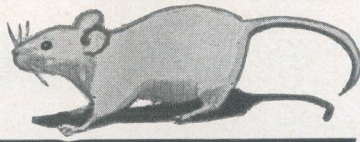


# FANCY MICE



## FANCY MICE VARIETIES

**T**HE Sable is a very attractive variety, and may be easily bred by crossing Red with Black and Tan. Though recognized in three shades, light dark, and medium, the dark shade is the one that catches the judge's eye. The back, from head to tail, should be dark brown—practically black—shading gradually down to flanks and belly, where it should be a rich tan.

The Dutch needs little comment. The hindfoot should be half white and half chocolate, but this "stop" has not come out clearly. The ears should not be white or light, but the same color as the ear marks. One of the prettiest mice is a Red mouse, the color of which should be deep and bright, without smudge or sootiness.

The Cream is a very difficult mouse to breed. The color is hard to get free from white or fawn patches, and should be a real cream color. Then, there is the Pink-eyed White, and Black-eyed White. The former is easy to breed, as the chief points the fancier has to aim at are size and shape. The Black-eyed White is really a colored mouse, which has formed no pigment except in the eye. It is usually smaller than the pink-eyed variety, and for this reason should not be shown in exhibitions in the same class as the latter, but with other self animals.

The broken marked mouse has a noticeable nose patch. This may be on either side, but a mouse without it is not considered a Broken for exhibition, though it may do well enough for the breeding pen. Small spots or patches should be unevenly distributed over the body, and if there is a patch on the rump, this should be small, and split into two parts, one of which should be bigger than the other. Anyone fond of experimental breeding will find his interest fully held in the attempt to produce Broken from mismarked Dutch, or other piebald mice.

The Black mouse should be jet black all over, including the belly. The chief faults are white feet, or toenails, white hairs in coat, or tan hairs around the vent. A good Black mouse should shine like jet, without

sootiness or the brown tinge so often seen.

In Chocolate and Tans the color must be dark, not like milk-chocolate, and the tan, rich. The latter should run in a straight line across the flanks and jaw, and mice with pale noses should be avoided as much as possible.

A very attractive mouse is the Variegated. If you took a white mouse and flecked him all over with ink from a pen, you would have a good idea of the ideal Variegated. Usually, it will be found that the head markings are heavy, and any attempt to make these much lighter will result in a loss of markings on the body. To breed Variegateds or Broken it is necessary to keep some 25 or more breeding specimens, which is one reason why the breeders of such varieties tend to become specialists.

*ED.-NOTE: All mice described here are illustrated in full colors on the special color plate showing the various varieties—obtainable for 15c, coin or stamps.*

### White Mice Breeding

Sexual maturity is attained at from 2 to 3 months of age. The young are carried about 21 days before they are born and are weaned when 20 to 25 days old. They are suitable for laboratory use when six weeks old. Females can produce on the average five young in a litter every 30 days until they are about 18 months old. Usually, however, it is best not to breed them a second time until they have ceased nursing the first litter, for they soon break down under the strain of supporting two litters at the same time. This plan brings successive litters at intervals of six or seven weeks and may be expected to produce in the course of a year about 40 young mice from each breeding female. Each male may have three or four females occupying its cage when they are without young. Each female is removed to a separate cage of her own before the young are born and is kept there until they are weaned.—U. S. Dept. of Agriculture Bulletin.

### MAKING RABBIT FELTS

Many breeders will soon consider pelting their earlier bred youngsters, and a word of warning here will not be out of place. Make sure that your animal is in good coat and that there are no signs of moult left. If it is not ready when the pelt is removed, on the flesh side will be seen bluish-black marks resembling bruises, these being the moulted places in the coat where new hair or fur is growing.

Blow into the coat until the skin may be seen at the bottom, and if it shows the usual pinky flesh color the pelt is ready for taking; if there are places which show dark or blue-black, it is not ready. Commence the overhaul from the back of the neck over to the root of the tail, which is the last place to come into full coat, with a slight exception when Rabbits sometimes finish on the chest. Speaking generally, the start is on the head, to the back, following down the flanks and under, finishing at the tail root, or the chest. It is essential that care be taken, as once the animal is killed and the pelt is not ready, much of its value is taken off and much time in producing the pelt has been wasted plus the decrease in value. It is always better to stretch pelts on to a board to dry before having them dressed as there are very few dressers who will take them unless they are air dried.

When stretching and nailing pelts on to a board do not over-stretch them as by so doing you may reduce the density of the pelt when finished.

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