

# INDIAN RUNNER DUCK CLUB



**I R D C Dec 2022**



*Ballymena Poultry Club's 1st show. Held on Saturday 8th of October. Despite a lot fewer entries than normal there were still some beautiful Runners on display and a chance for breeders to get together to examine this year's breeding. Best Runner was a 2022 Fawn ducklet shown by Adams&McLaren*



**IRDC**

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Cover: *Fawn female 2022*  
*Best Runner on the BWA Virtual Poultry Show*  
 Photo -bird and photo James Rigby

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**SECRETARY**

A whole year with no birds shows in Britain. People here have looked enviously at Northern Ireland and Germany where bird gatherings have carried on. I personally agree with Defra regarding the ban on bird gatherings, and I think most other people do as well, but one does wonder how infectious we bird keepers really are?

One keeper was taken to task by the owner of the broiler shed almost next door to his holding because, in theory, the keeper was breaking best biosecurity recommendations. The retort to the poultry meat producer was that the crates of broilers leaving for slaughter shed feathers all along the route they take. So, which was the bigger risk? A sedentary flock? Or a business which can potentially spread the risk over a large area via fomites?

**Do ‘backyarders’ cause a problem?**

James Rigby and Chris Ashton both attend Defra/APHA stakeholder meetings via Teams to get the latest situation and to give an assessment of the situation from the point of view of the hobby holder. We have criticised the use of the term ‘backyard poultry’ which implies crowded, dirty conditions and poor welfare - when in fact these gardens and smallholdings have birds in far better conditions than those in poultry sheds.

Broilers have been selected to grow so fast they reach slaughter weight in 35 days. During that time, some of these ‘franchickens’ have already succumbed and have been binned. The atmosphere in the sheds is stifling with ammonia and small particles, and the birds develop hock burns from the droppings collected in the bedding. The sheds look OK when there are only small chicks there - but that soon changes as they grow because there is then only 1.5 sq. ft per bird. Some birds become unable to support their own weight. They are basically unhealthy and are being treated as a biochemical reaction to provide cheap protein. No wonder they succumb so easily to virus infections.

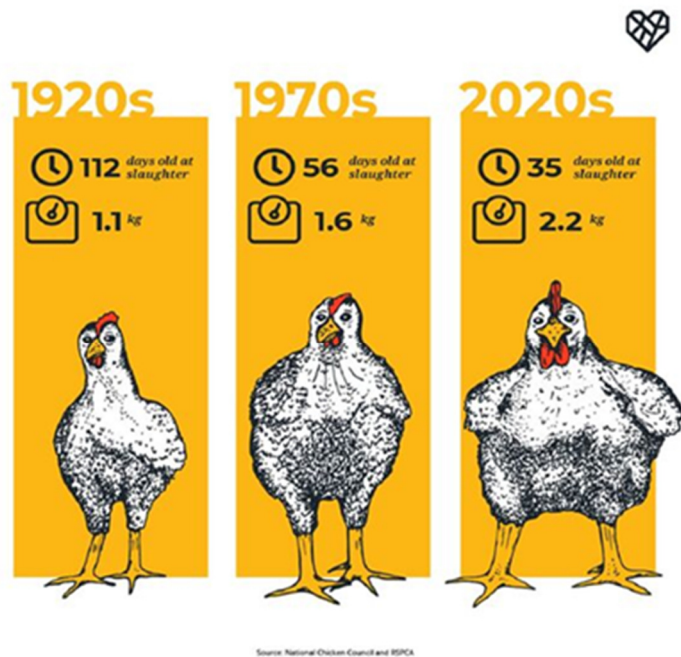
Campaigns coordinator for The Humane League UK, Jodi Darwood, told Express.co.uk: “I think one of the big problems is that many people, including Lidl’s own employees, are unaware of the horrific conditions and suffering that these chickens and their supply chain is causing.”

“Fast-growing chicken breeds grow from birth to slaughter weight in around

35 days - but the changes to their biology to achieve this can cause congenital diseases. These include heart attacks, lameness, green muscle disease (where muscles atrophy), ascites (where water collects in the abdomen, leading to constant pain) and organ failure. For some fast-growing chickens, their legs can't function due to the weight of their bodies, forcing them to lie in their own waste - which in turn causes burns."

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1698635/lidl-chicken-farming-free-range-battery-fast-growth-humane-league>

More news also at <https://www.euronews.com/green/2022/04/24/franken chickens-the-nightmarish-reality-of-how-chickens-are-farmed-in-the-uk>



**We need higher welfare livestock units even for our own good**

"Researchers ... carried out tests for superbugs in rivers alongside a dozen intensive and higher-welfare pig and poultry farms in Warwickshire, Herefordshire, Devon, Norfolk and the Wye Valley and in the slurry from four intensive dairy farms and in one chicken litter sample. They said they found

a range of antibiotic-resistant genes and resistant strains of bacteria, Escherichia coli (E. coli) and Staphylococcus aureus (S. aureus).

Higher levels of at least one type of resistance were found downstream of five of out eight intensive farms. None of the four higher welfare outdoor pig or chicken farms tested had higher levels of any type of resistance downstream than was found upstream, according to the report.

Overall, our findings suggest that factory farms are likely to be discharging resistance genes and superbugs into public waterways ... It's a no-brainer. The excreta which comes out of an industrial pig or poultry environment is then spread so that it feeds into the groundwater and into the rivers. That causes a major disruption to the balance of nature."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-63666024.amp>

**The UK poultry industry is still under siege from avian influenza, with its worst outbreak figures ever**

The UK commercial poultry figures are even worse than those current in France. Last year, it was the other way around with over 1000 cases recorded in the French industry, many of them in the Dordogne in the duck farming country. This year, in Britain, the attack is two pronged. As well as the wild migratory waterfowl population being a potential source of infection, the virus has now become entrenched in the sea bird population with distressing results

Reported by RSPB: This summer alone, the virus has killed tens of thousands of seabirds, including those in our key colonies of gannets, Sandwich terns, and great skuas. The disease has spread from Scotland, around England's coasts, reaching Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, as well as Wales and Northern Ireland. Last winter on the Solway Firth, the disease killed a third of the Svalbard breeding population of barnacle geese - more than 16,000 birds. This autumn, along with hundreds of thousands of other waterbirds, the barnacle geese will return to our shores. We fear that our over-wintering birds may suffer in the same way our seabirds have. We must be prepared.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/rspb-news/rspb-news-stories/avian-flu-devastating-bird-populations/>

H5N1 was briefly identified on a bird reserve, the Montrose Basin, in Eastern Scotland in the 1960s but reared its head again in 1996 and proceeded to infect the S E Asian poultry industry.

It's no coincidence that H5N1 is now so widespread and lethal. The expansion of the poultry industry has ensured multiple reassortments of the virus in densely packed poultry sheds, as well as opportunities for its spread – far more opportunities than the wild bird population could ever have achieved on its own.

The 2022 infections in the coastal sea bird population caused several coastal outbreaks in captive birds in the SW this year when, in an APHA meeting, the chair tartly remarked it was pretty much 'equal opportunities', for infections in captive birds and small hobby collections (as opposed to the poultry industry). At that point (August 31st), the south west was declared a Prevention Zone, well before the Prevention Zone was declared for Britain, starting on October 17th.

As the summer went on, infections became concentrated in East Anglia with devastating results for the commercial free range chicken, turkey and goose enterprises. A Prevention Zone was declared September 27 (for Norfolk, Suffolk and parts of Essex), and the housing order was also introduced for this region October 12th.

In addition, there have been infections in previous hot spots (South Derbyshire, East Lincs and Lancashire) but Defra held off prescribing the housing order for the whole of England until November 7th.

Although the poultry industry has wanted 'backyard poultry keepers' to house their birds for some time, keepers of smaller hobby flocks are grateful that DEFRA waited and watched rather than reacting too soon. It is understandable that the industry wants the housing order – a lot of money is at stake.

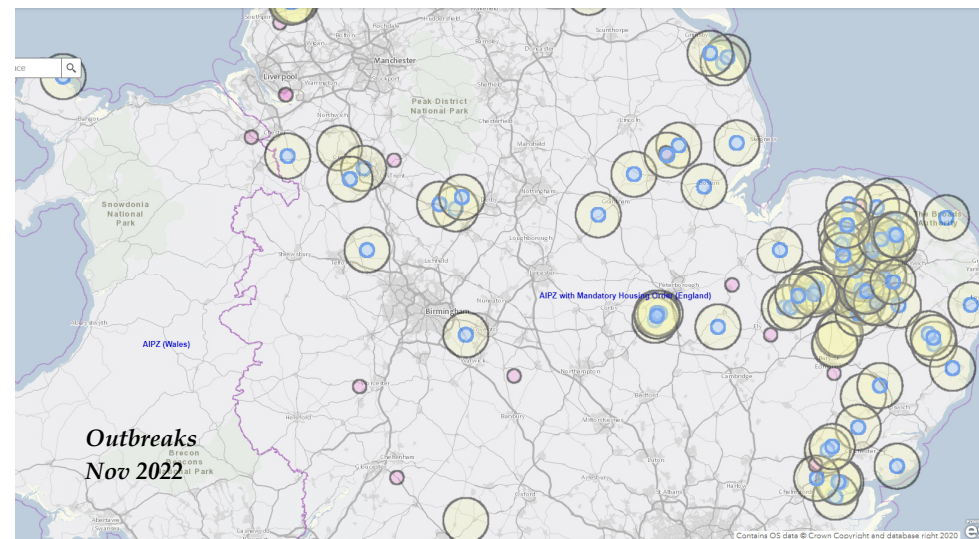
Wales waited to impose a housing order until 2nd December. We've been fortunate so far. There are just two outbreaks at present (6/12/22) on the interactive map.

<https://gov.wales/avian-influenza-bird-flu-latest-update>

The most numerous outbreaks have, so far, been in Lincolnshire; the loop that stretches from Lancashire along the Trent Valley; the Vale of York; and the concentration in East Anglia. <https://defra.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8cb1883eda5547c6b91b5d5e6aeba90d>

### Peak Poultry

These outbreaks seem to be concentrated in the same places each year. We



have suggested to Defra (see the points sent below) that the UK has reached 'peak poultry'. We must be at the point where it is not cost effective to have so many poultry sheds. And it would be better to scale the industry down and locate it in areas of the country where outbreaks are fewer.

- We are grateful that Britain has now been divided into regions where appropriate levels of control can be used in higher risk areas, rather than blanket coverage.
- We also note that the global and UK poultry population has continued to grow reaching an estimated 36 billion at any one point in time. The UK poultry density maps provided in Defra reports also indicate an increase in density in areas which are most prone to AI outbreaks. Obviously, if there are poultry units at high density, then there will be more outbreaks. Yet some of these areas are also the ones designated at high risk from wild bird incursions. Thus we wonder if there is now a national policy for assessing the desirability of new poultry unit development in such areas?
- As pointed out in an earlier meeting with Defra, the high density of intensive poultry units is causing environmental degradation on the River Wye (negated in a previous meeting but confirmed in another recent piece of research/article in the Guardian [2]).
- Therefore, if intensification of poultry production is causing environ-

Helen Browning Chief Executive of the Soil Association

<https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/>

As it happens, some farmers hit by avian flu will not be restocking. As well as that loss because of disease, it has not been publicised enough that the price that supermarkets pay farmers for eggs is below the cost of production – hence the egg shortage. That shortage will grow as replacements for the laying flock will not be bought. In the news today (6.12.22) the government has been warned we are sleepwalking into a UK food supply crisis.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-63864786>

**BBC ‘Farming Today’**

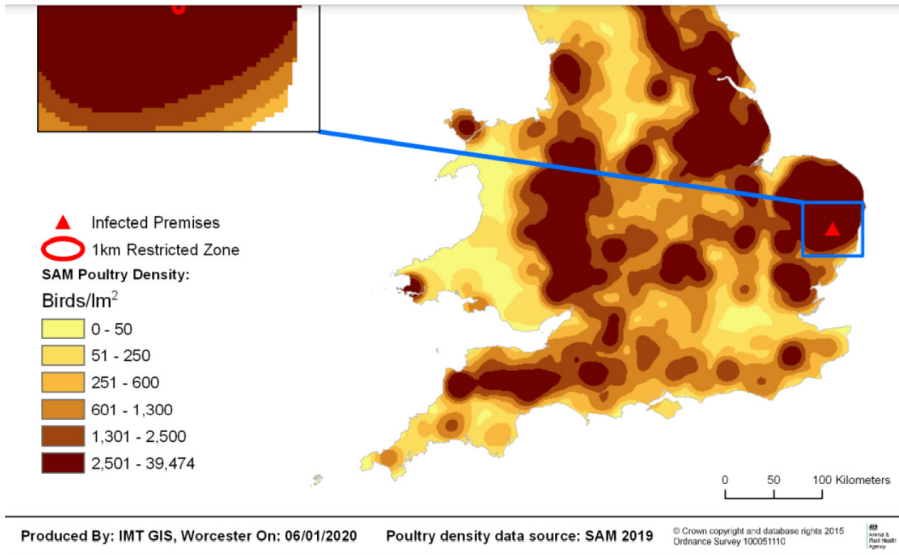
News on Avian Influenza at the BBC, November 2022 [Summary]

Defra believes the disease is not being spread from farm to farm, or even from garden flocks to farms, but from wild birds to farmed poultry. Insecure poultry housing is letting in wild birds, or just their droppings, thus allowing the virus to spread into commercial flocks. Just a tiny amount of infected bird dropping with let the virus multiply in housed poultry.

Commercial poultry farms are run like a military operation. Everyone washes their feet. Everyone checks biosecurity. Most of the time, precautions are good enough, but this high level of biosecurity has to be maintained 24/7. Any tiny slip leaves you exposed. Housing is not a panacea – it helps, but it does not completely stop the virus because you have got movement of people/equipment/bedding into the poultry sheds.

Vaccination is still not allowed in the UK and the EU. The vaccines commercially available are not particularly effective for this virus. However, Norfolk Poultry, which has about 50 farmers with organic free-range farms, commented that chickens are already vaccinated for several diseases. So, from a poultry farmer’s perspective, if a vaccine is available, we should use it as soon as possible. This is not a disease associated with free range poultry. It affects all poultry, free range or not. We need to be able to vaccinate our birds.

*There is good coverage of the poultry industry and egg production on Farming Today on a regular basis*



mental problems of both water and air pollution, should expansion be allowed to continue? This is a good example of industries dumping their costs onto the commons. It is a great pity that the recommendations of the Dimbleby\* report were very much watered down by the government at a point in time when it is widely acknowledged that factory farming is creating ever increasing risks with respect to virus mutations and resistance to antibiotics.

- Disease control would undoubtedly be far easier if there were a lower density of premises and therefore fewer interactions within a given area. There are economies of scale to be derived from having large operators within an area (with respect to staffing/requisitioning of materials/ marketing and disposal of products) but if this kind of integration increases risks, it then becomes self-defeating.

**Dimbleby Report\*** "Everyone knows farming has to change if we are going to meet our climate and biodiversity goals and improve the health of the nation. But it is far, far easier said than done. Dimbleby offers a nuanced and imaginative way forward, one which harnesses the capacity of farmers and land managers to be a major part of the solution in tackling these challenges, while being fairly rewarded for their hard work and ingenuity. Many farmers are up for the challenge, but will need these recommendations to be implemented to make this possible."

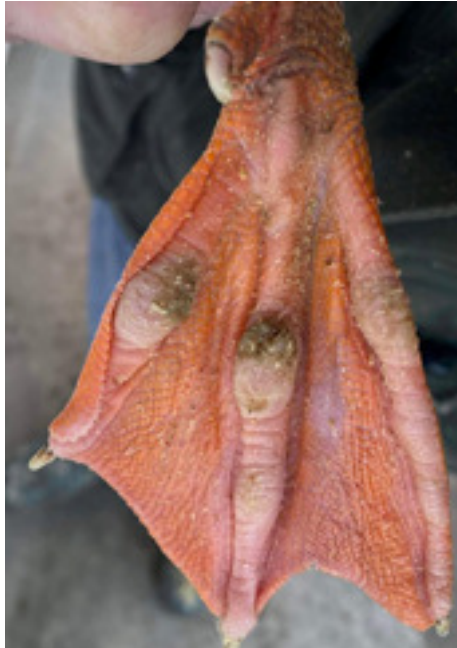
**THINKING OF THEIR FEET**  
**by James Rigby**

The current Avian Influenza housing/netting restrictions for waterfowl may affect foot health.

Build up of ammonia from faeces in bedding or bacteria in the soil can contribute to drying of webs, callus formation and Staph Aureus bacterial foot/leg infections.

Consideration for foot health actually starts from the moment a duckling hatches from the egg since the rearing environment and choice of bedding can have implications on their feet too. Hatching ducklings too early in the breeding season can prevent them being put outside on grass - which is known to help with healthy feet.

Domestics such as the heavy breeds, Indian Runners & Geese are more vulnerable to foot problems. Veterinary advice & treatment with antibiotics is often successful but some birds infected with more unusual soil bacteria fail to respond.



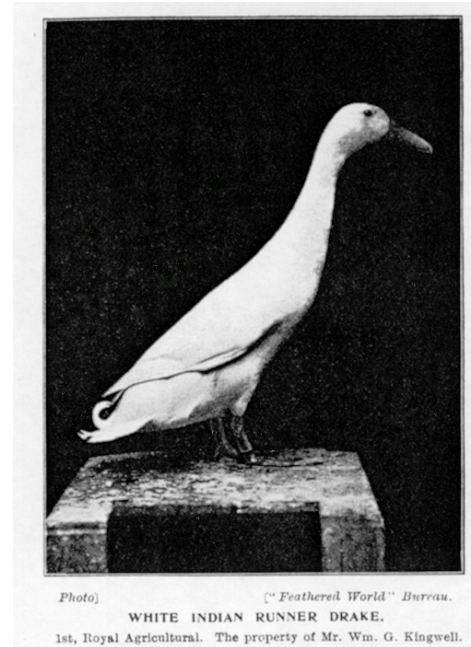
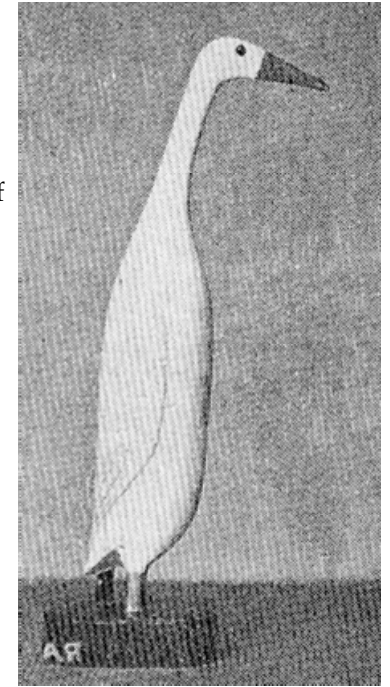
Apart from welfare, does extensive callus formation or a missing toenail impact on a birds performance at a national show when competing against fowl with perfect feet for Supreme Show Champion?

**Footnote**

White Runners are more prone to poor foot condition than other colours of Runners. The remedy? Living out in a pool, 24/7. [Ed.]

**WHITE INDIAN RUNNERS**

It's interesting to see how the style of White Runners has changed over time. With no argument about the ideal plumage colour, the focus is on shape. These are some examples of how they have changed since the early 1900s



Top left: 1st at the Royal Agricultural Show, 1912

Top right: Reginald Appleyard's ideal Runner shape – wax model from his 1st at the Palace and the Dairy Show, 1929

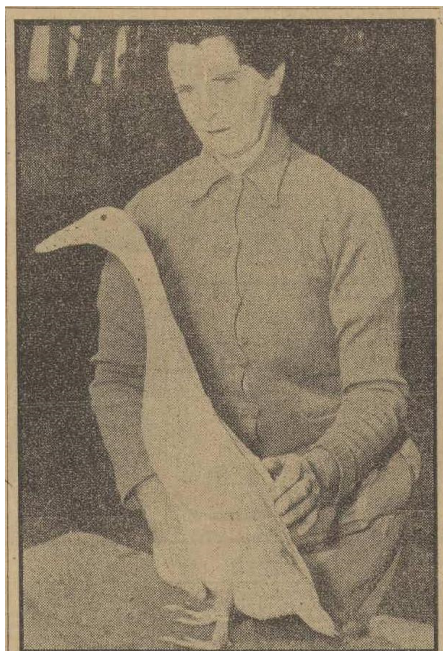
Bottom right: Taylor – a commercial Runner in 1916



A WHITE RUNNER DRAKE  
 (the property of the author)

**A Perth Show Winner in 1954 - Beryl the Duck**

White Runner duck belonging to Mrs Jean Wellman, of Tuart Hill – is the best duck South Australian waterfowl judge John Timperon, had ever seen. Mr. Timperon has judged waterfowl at shows in four States, including the Svdnev Roval Show and he recently awarded Beryl the special prize for the best waterfowl at the Claremont show. Mrs. Wellman, who runs a four-acre poultry farm, has won 92 prizes with her birds in 16 months. Said she: "I don't know whether I run them, or they run me." "The white runners like be fed right on the dot, and if I'm not there



with the food, they get in line and march up to me. I did not expect Beryl to win this year and was surprised when Mr. Timperon told me he had never seen such a fine bird."

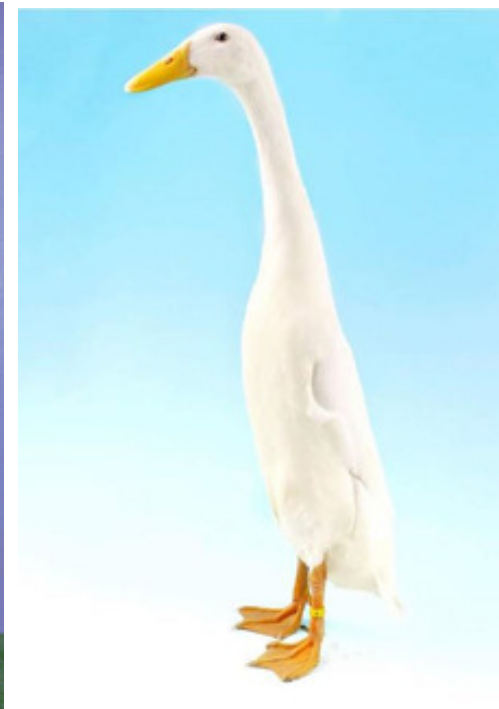
Daily News (Perth, WA : 1882 - 1955), Tuesday 17 August 1954,

Left: **White Runner drake Benn and Ferrugia,**

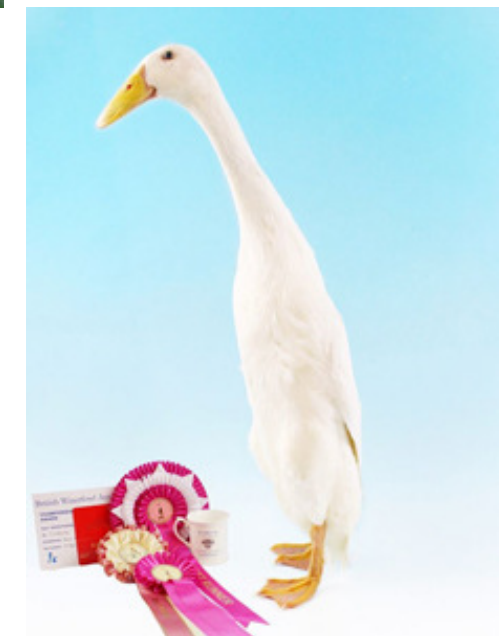
Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Sydney Royal Easter Show Grand Champion Bird of the Show 2021



Above: **Best White (female), Best Runner, at Malvern 1998, Reserve Champion Waterfowl C&M Ashton**



Above Right: **Best White Runner at PCGB National at Telford, 2018, Charlie Bourke**



Right: **Best White, Best Runner, at Telford, 2019 , Holly Harding Smith**



**American Types: Magic Man**  
**Best White -Best Runner- Champion Light Duck - Granite State USA Poultry Fanciers Show 2017**—young drake by Elizabeth London

"I am actually trying to get less convex bill lines and more wedge heads. I prefer them (probably because I learned that from Dave Holderread )- lol. The East Coast US judges seem to be split on their opinions regarding these heads. Magic Man actually got marked down a couple of times because of his head. Other judges didn't mind it at all. From what I have seen posted from other exhibitors from the central US (which isn't much) those regional judges don't mind a little convex line at all."

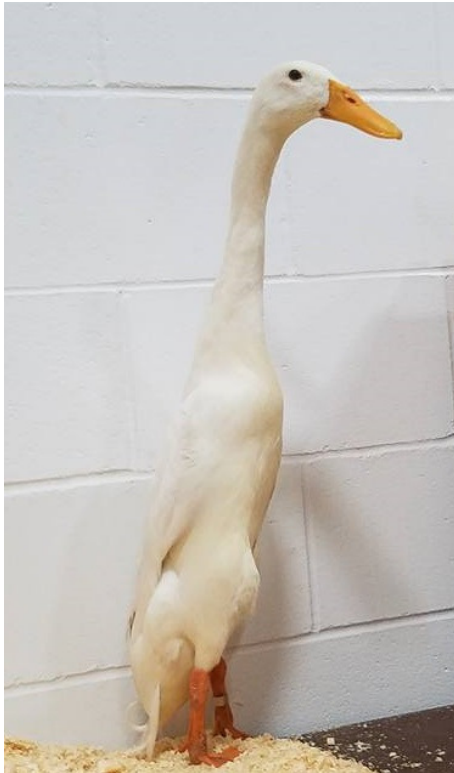
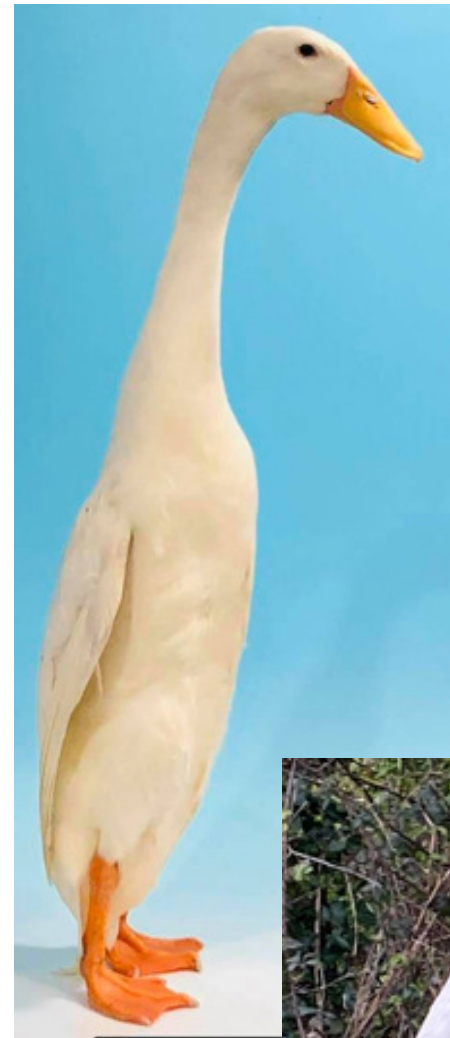


Photo INTERNATIONAL WATERFOWL BREEDERS ASSOCIATION website

**IWBA 2016 Western National, Hutchinson, MN - Champion Light Duck, White Runner** exhibited by Royal Oaks/ James Konecny



Successful strains of Runners from the UK  
 Left: **Mark Rubery's White female 2019**

Below: **James Rigby's birds 2022**

I'm sure we wouldn't all judge these birds in quite the same way, but White Runners are now bigger and bolder than they were earlier in the 1900s.





**CHOCOLATE GENETICS**  
**BY MIKE ASHTON**

*Chocolate duckling:*  
 Photo – James Rigby



**Chocolate = Black + Brown**

The chocolate phenotype in domestic ducks is produced when the extended black (E/E) pigmentation is diluted by brown dilution (d/(d)), a recessive sex-linked gene where the males have two (d/d) alleles and the females have only one (d/—).

Males carrying a mixture of brown and not-brown (D<sup>+</sup>/d) will ‘appear’ to be black, but if they are mated to a black duck half the female offspring will be chocolate.

Here’s why it works: a **pure chocolate** male will be (E/E d/d); a **pure black** female will be (E/E D<sup>+</sup> —). Below is a Punnett Square explaining what the offspring will turn out like.

	Males	E d	Phenotype
Females			
E D <sup>+</sup>	E/E	D <sup>+</sup> /d	‘Black’ males
E —	E/E	d / —	Chocolate females

Now, a **pure black** male is mated to a **chocolate** female:

	Males	E D <sup>+</sup>	Phenotype
Females			
E d	E/E	D <sup>+</sup> /d	‘Black’ males
E —	E/E	D <sup>+</sup> / —	Black females

It is important to stress that extended black (E) is not sex-linked, so it is present in both sexes. However, **without the black, birds are not chocolate**, merely ‘brown’ with other colours and patterns showing through the dilution, e.g. brown mallard, brown silver (Welsh Harlequin), brown dusky (Fawn Runner [light phase] and Khaki Campbell [dark phase]), etc.



Top: Young Chocolate males - at this stage they are really quite dark, and look more ‘chocolate’ by 20 weeks. [James Rigby] Drakes in the show pen should not be marked down for having a faint green sheen on the hood area; the sheen is characteristic of pure E/E.

Many of the pale chocolates show faint pencilling, especially in the females which even show mallard eye stripes in a good light. It is caused by being E/e+ [J Burrell]

Right: Chocolate female— Best Runner and Best Waterfowl, J Burrell at Whitchurch, Shropshire 1999



**BLACK RUNNERS CAUSING TROUBLE AGAIN**

Black Runners should be simple shouldn't they? They are all black. Genetically they should be homozygous for Extended Black, expressed as E/E. But they really do keep the queries coming in. As well as the white wing tips and white bibs that can pop out from 'all-black' parent birds, this year's crop of blacks have thrown up additional surprises.

The IRDC Facebook page was contacted by a Runner keeper from France concerning the colour of her blacks. These birds were from hatching eggs, purchased from a vendor who had supplied good quality eggs on an earlier occasion. They had also supplied photos of the parent birds which looked good. But this time there was a surprise. As the black ducklings grew into first feathers, most of them weren't solid black.



*Hello, I hatched Black Indian runners. I bought the eggs from a farm. According to the breeder, the parents come from good bloodlines. I saw photos of the parents, they look very black. However, I have a doubt. The ducklings are 10 weeks old today. They all feature wild designs under the wings. Brown feathers under the bill and designs on the flight feathers. Is this normal because they are young, where was there a crossing with a Mallard Runner?*

We also had one just one bird here with similar colour faults. As well as the light edging on the secondary feathers and their coverts, the French and the UK bird showed light markings under the wing, light marks on the secondaries and coverts, and brown feathers on the throat.

Now, the UK bird (there was only one like that), was bred from selected exhibition blacks. In theory, these have been bred for a sufficient length of time to have thrown up not-blacks if there are birds heterozygous (E/e+) for black hiding in the stock. Birds heterozygous (split) for black still look black and, sometimes, it may not be possible to tell by examining them. It does need two heterozygotes to get together to throw 25% not blacks.

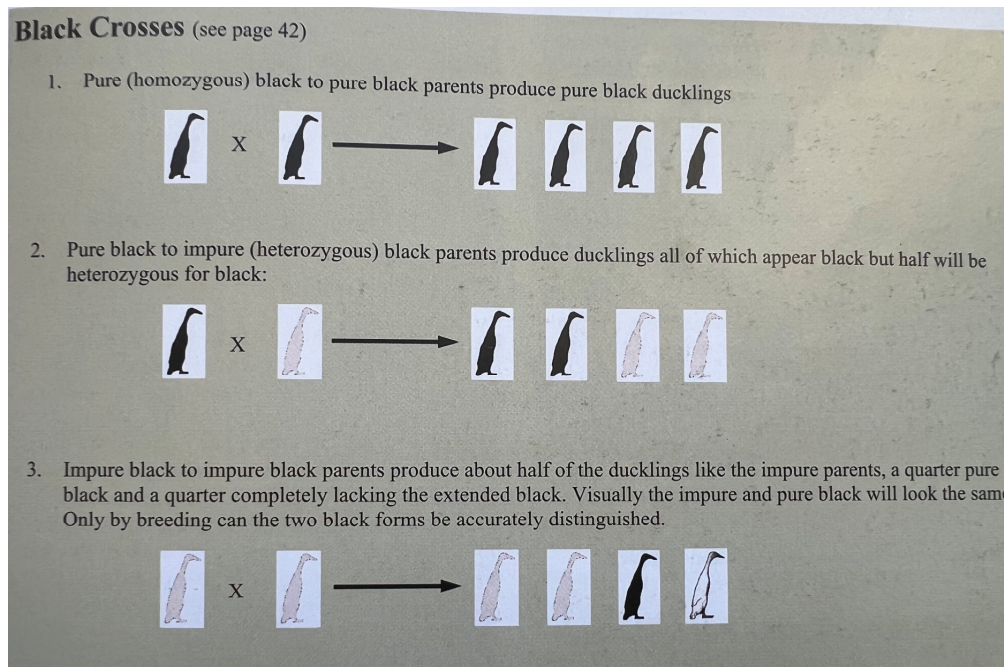


Diagram: M Ashton - Colour Breeding

However, even before the 'not blacks' arrive, faulty heterozygous birds should show the faults we have illustrated here on page 21. So, why don't we always spot them at that E/e+ stage?



*Above: Underwing coverts show mallard-style markings - the feathers should be pearly, and plain, underwing.*



*Left: the duck's throat is grizzled with not-black feathers*

*Photos: Chris Ashton*

Are other factors at play as well? In a previous Newsletter, Australian Duskyies (md/md) bred from blacks were illustrated. Dusky is the perfect under-colour for extended black. The dusky underwing is pearly with no patterning, and the bars of the wings can be almost obscured, so this helps to give the look of a full black cover, even in birds which are E/e+. These birds split for black could hide in a breeding flock.

In this French bird (page 19) and the UK bird, the underwing markings indicates the under-colour could be mallard (M+/M+). The secondary feathers and coverts also show traces of a wing bar. So, is mallard (M+/M+) the worst under-colour you can have? And if your pair of breeding blacks are split for black - and also split for M+/md - then the combination of some ducklings with M+/M+, E/e+ might show up the underwing pencilling, when maybe M+/md might not?

A word of warning - the Blacks with the nicest type, the tallest, and those with the best head, are often the ones which are faulty for colour. They catch the eye of the judge in the show pen, which is why careful handling to examine plumage, is essential for the classes in Black - including Cumberland Blues and Chocolates. Maybe that's because those beautiful types are the healthiest birds, and the least inbred. Breeding for pure colours which will breed true is a difficult task.

It is possible to test if your birds are pure, or split, for black if you are suspicious. By using two faulty birds, such a pairing would produce ¼ offspring with no extended black (see page 20). They would show up the colour under the black mask. Unfortunately, this kind of testing produces a lot of unwanted ducklings which could be culled in the first week. The ducklings are there simply to show the colour genetics in the fluff, in experiments such as those conducted by F M Lancaster and R G Jaap. It seems a bit heartless, but it is the only way to get reliable results. However, with blacks, ducklings in fluff only show up any birds which don't have the black gene at all. To see if the birds have colour faults in the plumage means taking them to at least 8 weeks (in first feathers) and even to 20 weeks to see how they finally look in adult plumage. At the moment, with avian flu around, there is no incentive to experiment with these birds because even the females would be difficult to sell. So, for me, this remains theoretical.

**Further comments from Julian Burrell**

Rarely buy anything in, but if unsure with blacks it's always worth a mating with a non black bird (not whites though). Something like fawn is good as you should get all black-looking youngsters if the father is pure for black. But the problem is you won't want to breed from the youngsters, and they can't be sold on as pure. In addition the males will be carrying brown dilution.

I think that the fixation over the years to try and get black birds with no white feathers has contributed to breeders of blacks often rejecting otherwise valuable pure black breeders. The temptation to outcross for type will produce dull, impure blacks with no lustre. But often these birds will have a reduction in white faults.

I'm not talking about rejecting birds with white bibs; you must select hard against that. But rather those with a few tiny white feathers under the chin, at the corners of the bill, or around the eyes. These birds are often the deepest black with the most green sheen.

Because the white faults have been in the standards for many years, I think that birds like this are thrown out of the mix when it comes to picking your breeders. People give up with them as all judges, no matter how basic the specialist knowledge level, will look for this.

These glossier birds also tend to show more white age feathering in the females and to a lesser degree the males, so again breeders tend to shy away from them.

When you look at the trials and tribulations that the East Indie breeders had with white feathering in their birds, time and again you see comments like - the greenest birds develop the worst white feathering with age. My East Indies are great in males and females in the first year. Deep black base and lots of green sheen. But after that first year, the females start to get the white age feathers coming in. I think that next time we review the standards, maybe we should make more of the problems with **dull muddy** blacks and matt blacks with no green sheen.

Obviously you can't have birds with serious white faults as the champs, but it's worth pointing out that if you want really deep shiny black birds with a

green sheen you are going to have to contend with a percentage of youngsters never to make a show bench. That's due to the connection between extended black and white feathering, not purity. Also, you have to accept that after the first year, your black girls will be going white.

The trouble is that we've never had enough quality blacks bred in large enough numbers for breeders to select from. To make real progress you need lots of deep pure black birds with a green sheen. Once your line is proven to have the required lustre and green sheen, then pick the ones that show no white faults in the first year. Just like they did over many decades with the East Indies and Cayugas. The limitations of only hatching a few birds each year, needing something with no white to exhibit here and now and mounting feed costs, all conspire to hold us back. It's difficult, I'm still trying to breed the perfect black runner. In 40 years of trying, there are only two birds, one of each sex and decades apart I've been truly happy with.



## NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA

The good news from Australia is that the bird shows are continuing.

There are regular posts on Facebook pages: -

AUSTRALIAN EXHIBITION WATERFOWL Admin Charles Jensen and  
and EXHIBITION POULTRY AUSTRALIA (BYP) Admin Cathy Newton

PLUS several Australian breed pages which have been set up as well.

One of the most interesting developments is Ross Rollman's *Duck Colour Genetics* Facebook page. The detective work done by Ross is meticulous. He is continuing to investigate the unique colour of the Australian Watervale, now at the F2 stage. The results of the F1 stage were published in *Australasian Poultry* this year as 'The Mysterious Watervale'. At the same time, he is pursuing a much wider agenda. This includes the methodology of conducting investigations as well as assessing the effect of colour enhancers on the expression of the mallard alleles (M+ and md in this case) and pattern alleles (Li, li, lih).

**The colour of the Watervale** is a mystery because the breed was originally a 'sport' from Cayugas. Did the black ducks lose their pure extended black at some stage by crossbreeding with 'not- blacks'? These impure blacks eventually would have revealed the Watervale colour mutation, which had been hiding under the black mask. OR is the Watervale an allele of extended black? The former suggestion seems more likely – but maybe it needs testing.

*fifty* [\[re\]collections](#)

Andy Flett's new book *fifty: [re]collections* is the intriguing title of his new book about the Elizabeth (or Lizzie) – the popular Australian little duck which, together with the Watervale, is changing how we look at duck colour genetics. *fifty* is of course relating to the 50 years of Lizzie, and, as the book is part recollections/recounting of the original book by Lance Ruting (Waterfowl of Australia ONE), and a collection of information on the Lizzie and other waterfowl. Andy thought **[re]collections** fits quite well. So, the book essentially is a collection of waterfowl information.

Ross's results have given Andy Flett something further to think about too, with the unique Australian Elizabeth. The Elizabeth has its own standard, but 'preferences' of exhibitors are producing quite a colour shift from the original birds of Lance Ruting. The Lizzies are most definitely colour enhanced, but are some of them now going a stage further?

There are more complexities to discover in waterfowl. Colour enhancers certainly change the looks of birds, and when that is combined with harlequin phase in both the Watervale and the Lizzie, then feather patterns can change dramatically. More about that in a 2023 edition, if the IRDC gets that far.



Defying expectations: Watervales were expected to be dusky (md/md) because they show no eyestripes as ducklings, or in adult plumage. They do show harlequin phase (lih/lih) characteristics.

But breeding experiments clearly showed that harlequin phase plus melanisers were hiding the normal expression of mallard (M+) eye stripes. The Watervales turned out to be (M+/M+) (lih/lih).

This has clear implications for our harlequin birds UK. Are they too hiding (M+/M+) under a harlequin mask? That could be followed up in the Newsletter next time. Any observations are welcome.

a duck tail/one feather (Australia) is pleased to announce:

## fifty :[re]collections

- a new book for 2022 celebrating 50 years of Lance Ruting's Elizabeth duck.



Just like the Elizabeth duck, fifty :[re]collections is unique to the waterfowl world, with nothing else like it in Australia ... or even internationally.

169 pages, A4 size, full colour and illustrated throughout with hundreds of photographs of the Elizabeth duck. Rich with historical content, along with contemporary breeder profiles, a colour guide from birth to adulthood, a selection of exhibition photos from season 2022, fifty :[re]collections is packed full of information including some new awareness of the genetics behind various mallard-derived domestic duck breeds.

fifty:[re]collections is more than a simple tribute to the Elizabeth breed, with general interest sections dedicated to selecting birds for showing, the Watervale, Rouen Clair and Silver Appleyard duck breeds from Australian fanciers Ross Rollman and Andrew Brown, and Indian Runner content from world-renowned authors, Mike and Chris Ashton (UK).

*Sure to be a valuable tome to add to your waterfowl library!*

### How to purchase?

**RRP: AS\$70.00** \*\* as an introductory offer, *fifty :[re]collections* is available at the discounted price of **AS\$60.00** for the remainder of 2022 !

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If you wish to receive SMS notifications for tracking, ensure you provide your mobile number. *Please be aware this is then included on the package, along with your address details.*

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a duck tail/one feather (Australia) | Horsham, Victoria 3400 AUSTRALIA | ABN: 30823293156

## END NOTE ON AVIAN INFLUENZA

If you are not able to house/net your ducks and geese on welfare grounds, and any other grounds, then enlist the help of your vet.

Defra does now recognise that geese need to graze and cannot be confined in a small space. They suffer from wet feather and lose condition because they are more likely to pick up parasitic worms and harmful bacteria. The same applies to larger ducks: they eat more grass than you first think – watch them carefully. And they are impossible to confine in a shed unless it's purpose built over a drain. In addition, foot quality suffers with confinement, especially in Runners.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-flu-avian-influenza-housing-your-birds-safely>

The page link above says it 'Applies to England, Scotland and Wales'

If you cannot house or net your birds because of unavoidable welfare concerns, you must:

- feed and water them undercover
- move them away from large bodies of water that attract wildfowl
- take steps to discourage wild birds - check the National Farmers' Union code of practice before you use a bird scarer

You must also speak to your private vet and put in writing:

- why you cannot house your birds;
- the steps you are taking to protect them from bird flu.

The Welsh Directive is more prescriptive regarding housing and netting of birds. We are hoping that more notice can be taken of the guidance from Defra on bird welfare.

[All-Wales Avian Influenza Prevention Zone | GOV.WALES](#)

[declaration-of-avian-influenza-prevention-zone.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

*Thank you Antonia Hudson for continuing  
to host the IRDC website into 2023*

<https://www.runnerduck.net/>

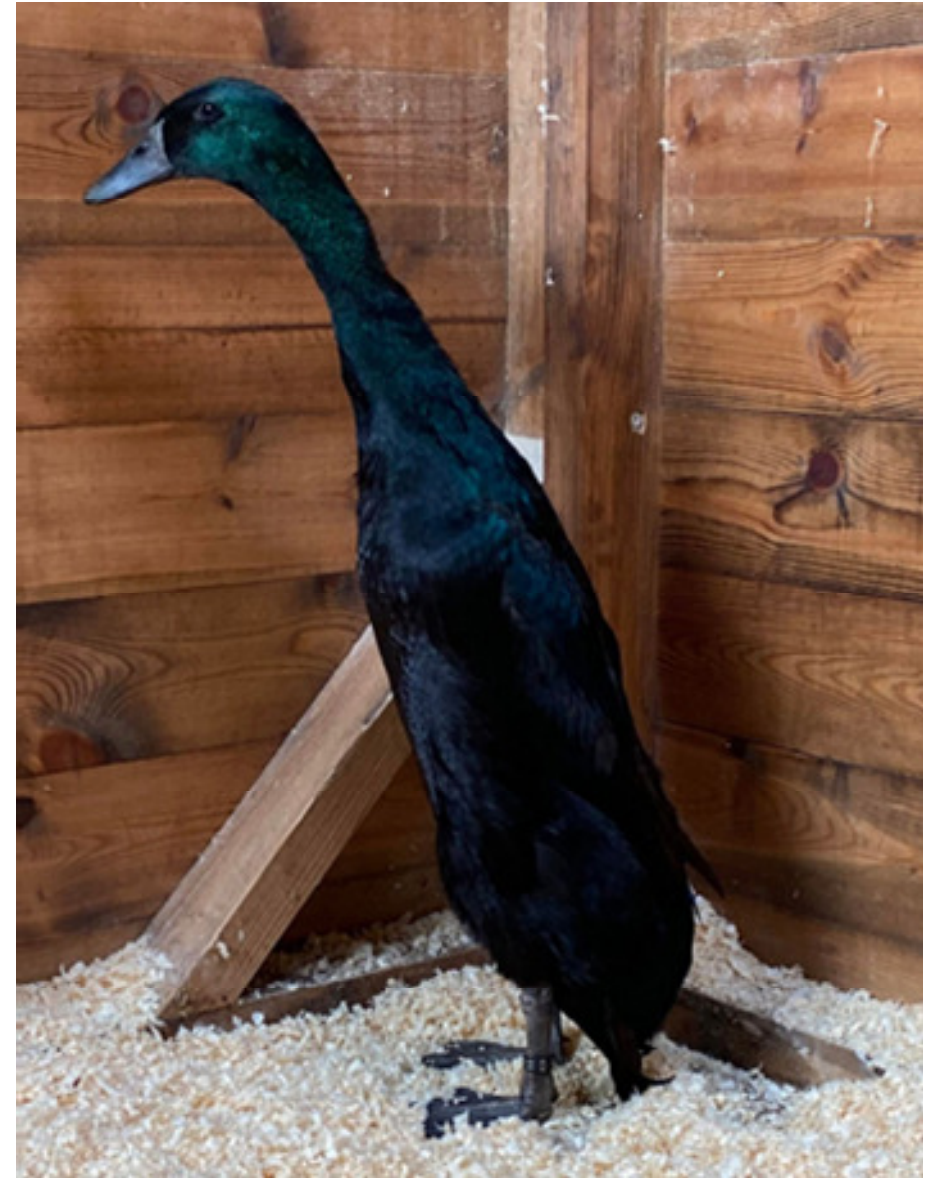
[Indian Runner Duck Club is on Facebook](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064939770522>



*Best in Colour sections Indian Runners at Nebraska Poultry Show*

[\(6\) Nebraska State Poultry Association | Facebook](#)



*2022 Young Black Runner with a super sheen*

*Photo: James Rigby*