

The Fancy Mouse

BY A. C. JUDE

THIRD OF A SERIES

Last month I wrote about the varieties generally, and said how important the matter of 'type' is. The "N.M.C." standard allows approximately 50 points for the various characteristics which go to make up 'type', and the remaining 50 points are given for color or markings.

Probably the most widely bred variety of fancy mouse is the Pink-eyed White. In this case the fanciers' attentions can be given up almost entirely to the production of 'type', and purity of color. Both are clearly defined, so there is little complication in breeding methods. The other White of the fancy, is the Black-eyed White, and although genetically one hardly expects quite the 'type' seen in Pink-eyed Whites, the variety has been so highly cultivated, that many Black-eyed Whites now rival the Pink-eyed White in both 'type' and color. But the breeding of these is far more complicated, and only a small percentage of clear B.E.Ws are produced. The others will be patched with color, and although of no use for exhibition, are valuable for further breeding. Both 'type' and color are lost when clear B.E.Ws are interbred.

The Black is one of the most highly cultivated of the varieties. Naturally, it is smaller than the P.E.W., and some of the points of make-up hardly compare with those of the P.E.W., but on the show bench it is sometimes difficult to separate Blacks when color is concerned. Black mice these days are just about as black as it is possible for anything to be, and the color extends right to the toe-nails. The gloss always obtainable on a black animal, helps to make this variety very attractive indeed.

The Chocolate is favored by many breeders, and there is no doubt that this 'color' is very striking provided it is rich enough. The color must be as deep as possible, including the feet, and no trace of white hairs is allowed. Type is very good, and the variety has more size generally than the Black.

The Champagne is one of the prettiest of the lighter shades of mice. It is a very pale biscuit color, and when the desired 'pink' tinge is present, this is indeed a beautiful animal. The size and 'type' are comparable with the Pink-eyed White. The Champagne is dilution of Chocolate.

The Fawn is a great favorite, as the color is outstandingly different from that seen in the other varieties. It is the deepest of orange shades. This coloring, and the excellent 'type' carried give a particularly handsome mouse. The two greatest faults are light colored ears and bellies, but by careful selection of breeding mates, and the occasional use of Champagne Tan as outcross, the points should cause little concern. The eye must be pink.

The Blue has been rather neglected by breeders here in England, which seems a great pity. Type has not been generally good, and another difficulty is that in any but the dark shades, the color tends to 'clump' giving the coat a 'ticked' appearance. There is a wide scope with this variety for those who would specialize. Blue, of course, is the dilution of Black.

The Silver selfs are very pretty indeed, and are allowed in all shades. The main object must be to produce quite level shading. The color is like

an old silver coin, and the base of the hairs is bluish. Just enough of this must show through to give a slight bluish cast through the coat, as this prevents any washed-out appearance.

The Dove is rather similar in a way to the Silver, but in this case the color or shade is level right down to the skin. The shade should be like that seen on the dove bird. A feature of the variety is that the eyes must be ruby-colored, and not pink.

The Red is another of the 'neglected' varieties. This is probably due to the fact that other varieties are essential in order to produce and maintain a stud of good Reds. Type has been generally poor and the 'color' elusive. This color is similar to that of the red setter dog.

Creams until the last few years were poor generally, but of late several English breeders have specialized, and some truly magnificent Creams have been produced. The better 'type', and the color which is now more level top and under, have given us an additional attraction. Perhaps the greatest difficulty is to maintain a balance of color top and under, and when the richness of color appears on the tops any lack of balance becomes so apparent, for all the bellies seem to fail to carry color.

There is little point in taking up space at present with individual descriptions of the tanned varieties. The feature has already been described.

Most readers will be acquainted with the Dutch pattern of rabbit. The mouse of this pattern is absorbing to breed, and although the excellence of markings in the mouse is often below that seen on the rabbit, some wonderfully good specimens can now be seen in various colors. These include Black, Agouti, Blue, and Red.

(Continued on next page)

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The Fancy Mouse

(Continued from Page 112)

The greatest difficulty is in producing really good under-cuts.

The Broken and Evens have been described. A fair amount of inbreeding is necessary with these marked varieties, and this has led to some loss of 'type' and size. But it is possible with care to maintain these features and this has been proved by some of the newer converts to the breeds. I have lately seen Broken which compare quite favorably with the average P.E.W.

The Variegated, the markings of which have already been described, are bred in various colors. The tendency has been to produce variegated too light in markings, so that the mouse would seem to be merely a ticked one instead of carrying the flecks of color which are really attractive. As with all mice of this genetic 'make-up', we have the 'fault' that little color is seen between the ears.

Next month, the description of varieties will be concluded, and advice will be given about feeding, etc.

An Open Letter

(Continued from Page 110)

little building somewhere and expect them to take care of themselves very long. A pet shop demands constant attention (on Sundays too!), pens, cages and aquariums must be cleaned, stock must be fed, watered and looked after.

One person who is energetic, who is careful not to buy more stock than he can care for, who is interested in the business and has a good deal of knowledge about handling pets should be able to operate a pet shop very

successfully with little difficulty. A man and wife combination is better—a man, wife and son-or-daughter trio is even better still, but more important to the success of the business is not how many are involved in its operation as to how interested in its success they are. If you plan to operate a shop by yourself you should be ready and willing to devote from ten to twelve hours a day to it and not expect to go off anywhere for a long vacation any time soon. Of course after you are well established and have been able to hire and train some competent helper you won't be so completely tied down.

These are, I believe, the most frequent questions asked me. I hope that my answers will be of some help to you and that you will be able to follow my suggestions to your profit and pleasure in the pet business.

Yours very truly,
J. B. Roberts, Jr.

Science Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. — Deamer the lemur, a friendly 10-inch long monkey-like creature with a 14-inch tail, led the Navy's medical science group of the University of California's American Expedition into town.

Deamer, who also answers to the French Madagascar name of Make, arrived by air, cuddled inside the shirt of his patron, Harry Hoogstraal, Chicago Museum of Natural History entomologist and mamalogist who was attached to the expedition.

Deamer's contribution to science will come through studies of how he uses his bones and muscles in jumping, holding food, walking and other activities, including sleeping, Mr. Hoogstraal explained. Lemurs are rather scarce in zoos in this country
(Continued on next page)

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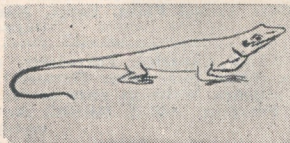
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