

Sexing

Friday, 10 November 2006

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Here are some tips on determining sex of your chick

- 1.) From the time the chicks are three days old a vein on each side of the belly traveling down towards the vent and coming to a vee just in front of the vent can be seen on the young male. This vein cannot be seen on the female. Even though this vein exists throughout the life of the male, it is best to observe it prior to the bird becoming feathered.
- 2.) At five to eight days (banding time) put all the chicks from the same nest on a towel and line them up like horses at a starting gate. The ones that can jump the farthest will be the males.
- 3.) While banding the birds you will notice that some of them have a long center toe while others have three toes that are more nearly the same length. The ones with the long center toe will be harder to band and will be the male. The females are easier to band because the three toes are of nearly equal length.
- 4.) While banding the chick look at the back bone. Along the side of the back bone the little male will have stiffer and deeper in color quills. The female seems to have only little fuzzy down long the backbone. Indicate the males on your nesting card.
- 5.) Before the chicks are feathered look down into the nest at the heads of the chicks. The ones with the more flat looking heads will be the males. The females have a more rounded crown.
- 6.) About the sixth or seventh day the chicks begin to open their eyes and from this time on into adulthood the eye of the male will be directly even with the beak. The eye of the female is placed above the beak causing a rounder appearing head.
- 7.) While the chicks are being fed by the parent in the nest observe the attitude of the chicks. The ones that stand the tallest, scream the loudest and demand to be fed first are the males. The female with her shorter legs does not stand as tall and is smaller because she is being fed less.
- 8.) Twenty-eight to thirty days some of the young males can be seen swelling their throats and practicing to become good singers. (Because he tries to sing early does not mean that he will be your best singer. It just means that he is trying to sing early.)
- 9.) About 5 months of age give or take two weeks, the males are most generally the brightest and deepest in color; though some of my hens are as brightly colored. In the mottled the spots will be sharper and deeper in the males especially near the head. The center of the head in the yellow females will be very light.
- 10.) You may still have some females among the males even though they are about six months old. The female will sit lower on the perch because of the difference in her structure. She will also be causing trouble by fighting the young male as he tries to practice his song. She is not in breeding condition and wants no part of the nonsense which she thinks his song means.

Should all of the above methods fail, there is still one last sure way of sexing. In the event the bird lays an egg, it is for sure a female.