

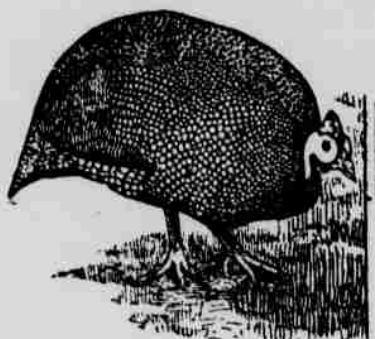
Guineas for Pleasure and Profit

By Anna Galliher.

THE raising of guineas has recently become a very interesting and profitable branch of the poultry business. There is a growing demand in nearly all of the large cities, owing to the fact that natural game birds are fast disappearing, and the guinea will partially take their place.

Almost anyone can secure a good trade among hotels and cafes. They are willing to pay good prices at any season for plump, young guineas, and there is no immediate danger of the supply exceeding the demand.

It is generally believed that guineas



are difficult to raise. They are no harder to raise than other poultry when their habits are thoroughly understood.

All guineas are cleanly in their habits. They cannot endure unclean quarters, and they require more care, especially during cold weather, than some other fowls, probably owing to the fact that the guinea is a native of warm countries. If guineas are left out in a snow storm they will not get frightened so badly that they cannot easily be controlled.

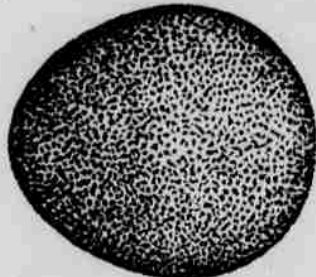
They can be kept in the hen house with the chickens, but it is better to have a separate house for them. They are very domineering, especially at feeding time. This is a disagreeable habit that cannot be easily overcome, even by raising the guineas and chicks together. However, the White African is more quiet than the Pearl guinea, and is fast gaining in favor.

We feed guineas about the same as turkeys or chickens. In winter when they cannot get much on the range, we feed corn, wheat, a little oats (boiled) and some green stuff. Pure water, grit and charcoal are kept within reach.

They are very active and like to be busy all the time. That is why a good range is necessary in summer, but when they have to be kept housed in winter, they can get enough exercise if the house is large enough and scratching material is provided. Some sort of clean litter on the floor is necessary; or better still, scatter some sheaf wheat around, and let the guineas do the threshing.

Guineas Require Care.

Guineas are sometimes raised on the "let alone" principle; that is, they roam the fields in summer, steal their nests, hatch out a few keats, raise probably half of what they hatch, and when winter comes they are so wild that they will scarcely venture near the feeding yards. They roost in the trees or on the roofs of buildings, and when a snow storm sets in they refuse to come down. Needless



why the young guineas should always be raised with chicks, or hatched under chicken hens. If large numbers are being hatched, of course incubators are almost a necessity. The eggs hatch nicely in incubators. They require from 24 to 28 days to incubate, say, there is neither pleasure nor profit in raising guineas by this method.

They must be domesticated for they are naturally wild and timid. That is true. A few hen eggs should be placed

in the nest or incubator, when the guinea eggs have been set about a week or a little less. The chicks help teach the young guineas to eat. However, this is not always necessary. If the guineas are hatched under chicken hens they will soon become quite tame and will stay near the hens, although they are very wild at first. They are not unlike young quails in this respect, and the Pearl guineas greatly resemble young quails in color when first hatched.

Yards Necessary.

Yards are necessary and they must be enclosed with screen wire or broad boards. The guinea chicks can easily get through the one-inch poultry netting. We keep the young guineas in small yards until they are a week old; they are then turned out into a five-acre lot which is fenced especially for young guineas. Here they are kept until they are two months old, when they are given free range. By this time they are quite tame and never wander far from the premises.

Guinea hens lay no eggs in winter. Their laying season is usually from about April 15th to September. Guinea eggs are small but good in quality. They will not sell well as a rule. The guinea hen lays anywhere from 40 to 100 eggs in one season. If guineas are properly managed their eggs will be fertile. They usually go in pairs or trios, but not always.

Young guineas must be kept free from lice. If they are hatched under hens, the latter should be dusted with louse powder every week. If the young guineas get lousy in spite of this, they are given the same treatment as other fowls, i. e., a little castor oil or olive oil applied wherever the lice are found. We are very careful to keep all young fowls out of the sun for a day or two after the oil is applied.

During the first few days after guineas are hatched they have to be fed quite frequently. We feed a little every two hours. Dry bread, finely crumbled with a little chopped greens, such as lettuce or onions will always give good results. A little coarse sand is sprinkled over the feed at first, but this is not necessary after they have learned to eat grit whenever required. However, sharp sand and other grit should always be provided. Boiled eggs are not suitable food for young guineas, as they are almost sure to cause constipation. After they are a few days old they will eat oatmeal dry, or cornbread. A varied ration is better than any one feed. When they are a few weeks old they will eat cracked corn, whole wheat, or whatever chicks will eat. When they are a month old they should not be fed more than three or four times a day, and if they have good range, a very little feed each time will be sufficient. In fact, they could get along on two feeds a day, but we like to teach them to come home for feed. They are great foragers, and if there are any grain fields near, they will make regular trips to pick up what they can find among the stubble. Guineas, both old and young are good bug-catchers, and they will not injure garden crops as chickens are apt to do, because they rarely scratch unless grain is thrown among litter.

Incubators.

We have never hatched guineas with incubators, but know of others who are very successful in hatching and raising them by artificial methods. As they are never hatched very early in the spring, fireless brooders are used. This is the best plan to follow when they are being raised in very large numbers for market. They are not so easily hatched as some other fowls, because the shells of guinea eggs are very thick, and the little fowls are sometimes unable to get out unless they are given some help. If the young guineas cannot get out in a reasonable length of time after the shells are pipped, we pick off enough to enable them to free themselves.

Young guineas sometimes appear to be deformed when first hatched, and as a rule the apparent deformity is simply the result of a slow hatch. When chicken hens or incubators are

used, it is an easy matter to give the eggs proper attention. Guineas resent intrusion, especially while setting. This alone would be sufficient reason for hatching with chicken hens, or with incubators, although there is still another reason not given. Guinea hens if not controlled, will drag the young guineas around through the grass in all kinds of weather, and the result can easily be imagined. Of course, young guineas need exercise, but they are very tender at first, and should be kept out of wet grass or rain. They are far less apt to take gapes if kept dry. It is the same with chicks and turkeys. We have houses, not coops, for all the young poultry, and find that keeping the floors clean and dry is as important as keeping everything free of vermin. However, we are convinced that lice kill more young poultry than all the other causes combined.

GET RID OF LICE.

NATURE'S way of riding poultry of lice is a frequent dusting of light dry earth. Chickens seem to enjoy nothing better, and certain nothing does them more good. At this season birds are sometimes yarded on the farm to prevent their getting into the garden, but wherever they are they should be provided with some sort of a dust bath. Above all, do not fail to put a deep, roomy box in a sunny part of the henhouse, where it will keep dry.

In the summer the best dust baths are made by spading places in the yard, each about a yard square and 10 inches deep. If there are any stones in the dirt, it should be sifted. Care must be taken to have the dirt fine and free from pebbles, or the hens will not use it. Make the place where the sun can shine on it, so as to keep the dirt dry, and after every rain the dirt should be turned over with a spade or fork. If they can have such a place to dust themselves, the fowls will easily keep their bodies free from lice.

HENS HATCH FISH.

AS is generally known, a big quantity of fish spawn is annually lost. To avoid this fish rearers in China carefully collect spawn from the surface of the water, and when they have secured a sufficient quantity they take a number of hens' eggs, the contents of which have been carefully emptied through a small aperture, and refill the shells with the spawn. The holes are then sealed up and the eggs put under broody hens. The hens are allowed to incubate the eggs for a certain number of days, when the eggs are again broken and their contents put into water that has been previously warmed by the sun. In a very short space of time the spawn hatches, and the young fry are then kept in pure fresh water until they attain a sufficient size to be put into the ponds containing older fish. The Chinese have long understood all the intricacies of incubation, and were among the first to use incubators for the hatching of hen eggs, long before such machines were made in this country. At one time a considerable business was done in this style of spawn hatching.

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