

Ever Heard Of A Rooster That Can Lay Eggs?

Dual-sex chickens that are half rooster and half hen are so rare that few people in the poultry business even know about them. The condition is called “gynandromorphism”, a Latin word meaning female-male-form.

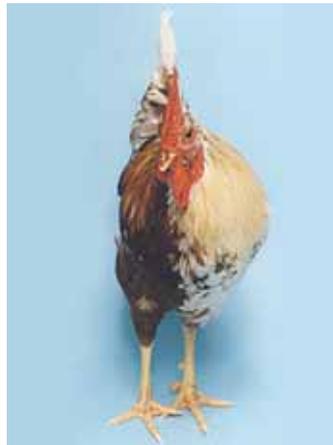
In the 1920’s a Dr. Schaefer from Ontario kept chickens in his backyard and one of those chickens looked like a rooster on one side and a hen on the other. Its behavior was confusing because it tried to mate with other hens but also laid eggs. Schaefer decided to have it for dinner. After the bird had been plucked he noticed that each side of the bird was different. He also found a testicle on one side and an ovary on the other.

After roasting and eating the rooster/hen, the good doctor cleaned the bones and gave them to an anatomy professor who wrote about it in 1923.

The occurrence of gynandromorphism in chickens is rare, somewhere between one in 10,000 and one in 100,000, so it hasn’t been studied much. Animal science also hasn’t had the tools to observe reproduction or decipher the relationship between chromosomes and hormones until recently. One expert on the subject is Dr. Michael Clinton, from Scotland’s University of Edinburgh.

According to Dr. Clinton, gynandromorphism in chickens is caused by double fertilization and results in what looks like 2 opposite sex birds glued together. The male side has larger bones and muscles. Even the male side of the vertebrae is larger. The bird will have a male and female kidney, and other internal organs such as the heart or brain may have male and female sides.

Gynandromorphic chickens aren’t just a curiosity for Dr. Clinton. “If we can understand the differences between the male and female identities, then we can imagine making female birds with the same growth



Dual-sex chicken looks like a rooster on one side and a hen on the other.

characteristics as males. That would increase productivity and food security.”

Gynandromorph research also has implications for human health. “There are differences between males and females in susceptibility to a variety of diseases and stress. Conditions like MS, dementia, addiction, and heart disease are different in men and women. Understanding gynandromorph brain development and function may help us better understand behavior traits, diseases and other disorders.”

Thankfully, the work of people like Dr. Jacob and Dr. Clinton could provide answers to many questions. The stranger-than-fiction chickens may one day lead to better health for humans.

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Basil Bacon added inexpensive fish habitat to the lake where he fishes by pushing long vinyl siding cross pieces through a plastic pipe.

Do-It-Yourself Fish Habitat

“I have been working on developing an affordable fish habitat to place at the lake where I fish. I finally came up with a design that really works. I’ve caught thousands of crappies around these habitats over the past 4 to 5 years,” says Basil Bacon (baconbe@gmail.com).

“I found a plastic pipe manufacturer who sold me some 10-ft. sections for less than \$10 apiece.

“The cross pieces are vinyl siding, which I got free. Many old houses with vinyl are either coming down or being re-sided. You

can get as many pieces as you want for nothing.

“What I do is cut teardrop-shaped holes in the pipe with a jigsaw and then tie one end of the pipe to a concrete block with wire and attach an empty sealed gallon milk jug to the top. The jug keeps the ‘tree’ standing up straight. Then I simply slide the siding into the holes as shown in the picture and drop them overboard, recording the location with a buoy or GPS.

“This has worked better than any other method I’ve tried.”

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Charlie Brown converted an old Dodge COE semi truck into this shop truck complete with a flatbed and knuckle boom crane.

Cab-Over-Engine Turned Into Working Shop Truck

It’s not easy to find a 1947 Dodge cab-over-engine (COE) semi truck, and harder still to convert it into a working shop truck complete with a flatbed and knuckle boom crane. But that’s what Charlie Brown of Port Orchard, Wash., did recently.

He mounted the COE cab on a 1980 Dodge motorhome chassis and also built an 11 1/2-ft. long flatbed with an aluminum diamond plate floor, bolting the crane on back of the floor. The cab sports a custom built grill and is painted light metallic blue, while the fenders and bed are a dark metallic blue. The truck has several LED lights, including 6 narrow tail lights on back, 3 on each side, that blink in sequence from inside to outside as the driver turns. A pair of 2 1/2-in. dia. stainless steel, MagnaFlow performance exhaust mufflers give the engine a beefy sound.

“I got the ‘old truck disease’ about 4 years ago and decided I wanted to restore an old COE truck,” says Brown. “It took a year to find a cab to use, and I bought the motorhome chassis at the same time. It took me 3 years to build.”

“I enjoyed building it, but I’m not sure I’d want to do it again. Some of the parts were incredibly hard to find, and there were a lot of little things that took a long time to do. I spent a total of about \$20,000.”

Brown owns and operates Brown Custom Iron, Inc., a welding shop that specializes in custom built ornamental iron objects designed for high-end homes - everything from custom driveway and walkway gates to handrails, furniture, benches, fences, planters, arbors, outdoor art and light fixtures (www.Browncustomiron.com).

He started researching older trucks on the internet and found the cab and motorhome chassis in Oregon. The cab didn’t have an engine so he installed a 360 cu. in. gas engine with an automatic transmission. “I had to

rebuild the cab hood to make room for the engine and ended up building an aluminum grill and bumper to fit. The cab sets far ahead and over the engine, which required rebuilding the steering system,” says Brown. “I installed 2 U-joints in the steering column shaft, allowing it to run at a sharp angle down to the original steering box. I also replaced the cab’s vacuum windshield wipers with electric-operated ones.

“The owner had cut the truck’s frame off behind the cab, and most of the floor had rusted away so I rebuilt it. I found some nice leather custom seats on Craigslist.”

The motorhome chassis came equipped with a lightweight floor tach welded to the frame. They weren’t strong enough to support the 1,500-lb. crane so he pulled the floor off and bolted lengths of big rectangular tubing inside the frame, and then built the floor.

He found the crane on Craigslist. The hydraulics for it are operated by a 6 1/2 hp. Harbor Freight Predator gas engine, which drives a 2-stage pump off a log splitter. The engine and pump set on a slide-out tray mounted inside a storage box located just below one side of the floor. Hydraulic hoses with quick-disconnect couplers run from the pump back to the crane, and the control levers mount on the crane itself.

Brown also replaced the truck’s carburetor with a FiTech electric fuel injection kit (www.fitechfi.com). “Installing electronic fuel injection was the best decision I made during the entire project because it’s so reliable,” says Brown. “When I turn the ignition key the engine always fires right up. It never needs to be adjusted like a carburetor does.”

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