

## INDIAN RUNNER DUCKS FOR PROFITABLE EGG PRODUCTION

R. M. Paterson, York Co., Ont.

THE true Indian Runner Duck was imported from India by an English sea captain about 80 years ago. This was their first known introduction to the European public, although we have had sufficient proof that they were domesticated by the Hindus in the early centuries. For a number of years very little was heard of them until poultry fanciers in Cumberland county, England, began comparing the laying qualities of the various breeds of poultry, and it was found that this breed of ducks outclassed everything else for the production of eggs.

A boom then started, and as people were anxious to get them many breeders crossed them with the more common varieties. By this practice they lost the true type of the Runner, and the eggs of the cross-breeds were usually of a dark color.

A few breeders, however, were anxious to retain and improve the original Indian Runner. Among these were Mr. Donald of Wighton, Cumberland, Mr. Matthew Smith of Dumfries, and later Mr. Walton of Durham, England. From these veteran breeders and the literature they distributed comes nearly all that is known of the Indian Runner until recent years.

### IT DOESN'T WAIDLE—IT RUNS

This breed gets its name from its native country, India, and the peculiar gait that it has. It has an upright appearance, with feet close together, which gives it a true running appearance rather than a waddle like other breeds. They are very active, which enables them to forage over a larger area than any other fowl, unless it be the turkey. They are practically land ducks, and care little for water, except to drink and an occasional bath to keep them healthy. Indian Runners are very hardy and will stand our severe winters or the intense heat of our summer months with little or no loss. They are not subject to lice, and are almost free from diseases which play such havoc among our fowl during the fall and winter months.

Last winter I got eggs from my flock on the coldest days in January and February. I have found, however, that it does not pay to force my breeding stock all winter, as the fertility is not as good and the ducklings are weaker. It is better to give any breeding stock a couple of months' rest before eggs are required for hatching. This winter I stopped my ducks laying the latter part of December by placing them in a shed with open front, and feeding nothing but whole grain and a little coarse grit with it. About the first of March they will be fed a mash, consisting of ground grain, shorts, beef scraps, and alfalfa meal in the morning and whole grain in water at night.

### MY PREFERENCE IS THE RUNNER

I have had 18 years' experience with fancy and utility poultry, and have never had any variety to equal the

Indian Runner for eggs. They are good fall layers, this being due to their summer moulting; hens generally moult in the fall and that is why eggs are so scarce and the price so high. Last spring, from March 15 to June 15, I sold \$98 worth of eggs for hatching from 24 ducks, and replaced all the infertile eggs once free. This is not counting the eggs we used and set at home. The advantage in buying eggs from a large flock is you get the eggs fresh, because duck eggs are of little value after 12 days, and it is to the breeders' advantage, when replacing infertiles, to ship a good sample of eggs and have them arrive at their destination in the best possible shape.

I am wintering 40 ducks. These will be mated, four ducks and a drake, and kept in separate yards.

### "Eggs My Specialty"

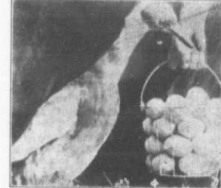
One breed of ducks there is, valued for egg production rather than flesh—the Indian Runner. Young Simpson Paterson, of York Co., Ont., may be here seen holding one of his father's laying flock.



### Improvement of Market Conditions

(Continued from page 6) cooperation and organization, with probable grading and inspection as have other food products.

A thorough campaign of education is, of course, necessary, but above all what is most needed is practical education, education that will reach the individual farmer's pocket. Other education is useless if it cannot be practically followed up, owing to the scattered condition of egg and poultry producers. The small quantities produced by each make it absolutely



### Duck Eggs

From this pair of duck eggs were picked the dozen that won first prize at the National Show in Toronto last fall. The duck standing beside them laid 21 eggs in December, which Mr. Paterson sold for \$1.50.

necessary that central receiving points for eggs should be established, where farmers can deliver their eggs individually, if necessary having them candled before their own eyes, and paid for according to quality as delivered. This will right the wrong with the producer and educate every farmer as to his shortcomings by a direct and practical method. I feel positive that if this system was thoroughly carried out it would in a short time renovate the egg industry of this country. There is certainly a crying demand from consumers that something should be done to give them the new-laid egg for which they are willing to pay, and also by producers who realize who is to lose to them by faulty marketing methods.



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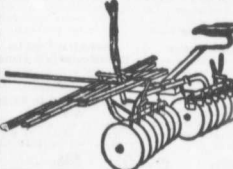
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