



# JULY NEWSLETTER 2016

*Shows, Summer, Boarding, Hybrids, Pekins, Pure Breeds*

## *Home and holidays...*

Thanks to all of you who popped in to see us at the shows, the weather was kind to us this year and it was great to see so many familiar faces as well as new garden farmers. So, we have survived another show season and it is again time to focus on things back here, catching up with the routine tasks and projects for the summer. With the amount of rain (and some sun) our hedges, grass and 'weeds generally' seem to have got out of control, so its lots of strimming, pruning and weeding needed next.



As we think of things back at home, many of you are thinking of your summer holidays and looking for someone to care for your hens and small pets while you are away. We are of course offering our usual boarding service, but please hurry to book to avoid disappointment as we are getting very busy through the school summer holidays

Our hybrid hens are available as usual and we have again some lovely little Pekin hens; they are just a few weeks old at the moment so we will be keeping them for a couple of weeks just to make sure they are all girls. Feel free to pop down to the end of the barn to have a look - reservations are now being taken.



After many, many years of selling our hybrid hens for £15.00 each and resisting the need to increase the price each time our chicken and feed prices increase, we have decided that we really must increase the price of our hybrids to £16.00. We are sure you will all agree that it is still a really good price for our lovely chickens and hope you will continue to buy your hens from us. This price increase will apply to our new flock available from Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July, our existing flock of hens will remain at £15 until sold, so hurry if you would like to buy at the lower price!

We also have some new birds in the barn; we have been lucky enough to source some lovely pure breed Rhode Island Reds and Copper Marans, so if you are looking for something a little special (and now quiet rare) please have a look and ask for more info.

## **This month's feature:**

### **Mink**

**Graham Burgess provides a local pest control service, including Bees, Wasps, Mice, Rabbits, Mink, Moles, Rats, Earwigs and Birds. This month he has written a feature on Mink:**

Mink were first introduced into Great Britain from North America in the 1920s and bred commercially for their fur, but due to accidental escapes and deliberate releases from fur farms they have become established in just about every river system in the country

In the wild Mink can weigh up to 1.5kg, the female will usually be smaller. They are very good climbers and can easily scale a chicken pen or squeeze through a 40mm diameter hole. They feed on many things including Poultry, Turkeys, Waterfowl, Rabbits, Gamebirds, Ducks, Geese, Fish and Frogs. It has been known



of one Mink killing 300 poults in one night after dodging under the electric fence, climbing over the pen wire fence and then going into a killing frenzy!

Because Mink do not have any natural predators they are quite bold and can easily trapped either with a No6 Fenn spring trap in tunnels or on a board placed across a ditch or with cage traps either hidden in tunnels dug into the banks of a pond or put on raft floated out on a pond. Once caught they have to be humanly destroyed because it is illegal to release them back into the wild.

**For pest control services contact Graham on 07876 108434 or 01424 251222**

## Our local weather forecast



After the wettest June on record, apparently, we are hoping for some more settled, warmer weather and unfortunately we could be in for a disappointment. It looks like low pressure will continue to dominate generally across the UK but...in the south east we are likely to get the best of any nice weather with interludes of warm and humid weather.

We'll get periods of mixed weather sunshine and rain and generally rather cool and breezy. This will restrict opportunities for any boat fishing over the coming months now that the bass landing ban has expired. All this is not good news for our bees and it is probably wise to feed our bees with syrup solution as flying hours are likely to be reduced making them consume their own stores and not stock up for the winter

[www.sussexanglingmedia.co.uk](http://www.sussexanglingmedia.co.uk)

## Special Offers, New Products and Services



### Animal Carriers

We can now offer purpose made animal carriers for your chickens and other small pets.

Just £3.50 each, they provide a re-usable carrier – perfect for arrivals and departures from our Chicken Tripper stays.

**Re-usable carriers £3.50 each**



### Available while stocks last: Anti-Peeking Spray

At this time of year with the longer days, poultry can begin to peck at each other's feathers. Pecking can also occur when additional birds are introduced to the flock.

For a short period we have a new anti-pecking spray available – for just £8.00 this is a handy addition to the poultry medical kit.

**Just £8.50**

[http://mantelfarmshop.co.uk/epages/950003783.sf/en\\_GB/?ObjectPath=/Shops/950003783/Products/PTT-PSS-167](http://mantelfarmshop.co.uk/epages/950003783.sf/en_GB/?ObjectPath=/Shops/950003783/Products/PTT-PSS-167)

### Pure Breed Chickens: Rhode Island Red- £45.00



The Rhode Island Red is an easy going bird with a naturally friendly nature, well suited to either the back garden, smallholding or farm environment. They are a hardy breed with a very striking plumage of glossy dark chestnut red. With their broad deep body, they are one of the most recognisable, almost 'famous' breeds of chicken, having been adopted as the official state bird of Rhode Island, USA. They are classed as a heavy breed, being known for their egg laying (around 260 a year, light to medium brown eggs, generally large in size), and meat producing capabilities.

The limited number that we have available exhibit extremely good dark plumage, and will be sold at 'point of lay'.

## **Pure Breed Chickens: Copper Black Maran - £45.00**



The Copper Black Maran is a friendly natured bird, the females being docile, an active busy bird making a good friend around the garden. Described as 'black with a red ginger neck', it soon becomes apparent there is something much more special about the plumage once seen in good sunlight for the first time. A very special, almost metallic, 'beetle green sheen' across most of the body gives this bird the 'wow factor'. Their egg laying is more than reasonable at around 240 a year, but the quality that makes these birds sort after is the deep brown colour of the eggs, generally regarded as 'as good as it gets', though this does depend on the actual strain acquired. Note also that this bird is a 'feathered leg' variety, though

not so extreme as some breeds.

The limited number that we have available are of good quality, and will be sold at 'point of lay'.

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## **Beginning your Beekeeping:**

**Next course: 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> July 2016:**

Only a few places remaining:

A beginners course to get you started, helping you to choose your hive and equipment, how and where to set up your apiary, the bees management and pests and diseases. Not forgetting how to extract that lovely honey.

<http://www.beekeepingcourse.co.uk/beginning-your-beekeeping>

*With best wishes from all at Mantel Farm*

**[www.mantelfarm.co.uk](http://www.mantelfarm.co.uk)**