected to provide eggs for hatching should receive a "breeder" type mash instead of the regular egg mash. It's best to start feeding this breeder mash about 1 month before saving eggs for hatching. The breeder type mash provides more vitamins and nutrients needed for strong, healthy chicks.

Always make sure bantams have easy access to clean, fresh feed. It is a good practice to feed daily and to feed no more than birds will consume in 24 hours.

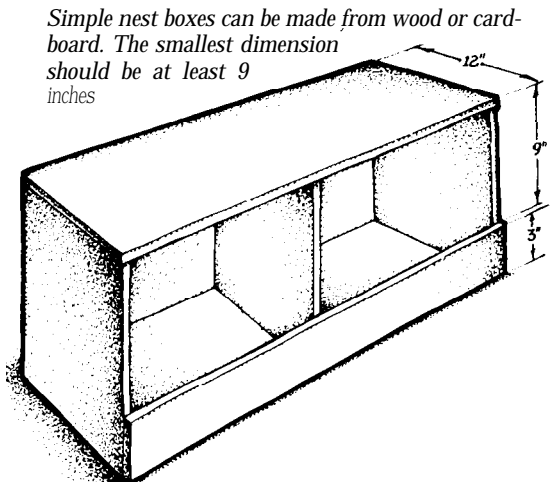
Store feed in moisture-proof and rodent-resistant containers equipped with tight-fitting lids. Keep containers closed except when feed is removed. Inexpensive, lightweight metal lard and shortening drums from bakeries are excellent containers to store feed, litter and small items of equipment.

Bantams relish a few blades of grass, bits of lettuce or other greens. Feed only small amounts at a time. Make sure fresh, green plant material is free from molds and chemical residues such as insecticides. Chopping greens into short lengths will help prevent material from becoming impacted in the crop or gizzard in case the bird overeats.

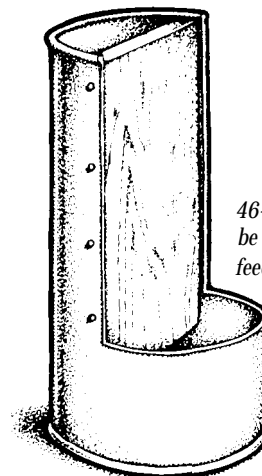
Supply grit to all bantams. Laying hens should have access to oyster shell flakes.



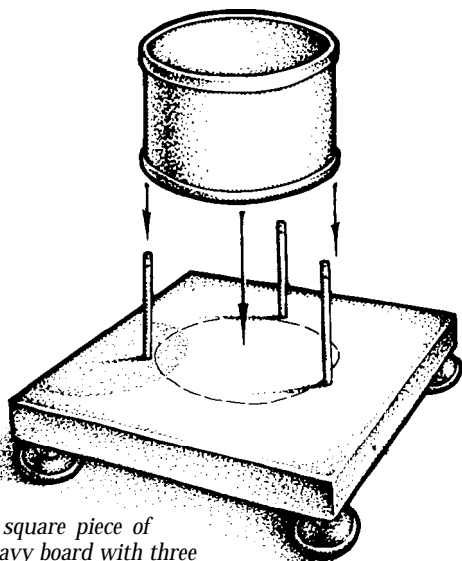
Good feeders and waters can be made from empty 1/2 and 1 gallon plastic jugs. These inexpensive containers are satisfactory for small flocks.



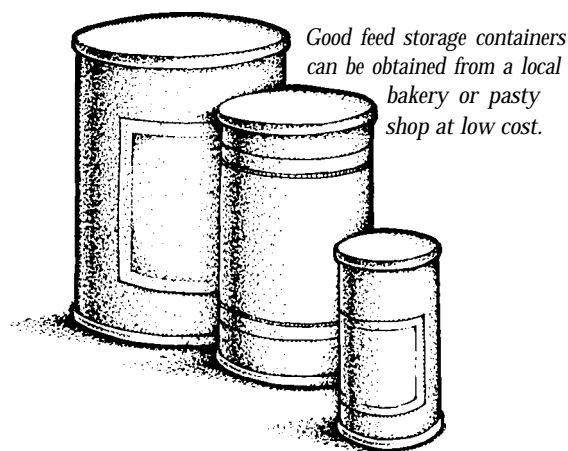
Simple nest boxes can be made from wood or cardboard. The smallest dimension should be at least 9 inches



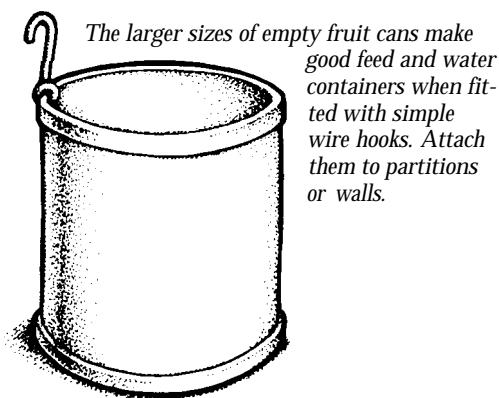
46-ounce fruit juice cans can be made into simple "self" feeders. Simply cut the can as shown above and fasten a piece of wood to the sides.



A square piece of heavy board with three equally spaced finishing nails makes a good base for feed or water containers. Spools or blocks to form short legs and allow air circulation beneath make it still better.



Good feed storage containers can be obtained from a local bakery or pasty shop at low cost.



The larger sizes of empty fruit cans make good feed and water containers when fitted with simple wire hooks. Attach them to partitions or walls.

Avoid frequent or drastic changes in the diet of bantams which might cause hens to stop laying and begin molting (annual loss of feathers).

Water is a part of good nutrition too. Make sure your bantams always have a supply of **clean, fresh** water.

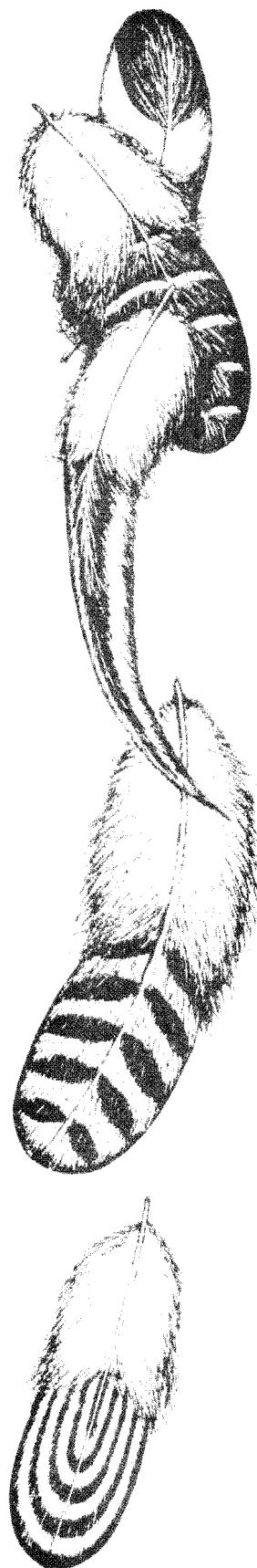
As shown on the left, many items of equipment for bantams can be easily made from used and scrap materials found around the home.

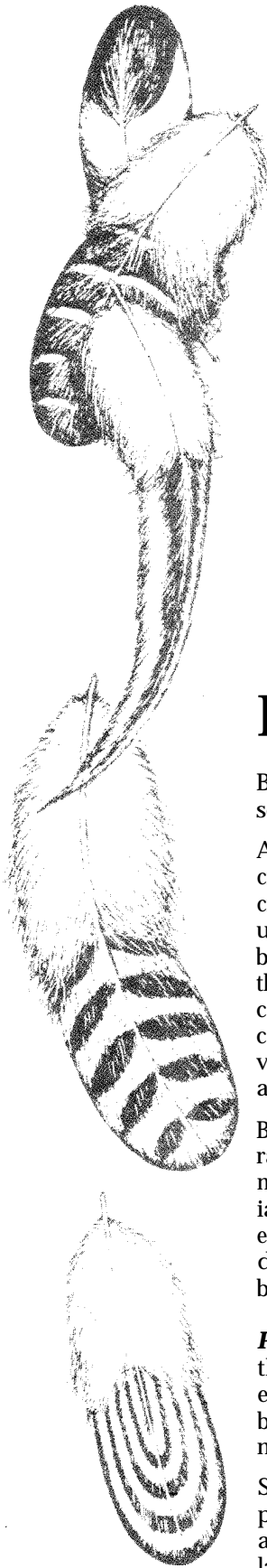
Housing & Runs

Satisfactory housing for bantams can be crude or elaborate.

In general, housing must provide:

1. **Protection from:**
 - rain, wind, snow and inclement weather
 - predators (cats, dogs, rats, mink, possum, coon, etc.)
 - others who might scare, annoy, hurt or steal your bantams
2. **Adequate Space**
For movement and exercise plus area for roosts and nests. The space required varies with the breed and the pen size. Birds in large pens require less area per bird than those in small pens. An area 3 feet square is the minimum amount of space required by a breeding trio. More space is desirable.
3. **Easy Access to Feed and Water**
Feeders and waterers should be convenient for birds to eat and drink and for you to clean and fill.
4. **A Source of Light**
Egg production in bantams, like all birds, is stimulated when day length increases. This occurs naturally in the spring and can be produced with electric lights at other times. Windows are usually placed in the south side of bantam houses. They should be kept clean to give maximum light. Protect them from breakage with woven wire so birds will not fly into them. Windows can be removed in mild and warm weather to increase air circulation. Electric lights can artificially increase day length for early spring egg production. Electric lights are also handy when working during the night.
5. **Ventilation**
Ample air movement without drafts is essential. Fresh air brings in needed oxygen while excess moisture, ammonia, and carbon diox-





ide is removed when stale air moves out of the house. The best arrangement for ventilation in small bantam houses and coops is to tightly close three sides and provide openings to admit and expell air on the remaining side. Locate openings on the side away from prevailing winds. The best location is usually the south or east side. Use two openings; one which is higher than the other. Cover openings with baffles or lightweight cloth.

A well-ventilated house must also have plenty of insulation and a good vapor barrier. Failure to insulate and ventilate properly causes moisture to accumulate on the walls and ceiling in cool weather. Bantams are never comfortable and seldom stay healthy in a damp house.

Bantams can be successfully raised indoors or in total confinement. However, they do enjoy direct sunlight and the opportunity to exercise outside. Consider using a portable, covered run which can be moved from time to time.

Diseases

Bantams are affected by very few diseases and seldom transmit any disease to humans.

All chickens need to develop resistance to coccidiosis. Provide a starter mash containing a coccidiostat until birds are 8 weeks of age. This will usually provide ample protection. However, if birds have ruffled feathers and pass blood in their droppings, immediately add an approved coccidiostat to the drinking water. These coccidiostats may be obtained from a hatchery, veterinarian or the animal health department of a rural drug store. Follow label directions.

Bronchitis is a respiratory disease which spreads rapidly among all chickens. A vaccine for this malady is available from hatcheries or veterinarians. Vaccination for bronchitis is recommended before birds are taken to shows. Vaccinate 30 days or more before showing and vaccinate all birds on your place at the same time.

Pullorum Pullorum is a disease transmitted to the chick via the egg. Carrier parents can be eliminated from the breeding pen by a simple blood test. County Extension offices may have more information about the test.

Seek advice from a trained veterinarian or poultry pathologist for other diseases or ailments. Many states have animal diagnostic laboratories where you can obtain diagnosis and suggested treatment.

Good care and clean quarters will go a long way toward keeping your bantams healthy but get professional help quickly when you notice a problem in your flock.

Parasites

Parasites may be internal or external. Worms are an example of internal parasites; lice and mites are external parasites.

Good management will help prevent worms. Birds raised on the ground, especially where older chickens have previously run, should be wormed at 12 to 16 weeks of age and again just before starting egg production. Worms are seldom a problem with bantams raised on wire or dry litter and away from older birds.

Lice and mites are always a potential problem. A good plan is to dust each bird on the first day of every month with a good poultry insecticide powder. Sprinkle some powder in the nests and on roost areas. An alternative is to paint the roosts with a poultry roost paint once a month.

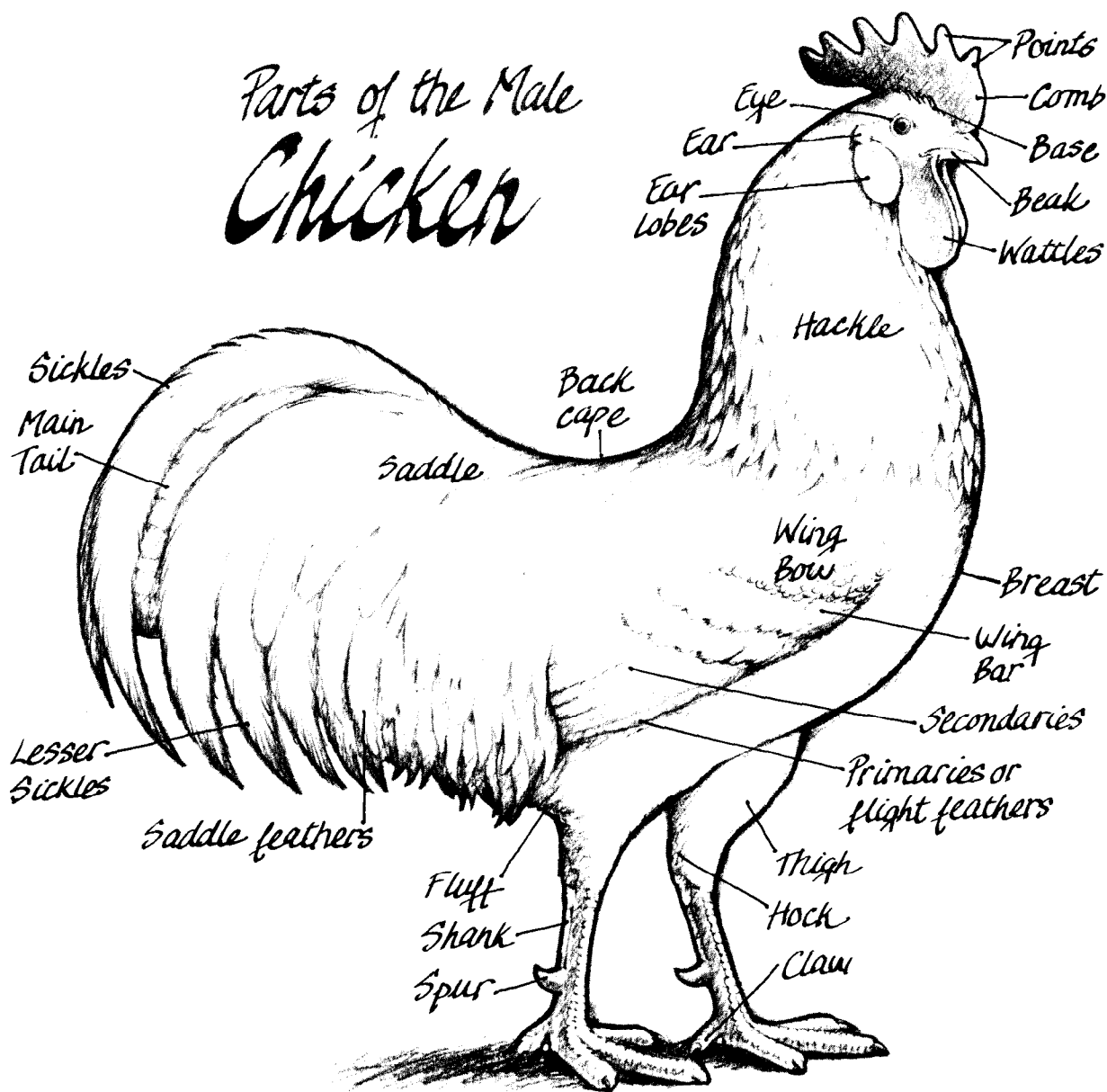
Selecting, Fitting & Showing

Birds selected for show should be the best specimens in their best condition. Birds should be clean, healthy and as near to complete feather as possible. Young birds should be at least 4 months old at time of showing; 6 or 7 months is better.

Acquaint bantams with show-sized coops several days before the exhibit. Handle them repeatedly and gently so they are not afraid and will stand naturally. You can teach a bird to assume the desired pose by repeatedly offering it bits of bread, grass or hamburger on a small stick. This will increase your chances of receiving the top award for which your bird is eligible. Blue ribbons often result from a good job of preparation.

Shows serve the bantam raiser in many ways. They are a chance to compare your birds with those of other fanciers. A judge's placings help owners make these comparisons. Exhibitors should be present during judging and not be afraid to ask questions. The answers given by the judge will help you prepare for the next show.

The awards, the sport of competition and thrill of having produced a winner add to the excitement and benefits of the bantam show. Bantams are interesting and quite unusual. They are a popular attraction at fairs and shows.



Fair Classes

Bantams are classified as follows:

Cock– a male hatched prior to the current calendar year.

Hen– a female hatched prior to the current calendar year.

Cockerel– a male hatched during the current calendar year.

Pullet– a female hatched during the current calendar year.

In large shows these four classes are set up for each breed and variety. Smaller shows and county fairs may have fewer classes. The various breeds and varieties may be grouped by features into the following five categories:

1. All single combed, clean legged breeds.
2. All rose combed, clean legged breeds.
3. All other combed, clean legged breeds.
4. All feather legged breeds.
5. All game breeds.

Review the **Standard of Perfection** to be sure you are familiar with the desirable characteristics of your breed and variety.

Reference List

Books

Standard of Perfection
American Poultry Association
Route 4, Box 351, Troy, New York 12180

Bantam Standard (and other books and supplies pertaining to bantams)
American Bantam Association
Fred P. Jeffrey, Secretary
97 Pine Street, North Amherst, Massachusetts 01059

Bulletins & Fact Sheets

Artificial Insemination of Poultry (Wisconsin Fact Sheet 31)

Chicken Breeds and Varieties (Wisconsin Bulletin A2880)

Conditioning Standard Bred Poultry and Bantams for the Show Room (Texas A&M Bulletin MP1066)

From Egg to Chick (Illinois Bulletin 878)

How to Operate a Small Incubator (Wisconsin Fact Sheet A3226)

Pullorum Testing for Small Flock Owners (Wisconsin Fact Sheet 50)

Showing and Judging (Wisconsin Fact Sheet 51)

Keeping Poultry Healthy (Ohio Bulletin 643)

Check with your State Extension poultry specialist(s) for additional references.

Magazines

Backyard Poultry
312 Portland Road, Hwy 19 East, Waterloo, WI 53594

Feather Fancier
R.R. 5, Forest, Ontario, Canada N0N 1J0

Hen House Herald
1011 Council Bluffs, IA 51502

Poultry Press
P.O. Box 947, York, PA 17405

Slides

Many Extension offices have slide sets available for loan to 4-H leaders and/or club officers.

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