

has been never to give water to swim in till 8 or 10 weeks old, feed plenty of soft food and green stuff, and all grain in a pan of water (shallow) half-filled with sand and gravel. This is our correspondent's plaint :

Could you tell me what is the matter with my ducklings? I hatched 28 in an incubator and put them in a box with a tin pan in middle of it; the pan was soldered to another reversed, and filled with water, heated by a lamp underneath. Half of pan is on a level with bottom of box, half below. The ducks did splendidly for three weeks, then a froth appeared over eyes, closing them after the second day, then their legs became weak, toes turning inwards, and the upper bill began to get shorter than the lower one, and also to turn up. It seemed quite soft when handled. Two or more have died every day for the last two weeks. I forgot to say that the nose became stopped entirely, when the eyes closed up. They are eager for their food and water, right up to the very last. Some of them lingered a week or more, wabbling on their legs or walking on their elbows, their upper bill did not turn up, but the lower one became much longer, nose stopped up also.

I thought it was because the water in the pan was too hot, so I took off the glass sash cover, then they huddled on top of the pan, and would run out to get their food and come right back again to the box. I shut off the lamp but still they became affected and died just the same. Then I took away the tin pan and lamp and put the box in the grass run, but it does not seem to make any difference. They all take one of the symptoms, either closed eyes, crooked upper bill, longer lower bill, and invariably the weak legs.

I would like to save four splendid fellows if I could. Please write me as soon as possible giving remedy.

Duck.

The medical man to whom such cases are referred by us advises as follows:—

We have ourselves had symptoms like the above when no incubator or brooder was used. There seems to be a total failure in the digestive powers and some radical defect of nutrition. We have sought for the fly in the ear in vain, and in fact for any organic change that would account for the symptoms.

Some would not allow ducklings any water to bathe or swim in till feathered fully. To us this seems a great departure from nature. We have tried both plans and have had the evils complained of above with both, though not satisfied with all of our other conditions. We believe in 1 to 3 opportunities to bathe during the warmer hours of the day—only, at first. We doubt if birds bred from stock that had no water to swim in are as good. We have ourselves raised ducks under very different conditions, and with at times complete freedom from disease, and again with troubles it was hard to account for or remedy. A number of intelligent breeders in Eastern Canada have had very bad luck with ducklings after numerous trials.

We think the subject one of great importance and much obscurity, and should like to hear from those of experience in breeding ducks in different parts of Canada as to the cause and remedy of the evils complained of above, and so well described.

Will our friend try the following treatment, experiment and report results:—

- (1). No water to swim in till fully feathered.
- (2). Only soft food till 4 or 5 weeks old.
- (3). A shallow pan of water half filled with sand and gravel.
- (4). Access to ground oyster shells and a pile of coal ashes.

We are also impressed with the importance of good ventilation at night, and of a little plot of ground with some grass and a few plants for them to run about in when the weather is good.

Since receiving above "Duck" again writes us "your letter re Duck's does not at all strike at the root of the matter. The ducklings never saw water except for drinking, in their lives; have always had soft food and gravel in drinking water; have had the run of a grass plot with sand at end, and I have always kept the sash of box slightly open at night, besides leaving the door 3 x 4 inches open.

We invite correspondence on this matter, especially from any who may have been unfortunate enough to have had a similar experience.

NOTES.

BY BLACK WYANDOT.

DUCKS and geese are always hardy and get away with feed that other fowls don't care for. As a rule, farmers and poultrymen give too little attention to raising water fowls. One does not need a fancy house for their accommodation or a great amount of water for them to swim in. They are ready to take kindly to common every day fare and if necessary will stand more hard knocks and neglect than other domestic fowls. A fat young duck is a delicacy not to be despised and is a luxury every American farmer can produce cheaply and profitably. The improved breeds so far surpass the old mongrel sorts that no one should judge of the possibilities of success in raising water fowls by the results he has obtained with the old fashioned birds. The Pekin ducks while they are much larger than the common ducks are also quicker to mature and will be ready for market ahead of any other unless it be the Aylesbury.