

# Fancy Mice

## MOUSE MUSINGS

By ROBERT H. BROWN

LATELY I have been very busy and did not have quite enough breeding pens in my mousery. For this reason I have allowed does to have their litters in the same cages with other mice. In none of these cases has any of the litter survived. This just proves that the doe must have a cage of her own before she has her litter. I have learned a lot since I started breeding mice. This fall, up in Northern New York, the nights have been very cold. My mice have been in an unheated building all the time but I have given them clean dry hay frequently and have had no deaths.

Another thing that I learned is not to be surprised to find several different colors in one litter. Recently I mated a black buck and a blue doe and they had seven youngsters. Of these I kept four. I picked these out and drowned the other three before they were old enough for me to tell exactly what color they would be. It happened that the four mice which I kept were all of a different color. There was a blue doe, a black doe, a Champagne buck, and a Chocolate buck. The Chocolate was not very good because he had light ears, feet, and tail. I learned that this is a common fault with Chocolates. The other three mice were excellent specimens. I always find it interesting to note the different colors that one may obtain by mating different colored specimens.

There seems to be a lot of interest in mice all over this country and I have even had a letter from Canada concerning fancy mice. Through my advertisement of the booklet, "Mice Beautiful" I received a great many letters asking for a copy of the booklet and in all these letters I noticed that there was a great deal of interest being created in exhibition mice. In one letter I was asked if one must attend a show if he wished to exhibit his mice. I do not know if this point is clear to everyone or not but a person need not go to the exhibition in order to show his mice. When the show is announced, the name and address of the Secretary of the Show is also announced. By writing to the secretary, the fancier can obtain the

information and details concerning the show.

There seems to be a good market for exhibition type fancy mice. The idea of breeding winners and then selling stock appeals to a great many people. I always tell the fancier that if he can breed mice better than the others he will have a market because fanciers that intend to breed for exhibition themselves like to get their mice from the best possible strains, and this is only natural because if a beginning fancier does get good foundation stock he will be more apt to be successful. I recently received a letter from Mrs. Blowers, the Secretary of the National Mouse Club (England) and she tells me that for the best exhibition stock she gets two and one-half dollars per mouse. Now, Mrs. Blowers has about twenty thousand mice so one can see what a large output she must have weekly. She sells to laboratories and also to fanciers who wish to breed for showing. She told me that she was in the hopes that some American fancier would send an order for about twenty mice and this would be a good amount to ship. Anyone can see that this would be a great help to the fancy because it would bring into this country some good mice that would be apt to win in the shows. Perhaps several fanciers can get together and place an order of about twenty mice.

This brings to mind another question which I have been asked by several fanciers: must one show his mice in the regulation type show cage. Most people agree with me that fanciers should be allowed to exhibit in any cage, in which the exhibit can be easily seen and easily taken out. Mrs. Daniels says that she has asked Mrs. Cobb to take action in this matter and I agree with her that this would increase the number of exhibits at a show.

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## A. M. F. C. NOTES

Our membership continues to grow steadily and it is now nearly 60. All mouse fanciers should join—the annual subscription being only \$1.00 per year, or 50c for those under 18. Members are requested to look up their receipts and send in their 1938 subscriptions. If you have mislaid your receipt, write to me for the amount due from you.

*Boston Show:* Just before I wrote these lines Mrs. Cobb told me that there had been 102 mice and 5 rats entered—nearly twice the New York entry. This is very encouraging, but it must be remembered that some half-dozen members are responsible for the majority of entries, and their generous support is appreciated.

The Mouse Fancy would benefit to a greater degree of more exhibitors were to send in their stock, and I urge every member to enter at least a few mice at every show within reach. I know that here at Boston several fanciers entered their mice without even considering whether their stock had a chance of winning—this is the true fancier spirit. We must all do our bit and not leave the success of the show to a few willing stalwarts. Few realize the amount of work to be done—classes have to be drawn up, printing arranged for and plenty of behind-the-scenes work. In this respect I wish to refer to Mrs. Cobb and Mrs. Cochet, who judged the Boston show, and who in many other ways has been instrumental in forwarding the Mouse Fancy. This month I should also like to pay tribute to Miss Amy Blanchard who judged

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Boston a year ago. She was the first to join me in forming a committee to found the Mouse Club and has supported the movement by a lavish expenditure of time and money. These efforts should not be taken for granted but should serve to inspire us to do likewise.

Considering future shows: I wonder if the members realize that the securing of these shows is really their business? If, for example, you live in a big city, there surely is a livestock society there. You should approach them to learn if it wouldn't be possible to have mouse and rat classes at one of their shows. I, as

secretary, and others of the committee, will gladly correspond with such organizations and do our best to smooth out any difficulties that might arise. So, fellow members, look about your neighborhood and see what you can do in this respect. We want more shows—especially in Chicago and St. Louis where many members could exhibit. Don't leave everything to the committee, for they can't do by writing what you can do through personal contacts. Let our motto for 1938 be: "More shows and bigger ones in every part of the country."—Rev. R. W. Ferrier, Hon. Sec'y.

## THE REAL FANCY MOUSE

By R. W. FERRIER

THESE few lines are written to help the novice who is breeding Mice for exhibition to know what to look for, and what to avoid, in his stock; and, while it is impossible in a short article to deal with everything or all varieties, some points of importance may be examined. One of the first things a beginner should learn to do is to examine his Mice closely, and compare them critically with the standards laid down in the American Mouse Fanciers' Club's handbook. We are all apt to assume our Mice are perfect, but, when we begin to examine them thoroughly, we can notice certain faults which had hitherto escaped our attention. Let us look at some of them.

**TYPE!** This term often causes bewilderment, but it really refers to the shape and general build of a Mouse. (See General Remarks, page 1. in the A. M. F. C. handbook.) Two types of Mouse will be noticed: the first which is not desirable, is ultra-long and slim, usually accompanied by a long neck, a long pointed nose, and ears too close together. The second, and correct type of Mouse has a plump, curved, body, practically no neck, large upright ears, free from creases and set well apart, with a nose of medium length and sharpness. Small ears are ugly, so select for breeding Mice of the right type, and avoid the long, slim Mouse with its many faults.

**TAILS & FEET:** The tail should be long—the longer the better—and should emerge from the body in a small cone, and taper to a fine point. It should not look as if it had been stuck into the mouse as an afterthought. A short tail is usually blunt at the end, and, though often found in

Red Mice, may to a large extent, be eliminated by selective breeding. In all self, tan, or ticked Mice, the whole of the ears, feet, and tail should be the color of the body, any ticking extending to the feet and belly. The ears of a Dutch mouse should be the color of the body markings, the front half of the hind feet white, and the tail parti-colored.

**COAT:** Two kinds of coat will be observed. The first, and correct, is short, smooth, and glossy; the second, to be avoided, has long guard hairs, which give the Mouse a rough appearance. Retain for breeding those Mice which have the sleekest coats, and discard the others.

**SIZE:** Large Mice, if shapely, are much more beautiful and attractive than are small specimens. Size, so necessary on the show bench, may be obtained by breeding from large parents, not too old, and by not leaving more than three, or five at the very most in the case of a doe known to be a good mother, in the nest. Never use a small weak Mouse for breeding, however good it may be in color or markings.

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