



Supporting Swallow Pigeons
World Wide Since 1969
Newsletter No. 1, 2021

President's Message

Chris Auer

I hope all USC members are safe and healthy, ready for the upcoming breeding season!!!

For those of you that are unaware the NPA National in Louisville was cancelled which unfortunately meant that the USC Annual Meet was cancelled.

In an attempt to fill in the void created by the cancellation of club meets the USC held a Virtual Show during the first week of February. 24 birds were entered which represented the lofts of 8 USC members (a big thank you to Rachel and Brad Stuckey, Kaylee Quattlebaum, Jim Grober and Bill Griebel). After 2 rounds of "voting" a champion and reserve champion were selected. Bill Griebel's fine black white bar Silesian took top honors and my black white bar Saxon Swallow took the reserve honors. If you want to take a look at the pictures of the birds entered and the 8 finalists visit the UnitedSwallowClub.com website, once you are there you will find 2 links at the bottom of the page that will take you to the pictures. A big thank you goes out to Gary Romig for posting the pictures on the club website and to all those that participated by entering birds or helped by voting. More on the virtual show is included later in this bulletin.

As usual the first bulletin of the year starts the USC calendar of events. Per the USC constitution and by-laws NOMINATIONS for President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, East, Central, West and Canadian District Directors are NOW OPEN. Additionally, nominations for the location for the next annual meet and certified judge are also open for 30 days. Please send your nominations to Rachel Stuckey.

After talking to Elliot multiple times it looks like we have several hundred extra bands this year. If you haven't ordered your USC bands yet please do so soon, within the next couple of months we will have to

place our club order for 2022 bands and unless we get close to selling out this year we will need to cut back on our order for next year.

If anyone had updates for the breeder's matrix please send them to me by May 1. At that time I will update the matrix and Gary will post the new file on the USC website.

At this time we have several members that have not renewed their dues for 2022. If you are one of those and want to stay involved in the USC please send your renewal to Elliot. Also, at this time I would like to acknowledge a few new members to the United Swallow Club, Ronald Jones from Oklahoma, Brad Metzger from Ontario Canada, Randy Wick from Texas and I would like to say welcome back to Freddy Moore and Lance Newman. It is great to have you as a part of the USC. And we all look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the shows!!!

With that I would like to close and wish all of you a safe, healthy and happy 2022. See you at the shows and if you would like to get involved in the USC just let me know and I am 100% sure we can come up with something constructive and worthwhile for you work on.



Bill Griebel's Black White Bar Silesian Swallow was the top choice in the USC first ever Virtual Show



Chris Auer's Black White Bar Saxon Swallow placed 2nd in the USC first ever Virtual Show



Brad and Rachel Stuckey placed 3rd in the Virtual Show

George de la Nuez

by Dr. Rob Teti, DVM

During my perennial visits to see my family in Italy, I always make the time to visit The Uffizi. The curators are always so passionate about their collection, pointing out details that the average or novice eye would miss, explaining a piece of art with such emotion, and imparting an impression that the artwork is more than just the finished product.

And such is the experience when talking with George de la Nuez. His passion for pigeons is more than a hobby or a distraction from life. It is an art form.

"My belief that the most important gift that we possess as breeders is our love for our animals which we show in the respect and care that we give them."

George's journey with pigeons began with five year old recollections of his father's roof top coop in Havana, Cuba. A few years later the family would find themselves in Los Angeles, California and a pre-teen George was pooling his money with the other neighborhood children to buy animals, from rabbits to ducks to chickens. When those animals proved to be a nuisance for the neighbors, George moved his coop to the middle of his yard and began with pigeons.

During those early years, George worked in a pet store & had the opportunity to clean the pigeon loft of a Bosnian friend who would mentor George in the world of pigeons & evolve that interest of pigeons into showing.

George's focus was never exclusively on showing and winning trophies. George breeds to the standard of a particular breed, with an emphasis on high quality & refinement; breeding for vitality & fertility; underscoring phenotype first, and then lineage.

George's birds are feathered works of art, and it is no surprise that he has an inherent eye for details and balance in a pigeon. His success is largely attributed to the relationship he has with each of his birds. The love and attention he gives them is evident in his strict regimen that promotes the excellent health of his birds— from daily loft cleaning to nutrition.



One of George's Blue White Bar Saxon Wing Pigeon



George's Loft



George's Loft interior

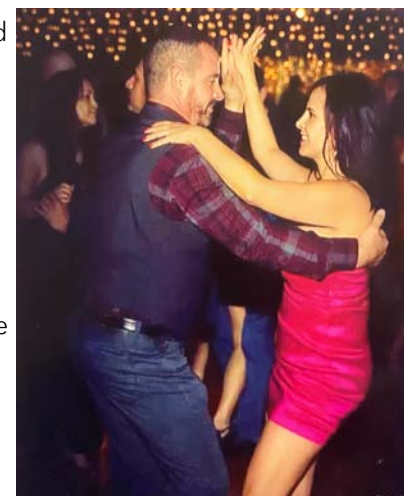
"Pigeons have given me the opportunity to be creative and nurturing. At times the hard work seems to be more of a therapy than a chore."

George's high standards & excellent precision in the pigeon world also carry over into his other creative outlets...all activities that require such focused attention to detail: culinary arts, horticulture, Latin dancing, & photography. The latter activity having started in 1985. Even in his chosen profession as a contractor, George is able to be creative, deliberate and deliver aesthetically pleasing projects.

As a fancier, George not only enjoys the camaraderie with other fanciers, but he is genuinely interested in the success of others.

"My desire is to share the importance of being a well-rounded fancier and for my fellow breeders to understand that being a breeder goes beyond acquiring high-quality stock. Having an on-going desire to improve and gain knowledge on the breed and other areas is crucial for success."

It is very clear that George's humble 'always-a-student' mentality & deep seated respect for his feathered charges has afforded him opportunities and experiences that have solidified him as an invaluable & irreplaceable member of our pigeon community.



Color Pigeon Special

By Mike and Cathy Swanson

The Purebred Pigeon magazine has designated its upcoming September/October 2021 as a special issue to honor, focus and promote Color Pigeons. This special issue recognizing and focusing on Color Pigeons certainly has the potential and promise to be an amazing issue to celebrate and honor Color Pigeons and their astounding variety, beauty and their breeders.

Although September/October may seem, at the moment, in the distant future it won't be long before the end of summer arrives and the deadline for articles, photos and advertisements will be upon us. So many of you have much to contribute through your experiences and knowledge with Color Pigeons. Recognize the subscribers of the Purebred Pigeon would enjoy, appreciate and relish reading about your experiences and enjoy deepening their knowledge of your breed.

As many of you know and realize, the Purebred Pigeon is certainly a quality publication that reaches a broad audience and provides an important platform for our hobby. So with this perspective, we would encourage you to contribute articles, photos and share your knowledge and expertise with others.

Certainly, this past year, we have been cheated out of the opportunity to attend all the shows we've historically enjoyed. So consider this issue as a way to "attend, showcase and interact" just as you would by attending those shows you've attended in the past. Know advertisements are also a great way to showcase you, your knowledge and your breed. Often as breeders we overlook and assume our breed is well known to others. Often we assume other breeders are informed about our goals for our Color Pigeons when in fact many fellow breeders are unaware or perhaps misinformed. So your articles and photos would provide insight, excitement and an increased consciousness of the attributes and nuances in our huge variety of Color Pigeons. Breeders far and wide would have the opportunity to enjoy them through this special issue to honor their history, significance and beauty.

Years ago we were amazed at the color, beauty and variety of

Color Pigeons during our many visits to Bonne Terre, Missouri to visit the loft of Dr. L.E. Hummel and his wife, Ruth. Dr. Hummel had over 2000 Color Pigeons in a wide range of colors, markings and breeds; certainly an astounding sight for a novice breeder. Breeds, colors, markings and varieties we had never seen before, many he had imported from Europe. Dr. Hummel told us that you can't keep them all, however Ruth quickly quipped right back, "Lynn certainly tries to!" So although, many of us are unable to travel to the lofts of others we can enjoy, appreciate and broaden our perspective of Color Pigeons through this special issue.

Know that we have contacted well-known renowned artist, Gary Romig to design the front cover of the Color Pigeon Special. We are excited about the outcome of the cover. Gary always does a tremendous job and we can't wait to see what he creates!

Doratha E. Connally, Editor and Publisher of the Purebred Pigeon magazine is very easy to work with so I encourage you to submit your advertisements, photos and articles directly to her. Her email is staff@purebredpigeon.com and her phone number is 615-851-9674. Her mailing address is 108 Freeman Hollow Ct. Goodlettsville, Tennessee 37072 USA. Doratha is a quality individual to work with and she will support and help you with the format of your article, photos and advertisements.

We have reached out to several Color Pigeon Clubs throughout the United States to make them aware of this upcoming special. Some of these clubs have a long history while others are loose-knit. The West coast has always been a hot spot for Color Pigeons as well as many other parts of the United States.

We are confident this will be a memorable and special issue to celebrate the beauty, uniqueness and rich history of Color Pigeons. Don't miss out, plan to contribute and support this special issue with your voice, stories and unique history of raising Color Pigeons. Know that we are eager to answer any questions and provide you with help and support!

Message from USC Secretary/Treasurer

Elliot Yeske

Hello Everyone I hope all of you are well in these uncertain times. Today, in the frozen north, we finally got above zero for the first time in about 10 days. We had a mild January—at least for us, so, I was hoping that February would bring us spring; I was hoping to get an early start with the birds.

Bands as of this writing; the USC is sitting on about 650 11 mm bands and a little over 200 8 mm bands. Our bands are 50 cents each with \$6 for postage and the mailer that we are using. If you are in need of bands still, please contact me and get them from USC. I will be cutting our order way back for next year; as we are not selling this year to people that have bought them in past years. Memberships: please check the enclosed membership list to see if your membership has expired. I will be emailing and sending out notices to those that have not renewed yet. It is our hope that you will all stay with us. Any members not paid up by March 15th will be dropped. I hope you all have a great breeding season. I know some members that I have talked with are underway with their season already.

Take Care Everyone,



Elliot's Desk

Our Trip to Hummels - By Bill Griebel

I am writing this and showing these photos for nostalgic reasons, for us old-timers who have been around for a while and for the newcomers who have arrived over the last several years.

Dr. Lynn Hummel was an icon to us in the swallow fancy and a trip to Hummels as many of you old-timers know was a real treat (like a kid in a candy store).

Blood from the Hummel birds still runs through many birds in this country. To use an analogy of a track team passing the baton in a 4-legged race, Lynn Hummel and others like Cal Breadhoff, Fred Merklinger, Harold Schrodel bridged the gap between the old American Swallow Club which I believe went defunct in the early 1960's and the now 50-year-old United Swallow Club which started in 1969.

Going way back in the early 1900's, Lynn Hummel was a friend of T.A. Havemeyer and M. Frank Cook who, along with many others, were among the first to help carry the baton into our swallow future.

I wrote about Havemeyer in our last swallow special, he was a very passionate swallow breeder and did many good things for the pigeon fancy in general.

Now we hope to see this next generation of swallow breeders take the baton and carry it to their next generation of swallow breeders. I look forward to seeing some of our younger members take on positions as officers in the United Swallow Club and help carry us into the future.



Lynn Hummel and Leon Stephens discussing - looks intense!



Steve Ball in Lynn Hummel's young bird loft



Back side of Lynn Hummel's two-story loft



Interior of one of Lynn Hummel's breeding lofts



Front view of Lynn Hummel's loft as you come up the driveway from the street

Central district news

My prayer is that everyone has been healthy through this pandemic. It should have given us more time to spend with our birds. A lot of shows were cancelled, missed opportunities. But we will persevere.

Here in Missouri we are thawing out from our deep freeze. I guess most of the people around the country experienced it. I have begun putting nest bowls in the loft and mateing some young pairs. But it's still early.

It's a little bit early to be planning the next show season. Hopefully we will have shows in Louisville, Des Moines's and Louisiana again. I haven't heard anything on the national yet. I will keep you posted when I get more info. Happy breeding.

Perry mueller.

Central district director

Swallow Artwork

by John Navant

I have been making these 3-D puzzles for my family; nieces and nephews mainly. I am making them out of wood, like this Black white bar Fairy Swallow. I have also made them out of a harder foam. I made one of a Jacobin for Drew Lobenstien and an Archangel for Herman. I make them out of 1/2" pine or poplar. And they are held together by 1/4" or 3/8" dowels. Let me know what you think. I am working on a Zitterhal, English Carrier, Short Faced Budapest, Naked neck and a larger Archangel.



PureBred Pigeon Color Pigeon Special

Most of you have probably heard but for those of you that have not the Purebred Pigeon magazine is having a Color Pigeon special in the September/October 2021 issue.

Although this special is not specific to Swallows, our Swallows are a member of the group of pigeons known as "Color Pigeons". Since Swallows are 1 of only 2 color pigeon breeds to have their own specialty club here in the USA it is important for us to support this special and the PureBred magazine. We can show our support by writing articles about our experiences with Swallows and other color pigeons along with taking out ads for this special issue.

This is a prime opportunity for us to promote Swallows, the United Swallow Club and color pigeons in general. Let's fill the issue with swallow articles and ads from cover to cover!!!

Chris Auer

Saxon Wing Pigeons

Blue White Bar Crested

Offering 2020 bred birds
in high quality
PMV vaccinated.

George de la Nuez
909-224-5449

goldenwesthomeimprovement@gmail.com



United Swallow Club Financial Report

1-1-2020 - 1-31-2021

Beginning Balance: 7,120.25

Deposits:	
National Auction	1,243.00
Dues, bands, pins, magnets	2,012.00
National rebate	103.00
Total Deposits	3,358.00

Expenses:	
Bill Griebel: National Expense	260.00
NPA bands	840.00
Iowa State Pigeon Assoc. Ad	50.00
NPA 1/4 page Ad	90.00
Gary Romig (German Award)	374.00
NPA Club dues	20.00
Chris Auer (Magnets + pins)	589.00
USPS (bands postage)	38.60
Total Expenses	2,261.99

Ending balance: 8,216.26



Champion Bowl for the Virtual Show Winner
made by Dave Gazaway



Blue Check Silesian Champion 2011 Leon Stephens E 97. Photo: Tom Moss

The Challenge of Breeding the Check Marking Pattern in Swallows

by Stephen Ripper

Breeding the Check Pattern in swallows presents the breeder with a number of challenges that are not found in the barred birds because of the amount of color required in a properly marked check pattern.

Another marking pattern, The Spangle, is the same as the Check marking but found in the Toy Stencil variety of Swallows and expresses the triangular checks in solid white with a black edging. In Non-Toy Stencil Swallows with the same triangular check markings the checks are solid black in blue birds and dark charcoal in the silvers.

We know that the Swallow color pattern is a bird where the main body of the bird is white featuring a colored spot above the wattle also with colored muff and wing shield. And, as a Color Pigeon the contrasting color on the white body should be rich in tone with even color throughout expressing a crisp clear image without intrusions which distract from the overall beauty of the bird.

The wing shield is where we find the Check marking which, like a Spangle, is the most difficult to produce clearly. Also, these markings are not fixed genetically and can be quite variable from bird to bird. The pattern of the Check marking is expressed with two broad shaped bars with the bottom edge of the first larger bar incised with "V" shaped notches. The 2nd bar isn't as developed and generally is found with less of the notching as well and the bottom edges are more rounded being less defined. These two bars are separated by the shield color. Beginning above the first bar, rows of evenly spaced triangular checks descending in size fill in the wing shield in a continuous arching pattern to the shoulder. These checks are aligned with the one point of the triangle pointing downward. In a blue Swallow this presents a striking pattern in contrast to the blue background shield color. The proportion of checks to the shield color is a 50/50 ratio of triangular checks to the area of the shield background color. The bars and checks should be crisp with clean edges with no infiltration of other colors.

And here lies the difficulty! To get the desired ratio of checks requires more color and when this color becomes too intense it causes the color to spread in areas where it shouldn't be. A check with a less dense marking pattern will have less of the color spread in these areas but also doesn't fulfill the proper 50/50 ratio leaving a more open pattern of checks. The problem areas where this color shouldn't spread

significantly are usually the primary flights and the layers of the muff.

Checks like Blue barred swallows should have black tipped flights and the outer tips of the muff's longest feathers also are black forming a continuous looking band.

Genetically the Muff feathers are produced by the same gene which produces the flight feathers of the pigeon. Therefore, we should expect the same coloration scheme in the flights and muff of a pigeon as well as the possibility of similar color defects in the flight or muff feathers. Of course, any color defects are more easily seen on the muff because the feathers are always spread in a rounded fan shape where the flights are folded showing mostly the tips.

The Muff feathers also reflect the shape of the wing primary and secondary feathers in shape and positioning. The main front feathers of the muff begin on the second toe and are shaped similar to the primaries but slightly curved, the middle feathers are longer and broader, then the rest decrease in length and curve back into the hock area completing the muff. These longer feathers are tipped in black and together form a black band on the edge of the rounded muff. These larger feathers are covered by two rows of smaller feathers, the third row being the smallest.

The area of the muff where most of the unwanted color is found is the 2nd row of cover feathers and in very severe cases also the 3rd row of cover feathers of the muff which makes the entire muff seem black which is a major fault. This is generally seen when the check pattern is very dense and approaches a "T" pattern look. You may also see in these heavily marked birds that the shield color is also a darker shade of blue than preferred which lessens the desired contrast of a nice clear blue shield color.

The flights of a heavily marked bird will also show more color and some rust. This presents to the breeder the challenge of producing a bird with the right ratio of well-defined checks and bars with good shield color without too much saturation of color which causes the over coloring in the unwanted areas. Also, it is difficult to produce a check marking pattern that isn't random where the checks are seen in uneven rows producing a scattered look. This is a commonly seen fault in



A Blue Check Silesian with an acceptable amount of color in the 2nd layer of muff, a minor fault. The Check pattern needs improvement.



A Blue Check Fairy with a nice clean muff. No color spreading into other top layers of the muff.



beautiful clean muff, excellent

checks. Some of the other faults you will see in the marking pattern are incomplete rows of checks, (open spaces) checks being too rounded, and poorly notched first bars. Remembering that the checks get smaller as the rows ascend up the wing shield which become very close at the shoulder almost appearing solid in some birds, this isn't a fault as long as it doesn't become a dense solid black appearance. The muff color is important to compliment the Swallow color pattern. This is why the muff in a blue check swallow should be as blue and clean as a blue barred swallow to show that contrast of clear blue to the even pattern of black checks filling in the wing shield. We need to also be concerned about any rust found in the flights and bar or checks of the wing shield which again is a fault in the coloring.

Of course, as in the Toy Stencil Spangle marking some slight infiltration of color may be permitted in the muff feathers as long as it isn't out of proportion making the muff appear almost solid black.

The Finch marking found in the Toy Stencil Spangle on the tip of each primary flight is absent in the Check marking pattern.

In my experience of breeding check Swallows which I breed in blue, silver, cream and ash red you need a number of birds of varying density



dark muff, major fault,

of checks to counter balance each other to get a nicely marked bird. Also, I have found that breeding from blue barred birds showing a third bar with excellent muff color helps to keep the color from spreading. Of course, this produces many open pattern birds which the best of these are bred back to birds with a closed pattern of checks thus trying to strike that balance of 50/50 ratio.

I believe I am halfway there in developing my check swallows. I have produced some fairly nice birds which are clearly marked and have less unwanted color in the muff while maintaining a fairly good pattern. It is a numbers game to some degree as the more you produce you have a greater number to select from to use in your program. You also have to watch your mating's carefully to weed out those birds which spread the color more than others. What I look for in a well-marked check is a bird with a well notched first bar, a complete row of the first-row of checks above the first bar and uniform arching rows of decreasing sized checks up to shoulder that are sharp and crisp with muff and flights tipped in black without too much color over the muff cover feathers. Also, the shield base color has to be a nice blue to show that contrast to the triangular check pattern. The difficulty of breeding Checks and Spangles shouldn't deter one interested in these markings as the satisfaction of producing a nicely marked bird is an accomplishment for any breeder.



A Silver Spangle (Toy Stencil) Silesian with grizzling in the muff, the color opposite of the Black color in the Blue Check muff. This is a fault by degree depending on the amount of color spread where it is unwanted. In this bird it would be a major fault, a clear muff is preferred.



Blue Check, slight brown in flights, minor fault



Fairly clean flights, a little light further back along quill, acceptable



Blue Check, Acceptable, very slight color on muff



Blue Spangle, Acceptable, very slight color on muff

A Guide to Mating and Selection of Fairy Swallows

by George de la Nuez



One of the most exciting times of the year in our hobby is the arrival of spring and feeling optimistic of the upcoming breeding season. Our spirit is filled with hope and enthusiasm as we start to think about our goals and plans. Selecting birds that are going to improve our family and get them closer to the ideal standard. This can be challenging and stressful especially as it relates to a complex breed such as Swallows. It is important to only use your best birds that meet your high standard as a breeder. There are numerous factors that one must take into consideration when evaluating and selecting breeders. I have used the following principles and methods to evaluate and select my breeders with consistent results.

METHODS OF EVALUATING AND SELECTING:

The methods of evaluating and selecting pairs varies from breeder to breeder. I have witnessed many methods such as, phenotype (visual) selection and pendulum method (extreme opposites). There are some that say, "Let's just see what these two birds can produce." I call this blind mating, a method that does not require any thought or purpose. Some solely rely on a pedigree mating approach. In my opinion there are lucky or well calculated mating, the latter being my preference. What does this mean? For starters, it means you have to know your pigeons individually as well as their lineage. We are all aware that no family of birds is perfect. Prior to evaluating your birds, you must be able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and have a vision of your short and long term goals. Another very important component in the evaluation and selection process is our intuition. This is our God given talent to be able to apply our experience and bring together all the tools to create well-orchestrated matings.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

The basic rule of thumb we are taught to follow when selecting pairs is to choose from those that possess as many quality features and never double up on faults. This is a sound approach to mating however there is much more to consider depending where you are at in your breeding program. One must be able to identify minor and major faults in the breed. This obviously comes from experience, learning the fine points of the breed, understanding inheritance and long term affects. The old saying, "What you put in, you will get out," holds true in every sense of the word. When we are in the process of selecting birds, we must be aware of order of importance.

In the case of our Swallows and Wing Pigeons, many factors need to be considered and evaluated. First, is type/color, markings and structure. Notice that I did not place type above color. In my opinion, they are equally as important when it comes to selecting birds for breeding. On numerous occasions, I have not used birds with great type due to poor color. Swallows and Wing Pigeons are color pigeons and great attention should be placed on this yet we need to look further than that. For example, feather quality, muff shape/size, heart marking, crest/rosettes (if applies), mane, head shape, beak color (if applies),

spot, wings, tail width, station, leg length, bars and how the bird fits together harmoniously. What does fitting together mean? This is the overall impression, balance, style, elegance and alertness. For example, how the wing butts fit into the body and chest, how the back and wings smoothly transition into the tail (wings should not cross at tail).

COMPONENTS AND STRUCTURE:

Selecting well-balanced complementary mates is very important. There are occasions that an overall exceptional bird with a fault can be mated with a carefully selected mate.

MUFFS:

While our goal is to breed a medium round muff, we must have several ingredients in our loft to successfully build and achieve a well shaped muff. First we must select birds with good layering (overlap of feather), fullness (wealth of feather) and wide strong feathers with three layers. The ideal muff shape and structure is based on short front feathers, medium side feathers and short rear feathers that end at the hocks. This will create a round shape. As a breeder attempts to achieve the ideal muff they must keep in mind that a smaller, rounder muff bird is ideal to balance out a mate with longer straight feathers.



Examples of medium, round shaped muffs.



Long front muff

Short front muff

BARs:

I want to discuss my approach on how to select matings for good bar structure. First, we must select for clear color in the bar, free from rust, pink cast and peppering. Reds and yellows are more susceptible to some of this due to their genetic makeup. Second, select away from tapered, short bars and bars that touch at the top. We must try to select bars that are long, with good separation and even width from top to bottom. Edging on the blue series birds should be narrow and as dark

as possible. We often see birds with bars that are jagged with uneven edge. We should not exclude them from our breeding if they possess all the other good qualities mentioned above. These birds could be useful in mating with a smooth edge barred bird which can produce a percentage of young with good quality bars. Mating narrow to wide bars is always good practice to control width.



Jagged bar



Example of good narrow bar.



Example of a good wide bar.

HEART FEATHERS:

The heart marking is one of the key components in a Swallow. It should be broad at the shoulders, curving on the sides and tapering down to the bars, be free of colored feathers and lay smoothly. On occasion unwanted colored feathers invade part of the heart. It is common to have a small amount interspersed throughout. When selecting mates, we need to consider this area and make sure one of the mates has a clear heart to balance color in the heart. On occasion we get birds with colored feathers near the bottom of the heart. I do not recommend using these birds, unless it is an exceptional bird and has a small amount of colored feathers.



Example of colored feathers in heart.



Example of a well shaped and clear heart.

PEDIGREE / LINEAGE

Pedigree is a main factor that should be considered in the selection and evaluating of the birds in question. Some of you newer breeders may be at a disadvantage as you do not know the background on your birds. I encourage you to attempt to obtain any background from the breeder you acquired your birds from as it will help tremendously. I personally offer background information and in most cases provide pictures of the parents and grandparents of the birds when sold. Keeping good detailed records and pedigree is an essential and useful tool. I use breeding cards for the initial recording of the hatchlings for

birth dates and short notes. I then transfer the records to a more sophisticated computer program that analyzes percentages of each bird's relationship as well as other important facts. Detailed records provide the breeder with pertinent information such as, prodigy (if it applies), dam and sire and lineage going back several generations. This is an important tool that makes the selection process not only easier but optimal. However, what takes precedence when selecting birds is looking at balance and birds that visually complement each other.



Inputting pedigree information from breeding cards.

LINE BREEDING:

My method to building and maintaining my family of Swallows has been based on line-breeding. Selecting birds based off their physical attributes is just as important as good temperament, health, vitality, excellent fertility, good egg production and of course good parenting instinct. Long term it is critical that one consider these various elements. One thing that I must emphasize is that we must start with very healthy stock. Starting with animals that are too inbred for many generations can lead to frustration and wasted time.

I am a firm believer that it is more beneficial to breed four top pairs versus ten mediocre pairs as it increases the possibility to produce higher quality young. If you have successfully bred a good number of young, approximately 5 to 10 then you will most likely have one or two useful young to high grade your stock. On the other hand, one should not make an assessment on a well calculated pairing based on a low number of offspring, or what their first set of young look like. Let's be realistic, even the best pairs produce culls! We must be patient and allow the breeding to complete its natural process without interference. I have had great pairs produce very poor birds however I felt confident of their potential and I re-mated them the following year. This resulted in them producing high quality offspring. You have to believe in yourself and your birds.



A well selected pair with their thriving young.

United Swallow Club Members March 2021

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