

## DON'T GET LOST IN THE WEEDS

By Mike Sayre, September, 2018

There seems to be a familiar theme when folks who have raised Cochin large fowl and Cochin bantams for any length of time come together either at a show or looking at the many pictures posted online and that is "What is happening to Cochins?"

With the advent of social media, like Facebook we now get to see many pictures of what is passing as Cochins both in Large Fowl and Bantams and worse yet reading the comments from other breeders and exhibitors that go something like this, "GORGEOUS", "WONDERFUL", "STUNNING", "etc, etc when in actuality the vast majority are pet quality at best. It seems that no one wants to invest in either the Bantam Standard or the Standard of Perfection. If they do have one or both of them they do not study the book! They worry about an off colored foot feather in a buff or black or a black not having butter yellow foot or leg coloring and ignore that the bird in question has either wonderful type or no type at all. I call that "getting lost in the weeds."

A breeder cannot improve or maintain a strain or breed by fixating on one minor trait if the type of the bird as a whole is not kept to standard. It is a balancing act, the Bantam Standard assigns 72 points to type on white birds with 28 assigned to color and 62 points to type for birds other than white and 38 to color, with those points being divided up in different sections of the bird. TYPE is KING my friends always has been and always will be , never, never lose sight of this fact.

Get the Bantam Standard or the Standard of Perfection or both and read them, study them, take them to the coop with you study, study, study. Be critical of your birds always look for something to cull off the bottom. When you mate birds up, have a mental picture in your mind of what you are striving for. Compensate mate, try and never mate birds together that have the same fault. Remember this order: TYPE, Balance, Feather Quality then Color. Keep trying, keep striving for improvement every year don't give up and remember "Don't get lost in the weeds." Until next time.....

