



The Fancy Mouse

BY A. C. JUDE

FOURTH OF A SERIES

In March, the "Self", "Tan", and "Marked" varieties of fancy mice were described. There now remains those in the "Any Other Variety" section to deal with.

The Agouti is the fancy mouse which is nearest in color and make-up to the wild pattern mouse, but through careful cultivation it is, of course, far more pleasing to the eye. The Golden Agouti, as the name implies, has a coat which is rich golden in color, with dark ticking. Generally, the hairs are black at the base, and this is followed by a portion which has chocolate pigmentation. Some of the hairs are tipped with yellow. The more pronounced the golden color groundwork is, in combination with well-defined ticking, the better the mouse is from the exhibition point of view. Agoutis retain coat quality and good condition longer than most varieties. Blue Agoutis are recognized by the National Mouse Club, but these seem little favored by fanciers.

The Cinnamon belongs to the same genetic group as the Agouti. Actually, it is Agouti minus black pigment. Sometimes it is known as Brown Agouti.

The Chinchilla is one of the newer varieties in the British Isles, but it has been highly cultivated since its importation from America, and has become very popular. The coat color on top is similar to that associated with the Chinchilla rabbit. Unfortunately, the blue color was lost here for a while, giving way to a brownish tinge inherited from a wrong color P.E.W. outcross, but now we have overcome this, and have Chinchillas

extremely good in both color and type.

The Fox is one of the most favored of the "Any Other Variety" section. It is recognized in several colors, which may be produced by the interbreeding of Tans and Chinchillas. The action of the Chinchilla is to cut out the tan, leaving the belly white. The object then is to increase the white ticking along and up the flanks. The Fox is a very pretty variety, and will carry excellent type.

The Sable can be a particularly handsome mouse, but it is rather difficult to produce to perfection, mainly on account of its tendency to fatness, and also because its shading changes quickly. The steady shading is, of course, a great feature. It starts along the middle of the back at almost black and finishes low down on the flanks in a beautiful golden color. The variety may be produced by the crossing of Reds with Black and Tans.

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The Silver Greys, Browns and Fawns are also difficult to produce, with the Grey being easily the most popular. Each color is similar in appearance to the counterparts in rabbits. Very few Browns or Fawns are seen on the show bench here, and even these have yet to be brought to perfection.

The Pearl has been sadly neglected since the war. This is a great pity, for with its all-white coat in which each hair is lightly tipped with pigment, it is extremely beautiful. Another feature is that this mouse usually carries particularly large eyes, which show up to advantage against the delicately shaded coat.

The Astrex, with the roughish looking coat is not particularly desirable from the fancy standpoint, and only few are now exhibited.

Fancy mice are probably the easiest of the domestic pets to cater for and this is one of the reasons why the hobby is so favored. Then again, the actual process of the feeding is simple, as is the preparation of the food required.

Being small animals, mice cannot go for long periods without food, so the best plan is to feed sufficiently to last for 24 hours. The best time to do this is during the late evening when the mice are rousing after their natural daylight resting hours.

The staple diet for mice is oats, either clipped or crushed, and moist stale bread. The stale bread must of course be perfectly wholesome. It should be soaked for about 20 minutes, and then squeezed out as dry as possible. Each mouse needs a piece the size of a walnut, and a level tablespoonful of clipped oats — or rather more if crushed oats are used.

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The Care Of Snakes

(Continued from Page 73)

ture is a little below that of the surroundings. (2) A snake is hurt more by excessive heat than by extreme cold. (3) A snake lives better when warm, but not hot!

I should think that everyone would want to learn a few simple facts and be able to recognize the snakes in his vicinity. The next time you see a snake crawling harmlessly through the grass, why not stop and think? Here is a creature that God created! It shares much of the grace and beauty of the more familiar animals. All nature lovers are slowly coming to realize that snakes not only play an important part in the balance of nature, but are beautiful as well.

The Fancy Mouse

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Naturally, all mice do not eat equal quantity, but in time the fancier will come to know the exact requirements. Never leave stale food in the cages. In addition, a quantity of sweet meadow hay must be available. This is most important, for mice eat hay in fair quantity, and it acts as a corrective to stomach disorders. A pinch of four parts canary seed, four parts white millet, and one part hemp may be given as a conditioner about twice a week, but this is not essential. Also a little milk may be added to the soaked bread for the feeding of nursing mothers. Water may be given separately, but usually all the moisture needed will be absorbed with the moist bread. When available perfectly clean grass, chickweed, etc. may be given, but this must only be given gradually. The flower of a dandelion is a special favorite.

Care must be taken in feeding mice of the Yellow Group, such as Fawns, Reds, Creams and Sables, for they all have the tendency to fatness, a condition which is definitely harmful to good breeding.

Publisher's Column

(Continued from Page 4)

Business" so often anymore but the caution still exists and that is good. To hold back in buying is wrong, to hold back on stocking a good item is wrong. It reminded me of the man I talked to the other day about a lot and he said—"I'm waiting for building prices to come down." When we stopped and thought how long before they would we wondered if he would live to be that old. In fact

—when you thought of it, prices haven't much chance of coming down in many fields. Business is good and it has every chance of continuing that way. Those people and firms that stepped out in the past few years have been happy that they have.

—O—

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