

The author has reported his detailed results in making various blue feather matings over a period of some ten years in another volume, #79. Some of the important facts may be summarized as follows.

The Blue to Blue mating. This is the ideal mating and the all blue flock represents the most beautiful picture to the visitor. The first and second years of this mating is responsible for most of the prize winning blue fowls in our shows. However, if this mating is used for three or more consecutive generations, the progeny tends to come too dark to reveal lacing and mottling with darker feathers may appear.

The Blue Splashed White Fowl mated to Blue. This mating is necessary about every third year to prevent or correct the extreme darkness and mottling mentioned above. Splash males mated to average colored blue hens gave progeny having a light enough shade that the lacing could not help being noticed. Several first prize pullets and hens that won additional awards for Best Laced and Best Colored came from this mating. The breeder must be warned however, that any of the Splash matings must not be used more than two consecutive generations. It has been found that when Blue out of one Splash parent and also out of one Splash grandparent, and is again mated to a Splash out of Splashed parent, the progeny is frequently too light a Blue to use for Breeding or showing. In fact a flock is recalled in which a Splashed ancestor on one side had been used in each generation for many years and the hens were as light on the neck as the breast and the males were too light in all top color. Any Splashed matings should be broken up as soon as hatching season is over, since the lack of uniformity in the flock is unpleasant to see and causes visitors to question why your Blue flock is mixed up with speckled birds.

The Blue Splashed White to Black of Blue parentage mating. This is the mating desirable for the fancier who is in a hurry to raise a large number of Blue fowl. Whether the Splashed sex used is male or female, the progeny will be 100% blue chicks. This mating has been found to produce a sad lack of uniformity in blue coloring in the same hatch, as individuals range from light blue to dark shades and some are mottled with darker blue feathers. Fewer birds of exhibition quality are raised from this mating than from either of the two matings mentioned above.

Pure-Bred Black mated to Blues or Blue Splashed Whites. This mating is frequently used to improve a lack of type, head points, breadth of feather, or tail details. It was found best to have the male on the Blue side. Here again the chicks lacked uniformity in color in the blues. This is a hazardous mating as it acts like out-crossing unrelated stock and this produces a great swarm of dominal autosomal genes that have been carried dormant for generations, but are now unleashed, and anatomical faults appear. One must take off large hatchings from this mating to be sure of raising a perfect specimen, but, that one perfect blue fowl would be worth the seasons time and trouble.

The pure recessive White mated to Black out of Blue parents. This mating is not recommended for reasons to be shown. The recessive white without blue blood if mated to blues would react in the same manner. When the author crossed black of blue parentage with pure bred recessive white of the same breed as mentioned in section "F" of Chapter IV, a hatch of 100% blue chicks was expected. But the blue chicks were too light to be used as exhibition specimen, and many of the blacks possessed large white areas. When these F1 blues were crossed with each other, the F2 progeny contained the ratio of: 2 solid whites to 4 normal blues to 1 black. No splash chicks were hatched. These solid whites were exactly like their white grandparents, and would breed true whites if crossed. The male tails of all were faulty as compared with the original blue stock.

When Wm. Huey crossed a black male having white patches with blue hems of the same variety, instead of getting the expected blue and /or black chicks, he hatched whites slightly splashed with blue to pure white. One of these blue splashed white F1 males was crossed to pure blue hens and the hatch resulted in the ratio of: 25% blue to 50% blue splashed whites to 25% blacks. An equal number of blues and splashes would genetically be expected. This black male with the white areas undoubtedly carried dormant genes from a pure white ancestor. This calls attention to the fact that when crossing blues with purebred Blacks or Whites, one must be sure they are from a long line of pure stock.

The Blue Splashed White crossed with Blue Splashed Whites. This of course gives 100% white progeny more or less splashed with blue. This mating is mentioned because several Blue Rosecomb fanciers are advocating breeding the Blue Splashed White as a distinct variety of Rosecombs.

The difficulty lies in the lack of uniformity of the blue ticking on the white, as no two birds are marked alike. The blue splashes range from one or two nickel-size blue spots to large irregular blue patches that cover half of the surface. Also, breeding the Splash to Splash over a period of years will cause them to return to solid whites. They must occasionally be crossed with blue stock to increase the number and size of blue splashes. There are many used for the splashed individual as are shown in their various matings above. They are used to rapidly multiply a blue flock, to obtain better lacing, to obtain better type, and a male can be used to head a pen of female containing: Blue, Black, or Black of Blue parentage.

In England about 1935 on the suggestion of Dutch Genetist Dr. Hagedoorn, #1 the blue splashed white cockerels of a hatch of large Blue Leghorns were mated to a large flock of high egg production Black Leghorns of the large order. This resulted in large hatches of 100% Blue Leghorns. Blue Leghorn Bantams can easily be produced by mating a blue splashed White Blue Andalusian bantam male to S.C. Black Leghorn bantam females.

Perhaps some helpful suggestions may be obtained from considering how the breeders of large Blue breeds of fowl operate. One of America's largest dealers in Rare breeds of domestic fowl and bantams advises customers in his catalogue that Blue Andalusians can be mated in any one of three ways: 1. Blue to Blue, 2. Blue males to Blue, Splashed White and Black females of blue parentage, 3. Black males of blue blood to Blue and Splashed White females. But he reminds customers, that in any one of these matings the breeder must expect a certain percentage of black and white splashed chicks in addition to blues.