

VARIOUS

NEWS, MISCELLANEOUS AND 'BUY AND SELL' MARKET

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A Word from the editor . . .

Dear reader,

The National Show of the NBS (Dutch Fancy Pigeon Union), held between December the 21st and December the 23rd 2007 in Utrecht, was a heart-warming show, where we, Aviculture Europe, were present with a display and floated along in their success. The Show had a record number of birds and many visitors, also from abroad. The National Show of the NHDB (Dutch Poultry Union), organized in January 2008 in Zuidlaren, was also very successful. The positive turn in the number of animals entered to shows is welcome, and a stimulus for the future as well.



In its turn, the Aviculture Europe online magazine is experiencing the same growth, characterized by an increasing number of subscribers and in particular by the great international interest for our product. We see world-wide copies of this formula come into being; a logical effect of our radiating enthusiasm. We wish all these initiators a successful development of their efforts. After all, if this contributes to a further extension, perception and better enlightening of our hobby, we all will profit from that.

What is new since volume 2008?

- Subscribers can now add photos with their free adverts for the Buy and Sell Market.
- Because of the new law on unwanted mails (SPAM) we will have to adopt even more severe security measures regarding our e-mails, the bimonthly Newsletter in particular. Consequently, our kind request for you is to register, by filling in the respective field on our website (left side), if you want to continue receiving our Newsletter.

The latest issue of Aviculture Europe, already Volume 4 number 2, is already in front of you, with 100 pages filled with interesting articles and reports. We hope you will find all the materials worth reading, as they have been created for you with all our devotion and enthusiasm.

With thanks to all contributors and subscribers,
On behalf of the team of Aviculture Europe,
Nico van Benten

THE FRAME

February 2008: Which breed is this?



Take your chance to win a free subscription!

Every reader may GUESS which Poultry breed is portrayed in 'The Frame'. Please mail your answer to redactie@aviculture-europe.nl stating: 'Answer The Frame'. With the issue of each new edition we will choose a winner amongst the correct entries. **He or she gets a one year free subscription to Aviculture Europe.***

Answer December 2007 Frame: **Gaditano Pouter**

We received only a few correct answers, so this was a tough one for you! This drawing of a Gaditano Pouter was made by Graeme Boyd. Graeme is more than happy to have us use one of his drawings. He told us that he uses soft pastels to depict the many varieties of pigeon, and he especially enjoys drawing the pouter pigeons. His work is popular around the world and the Aviculture Europe readers can see more of his art work at the Glasgow Feather Club Gallery at <http://mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/Glassfeather/gallery.htm>

The happy winner of the one year free subscription is: **Jan Buurmeijer.**

*Only to be won once per person.

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FASCINATING FEATHERS



Sometimes just looking at a single feather emphasises the beauty and uniqueness of a bird's plumage.

Pictured here are several feathers from the silver Brakel. The unique marking is typical for this breed, being broad, black bands on a silver ground colour. The black bands are 3 to 4 times wider than the silver colour. The black feather parts are shiny green and the feather tips are black. This marking has nothing to do with 'barring' but is an alternative 'pencilled' marking.

This marking also comes in gold and lemon, where the black bands are on respectively a gold – or lemon coloured ground colour. Also varieties exist where the colour of the black bands is replaced by white, namely gold white-pencilled and silver white-pencilled (a very soft tone, formerly called 'white-flowered').

Brakels are also recognised in selfs: blank, black and blue. The pencilled varieties are the most characteristic for the Brakel though. In the Netherlands the Brakels are recognised in silver, gold and gold with white bands (chamois). In Belgium the Brakel is also recognised in self black, white and blue.

Brakels also come in bantam variety, in gold and silver.



The Brakel is a very old breed from the region around Oudenaarde and Nederbrakel in Belgium. In United Kingdom and America descendants of the 'old Brakel' are recognised as 'Campines'. The modern-day Campine and Brakel are still very much alike, but Campine cocks are 'hen feathered'; this means that the plumage of the cock (i.e. tail feathers) is nearly the same as in the hen.

During the years the Brakel has proven to be a strong and tough breed, very well resistant to our changeable climate, not demanding and good layers of white eggs of 60 grams or more. A fine chicken for the backyard, and with their contrasting colour and marking also a very beautiful chicken to see.

A slight disadvantage is perhaps that they are good flyers, but this can be solved by clipping the primaries of one wing.

(More information on how to clip can be read in this month's Article 'Concerning Poultry')



Right: A silver Brakel pullet and cockerel.

Photo: Henk Meijers.



BERT OSKAM MEMORY PLAQUETTE

Text and photos: Joop Nouwels, on behalf of the Nun Pigeon friends in The Netherlands.

Since Bert Oskam passed away in October 2006, the governing board of the Dutch specialty club for *Nonduiven Vrienden* (Nun Pigeon breeders) thought that something had to be done to keep Bert's memory alive, having meant so much and for so many years for the breeding and perfecting of the Nun Pigeon in the Netherlands. They decided to have a plaque manufactured with the profile of Bert. It is the intention that this particular memory plaque will be distributed each year at the club show of the Nun Pigeons, to the one which becomes Club Champion that year.

The board members asked Mrs. Adrie Oskam if she was able and willing to award this plaque for the first time to the champion of the Nun pigeons' Club show of this year, and she thought this was a splendid idea.

Things really got an extra dimension when it appeared that it was their son Bastiaan, who had won the first Bert Oskam plaque, with an excellent young black cock.

This year, the Nun Pigeon Club show took place at the Avicorni show in Utrecht and the awarding of the plaque took place in the restaurant of the Halls on Sunday 23 December. Mrs. Oskam and her other son, Bartjan, received a nice memory and personal gift as a token of thanks for taking the honour of awarding the plaque.

In the picture: Mrs. Oskam (l) handing out the memory plaque to Bastiaan Oskam (r).



GAME FOWL SHOW IN BELGIUM



The youngest specialty club of Belgium, ' Dé Vechthoenderclub ' had a very good start with a fantastic first Club show with international participation. Almost 200 birds were entered, of which 90 Shamo, 20 Ko-Shamo, 20 Satsumadori, 11 Bruges Game, 11 Liège Game, 2 Tirlemont Game, a number of Indian Game, Malay, Yamato and Aseel. Also the number of visitors was phenomenal!

Left: The three Game fowl judges Karel Van Loy, Eddy Peiten and Marcel Wyffels discussing if this Shamo could be Best in Show. The answer was a frank and unanimous: Yes. Photo: Frank Brusselmans.

Right: Judge Karel Van Loy with one of the Shamo pullets.

Photo: Aviculture Europe.



The number of entered Game Fowl exceeded everybody's expectations; showing obviously that concerning quality and popularity the Game Fowl is alright in Belgium. The judging was open for the public and appeared to be a success and moreover very interesting for the breeders. It was not for nothing that the many foreign fanciers and visitors had travelled so far that day.

Below: A Ko-Shamo cockerel shown by Stijn Driessen. This one was Best Ko-Shamo in Show. Photo: Frank Brusselman.



The general quality of the 'Shamo' is very high. Even in the less common colours like white and cuckoo beautiful birds were present.



In the middle: Judge Van Loy with a mottled Shamo hen. Photo: Aviculture Europe.

More at <http://www.bloggen.be/vechthoenders/>



Above: Best Shamo in Show was a cockerel by Frank Brusselman, who also took this picture.

PIGEONS AND BIRDS OF PREY

By: Mick Bassett (Germany)

Raptors like the Buzzard and Red or Black Kite are rarely a danger to pigeons unless the pigeon is near death. Really the only threatening ones are the Peregrine Falcon, Female Sparrow Hawks (the Males being too small) and Goshawks. Magpies will take babies if they get in a loft; Crows and Jackdaws not so likely, they are less 'Urban'. Of-course in the USA and other countries they do have other Birds of Prey that are troublesome. In the USA Red-Tailed Hawks and Coopers Hawks being probably the worst, the Red-Tails 'hunt' in packs, so are especially dangerous. In the North of Europe Lanner Falcons, like a larger, different colour version of the Peregrine would also cause problems in Country districts, mainly with racing pigeons that fly over their territory. Migrating species do also take some but the period of time is limited, they are only 'passing through'.



Most other Birds of Prey would only take the odd pigeon and then only if it is sick or old; they do not constitute a 'normal' part of these birds menu like the Peregrine, which in towns feeds almost entirely on 'street' pigeons!

Right: A female Sparrow Hawk hunted a pigeon right into the barn, and bumped into the window. First she looked dead

Photo: Dirk de Jong

In addition to one of her former articles in Aviculture Europe on birds of prey, Wanda Zwart (NL) likes to share with us the following tip that she got from a falconer: It seems that goshawks exactly know which time of the day the pigeon fancier opens the loft to let his birds free fly, this of course when this is at a regular scheme each day. Varying the scheme will cause confusion have the goshawk wait in vain, hopefully enough times to discourage the bird.

There seem to be pigeons that are almost 'Hawk Proof'.... Read about it in the article 'Keeping Pigeons' part 3, in this issue.



In the pictures: A female Sparrow Hawk hunted a pigeon right into the barn, and bumped into the window. First she looked dead, but then scrambled to her feet and turned out to be OK.

Photos: Dirk de Jong.

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The quality of your chickens depends on many factors. A good genetic basis is a good start. Then your effort comes in: adequate housing, proper hygienic conditions, and your attention and care. And finally, what you feed them is of great influence. You can greatly improve their condition with providing the right nutrition in their various phases of life, no matter if you want to show the external features to advantage or to have the best eggs.

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When you want to have a brood of top-quality chickens, you must start already in breeding time. For the best fertilisation results, the pair you want to breed with must be slim and well-matched. Give Garvo's *716 fancy chicken breeder mash* or *717 fancy chicken breeder pellets* at least eight weeks before collecting the hatching eggs. Do not give them additional feeding in any care. Garvo feed for breeding broods gives the best fertilisation results and egg composition. The result: lively chicks that come out evenly in the brooder.



Chicks

Give Garvo *701 fancy chick starter mash* or *702 fancy chick starter minipellets* from day one. The meal has a good structure and the granules are of the smallest possible size. The peepers like eating it and easily ingest the feed. The emphasis is not only laid on meat growth but also on the development of the whole animal, whereby sufficient warmth and oxygen is equally important. Garvo chick feed is suitable until the chicks are ten to twelve weeks old. Then the chicks must be sexed and the males separated from the females. This is necessary because you can give better care when they are separated.

<http://www.garvo.eu/>

THE HAGUE: THIEF POUTER CITY

Just an average day in The Hague. Displayed on the pavement in front of the pet store 'De Zwarte Vogel' are a number of second-hand sets of pigeon pens; proper dookits. This is not a one-day phenomenon; all year round some are offered for sale, maybe only not so often in spring, because then the demand always increases a bit. More and more, the The Hague thief pouter keepers decide to pack up the birds and sell all their stock and pens. And if one quits, others follow, because you can only practice this form of pigeon sport when there are others to fly against in your area. As you probably know, this hobby is all about catching each other's birds. Thus flying with doos (males) which will return with other people's hens and the other way around with hens which will bring in doos to catch. Everything depends of the character of the pigeon, and of course the bond between the fancier and his birds also plays an important role.

Unfortunately that same recession happened years ago in Amsterdam with the pigeon sport, flying from the traditional style cabins. Today hardly any pigeon cabin can be spotted there.

Now the same recession has happened in The Hague; the older fanciers stop or move to another neighbourhood and young people or new, frequently foreign occupants are not interested in continuing this hobby, thus the dookits are displayed on the pavement at the pet store 'De Zwarte Vogel'. You can buy them for a couple pennies, depending on quality of course.

Nevertheless they are readily bought and particularly spread more in the country; it is no longer an exclusive The Hague Pigeon Sport any more.



GEESE ARE NOT STUPID

In point of fact it is quite inconceivable that the term 'stupid goose' exists, while this bird is not 'stupid' at all! On the contrary; geese are very eager to learn, curious and most of all: sociable. Next to the dog it is man's most faithful friend. It can get very attached. A goose can be an excellent watchdog ; even when the largest dog has not yet barked, the goose will already have noticed the danger or intruder and will make a hell of

noise to let you know!

If you are looking for 'something' to keep the grass down that would not be too difficult to manage, then why not try geese? 70% of their diet is grass!

Geese are hardy creatures who can live for anything up to 30 years. They are protective of the land, property and each other and really enjoy human company and often peer round the corner of the house to see what is going on. You sure can expect many happy hours observing geese.

If you want to know more about geese, we heartily recommend the article by Denise Moss: 'Starting to keep geese' in this issue.

In the picture:

A flock of geese, marching along at the Summer Fair in Peer (Belgium) September 2007.

Photo: Dirk de Jong.



THE AARSCHOT FOWL

By our editor.



Once upon a cold winter day in December 2001 we visited two fanatical Belgian fanciers, Hubert van Aarle and Fredy van Aarschot, who were busy with the creation of a new Belgian chicken breed: the Aarschot fowl. Although, new breed? In the book of Houwink (1910) the Aarschot Fowl had already been mentioned, but it is not much more than a single mention. Beginning in 1900 this was a local breed, but later it probably disappeared.

In 1984 an attempt was made to re-create this breed. There was only a little concrete information available; it was a utility (meat) breed, although it was said to weigh less than the Malines. Concerning the leg colour or egg colour nothing had been documented. So it was up to the initiators to think of an appropriate egg colour. To give it a characteristic of the town of Aarschot, they chose a very dark brown egg, resembling the colour of the iron sandstone, which is found in these surroundings.

Left: A Pullet of the Aarschot Fowl breed.

Photo: Dirk de Jong.

Even concerning the first attempts on how they started to re-create this Aarschot Fowl in 1984, no documentation is available; it is only known 'of hear say' that they started with a Brown-red Marans hen and a Belgian Game cock, and later also a Welbar was crossed in.

In 1994, the project was seriously beset with problems. That was the moment that Hubert van Aarle and Fredy van Aerschot got in and together with a few of the remaining pioneers put their back into the job.

Hubert is interested in genetics and in his spare time is always busy with growing things like strange, varicoloured little oak trees and tomatoes in unknown colours, i.e. all kinds of varieties of the tomato, from green to all sorts of red, including rose and redbrown. But he also likes to study hereditary in chickens. Fredy had not been a chicken fancier for a long time, but as he said: I am called Van Aerschot and I was born and bred in Aarschot. What could be a more beautiful challenge than trying to breed an Aarschot's Fowl?

It took a lot of patience. Sometimes only 10 chickens out of 200 chicks remained that were promising enough for further breeding. At the time of our visit the breed had still its growing pains and imperfections, but in spite of that the Aarschot Fowl had been entered in the latest National Show (that was in 2000) to show to the Standard Committee. The official recognition and standardisation followed in 2004.

Since then they are on the right road. With the Aarschot Fowl, Belgium has gained a fine double-duty breed; a beauty in the backyard, with dark brown eggs and the surplus cocks provide a good meat.

Shortened standard description

Fairly strong poultry, horizontal carriage and tail fairly high. The hens have a well developed abdomen. Single comb, orange to red eyes, red earlobes.

Leg colour: white; a little grey is tolerated.

Standard weight :

Cock : 3,5 to 4,0 kg.

Hen : 2,5 to 3,0 kg.

Ring: Cockerel 22 mm, pullet 20 mm.

The breed is only recognized in the golden cuckoo colour.

Right: Aarschot Fowl; a cock.

Photo: Dirk de Jong.



BROODING TURKEY COCK

Text and photo: Wanda Zwart

Some time ago we had a pair of Ronquières turkeys free ranging with the chickens. This always went very well until all of a sudden around March the cock got an intense antipathy against runners/joggers. The attacks became so violent that we had to put them in the barn. When we noticed that the hen started laying eggs, it was of course immediately clear why the cock had reacted this way.

However... when the cock decided to sit on the nest, we wondered if that happens more often, yet we expected that his 'breeding attempt' would not last and that he was probably in distress by being closed in so abruptly. But when after a couple days we discovered that the cock had plucked his breast feathers, we knew that he had seriously taken up the task to brood.

A week went by and in the meantime the hen had laid more eggs beside the nest of the cock and sat next to him. Brooding together, and from time to time the cock descended to stretch the legs (sometimes breaking an egg because of him being so clumsy) and then both the turkeys even sometimes changed nests.

Thus we were very curious to know if these eggs would even hatch.... And indeed something came right: 6 chicks hatched, but unfortunately only one reached maturity.

Later we read/heard of similar behaviour, but never before I had heard of a successful brooding of a cock.

Pity I have no picture of the brooding cock, but in this picture you see mother and son (r)



HOUDAN

Text and photos: Dirk de Jong



Photo: Houdan have five toes, a crest and a barb, and also a particular comb, the so-called leaf-comb.

The board members of the French Poultry Breeds Club help in an active manner to maintain the quality of the French breeds in the Netherlands and always try to ensure that there are useful breeding birds available of the French breeds that are kept by the members.

Are you also interested in breeding one of those particular breeds? Get in touch then with the board of the FHC. All breed descriptions plus photographs can be found on www.fransehoenderclub.eu

Once more we have a Houdan cock in the Netherlands! A splendid bird from France, coming from the French breeder Alain Caron and by means of the Belgian breeder/judge Gert Calcoen to the Netherlands. For several years we have only had 2 breeders of Houdan in the Netherlands, but in both of these the cocks died about 3 months ago, they still have hens though. After being housed for a couple of nights by the Secretary of the FHC (French Poultry Breeds Club), this superb cock arrived at its new destination, being the chicken house of the well-known Rotterdam hairdresser and breeder of crested French poultry breeds, Willem Schretzmeijer. Bas Boender, another active member of the FHC, brought the cock to Willem, in return for a free haircut.





ACTION 2008

Aviculture Europe is more than this item 'Various'; it is a quality magazine with over 100 pages. All readers that still have doubts if a subscription to Aviculture Europe is worth the money, we kindly recommend you to download our Free Sample Issue; just click at the red button on the left in the website.

Could we convince you? Then we have another special offer for you in 2008: each new subscriber can choose one photo from the Aviculture Europe archives and this digital photo will be sent to you at a high resolution, fit to print*.

Today there are all kinds of things that can be done with digital pictures. You could for instance have a photo of your favourite breed printed on high quality artist canvas, giving a fine piece of art. You can take your pick from all former issues (in the archives) or from the issues that will be published during 2008. Of course this action also holds for the readers that renew their subscription in 2008.

*Note: The quality of the original photos is much better than the ones in the digital magazine, due to the fact that the latter have to be as 'light' as possible in order not to slow down the downloading time.

FEBRUARY 14th – VALENTINE'S DAYS



This photo was taken by our photographer Dirk de Jong at the Bruges Show, October 2007. The pair of Black Swans form a perfect 'heart of love' with their necks, as Dirk described.

Swans mate for life. If a mate is lost then the surviving mate will go through a grieving process like humans do, after which it will either stay where it is on its own, fly off and find a new stretch of water to live on (where a new mate may fly in and join it) or fly off and re-join a flock.

Knowing this, we think this photo makes the ultimate Valentine's greeting card!