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The free monthly newsletter from Pembroke Nursery - subscriber info at end

Showtime at Pembroke Poultry

IT'S SHOW SEASON here at Pembroke, and Morna has been busy preparing birds for several local poultry shows.



Morna as she is often seen in the nursery at this time of year

It's a journey that really began last year, as it does every year, when eggs are selected from the breeding pens and incubated.

The hatched chickens are grown out, sexed, and chosen for their colour, carriage and all the other things that make up the strict rare breed standards.

Now it's show season, and the selected birds are being caged and cleaned. This involves washing and drying, and even rubbing vaseline on their legs to kill lice and bring up the shine. Woe betides any bird that leaves the farm with a feather out of place.

Show days are exciting. Usually it means an early start on a cold morning, bustling the birds into their pens (while trying not to ruffle any feathers, of course), then having a hot coffee while everyone stands around comparing their favourite breeds.

**We have
FERTILE EGGS available
from August to
November**

- Aruacanas (3 colours)
- Hamburgs
- Rhode Island Reds (& bantams)
- Speckled Sussex
- Transylvania Naked Necks
- More Breeds may be available

If you would like to be one of the first to know when eggs are available, just email pdenton@ceinternet.com.au with "poultry list" in the subject line.

The judges are the stars of the show. With their dust coats and pointer sticks, they usually have a small crowd of onlookers eagerly peering over their shoulder as they move down the isles.

They inspect each entry, gently using their stick to stand the bird up straight in its pen. Then they take them out to look at the line of their back or head comb.

Body weight and feather combinations are also closely examined. The judge quietly murmurs his result to a club official who writes down a score.

This can take several hours, after which a country lunch is served.

Next comes the highlight of the day. At our club we sit around on hay bales while club president, Neil, introduces the judges, who comment on the standard of the birds shown.

Prizes are given out – small trophies, ribbons and cards that mean a lot to the winners. It's a lot of fun to prove yourself and help perpetuate a breed of poultry.

Many towns and all the major cities have poultry clubs, and, as they say, it can be a lot of fun for the whole family. Most clubs advertise in Australasian Poultry Magazine, or can be found on the web.

The big rooster of all poultry shows, the Canberra National, is on this year in June. Unfortunately we can't make it this year due to other commitments (@#\$%^& damn and blast!). It's only held every four years, so if you want to see the best of the best in poultry, then this is the one to get to.

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We've been getting a lot of enquiries about fertile eggs recently. It's great to know that so many people are so keen on rare breeds. We do try to answer all emails, but probably miss a few. Please remember that eggs are usually only available from August to November. Details are listed on our website.

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You may remember in our last newsletter we talked about edible hedges. Well, some people obviously took us literally. Look what arrived in the mail. Some people ...!!

Best wishes

Peter & Morna

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