

Michigan Bird and Game
Breeders Association
Newsletter



www.MBGBA.com

September 2025

Front Cover Photo Credit:
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Canada Geese

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Table of Contents

President's Message	5
Editor's Page	6
MBGBA Updates	7
MBGBA Treasurer Report	8
Article: Bird Group: Goose	9-20
Article: How I Designed My Coop and Chicken Run	21-24
Article: What is the FFA?	25-27
Crossword	28
Word Search	29
Swap Meets & Sales	30
Let's Get Cooking	31
Exchange Clubs	32
Membership Application	33-34

Statement of Purpose

This association was created with the intent to preserve and propagate all varieties of ornamental/game/cage birds and animals. By doing so, we hope that future generations will be able to participate in the beauties of outdoor life.

We would hope to further educate our members and the general public with current information about the use of birds and animals for beauty and profit.

President's Message

Hello to all Michigan Bird & Game Breeder Association members. I hope this finds you all well. I would like to tell you how very proud I am of all our members who come out and show their support at our swap meets. This support makes our club survive. I also must say, I have seen and talked to many who make our club look great and who work hard to keep things going. Thank you to all who come to swaps with clean cages including food and water. Even though we are only at the swaps for a short time, it shows that we care for our animals and their well-being. Buyers notice this too.

As fall approaches again, we have 1 more swap left this year. The last for the year is on October 4, 2025 at the Mid-Michigan Fair Grounds in Imlay City, MI. We are hoping for good weather at the this last swap. Bring your smiles and healthy animals for a couple more chances to buy and sell.

As of now, we have confirmed our swap dates for next year, so please watch our next newsletter for that information including the new flyer to share.

Well, now that we are preparing for our next winter season, we must also prepare for a possible long winter without seeing our bird friends. It will be hard to wait until next year. In the meantime, please follow us on our Facebook page and share your bird photos this winter. It will help remind us of all the resources our group has. Next year, we will have some new opportunities coming to our swaps. I will share those with you soon. Have a great fall season and enjoy the changing colors.

Thank you,
Kim Castine, MBGBA President

Editor's Page

Publishing Information: Please submit advertisements, marketplace ads, and memberships by the following dates.

Newsletter Submission Deadlines

March Newsletter-Submit by February 1

September Newsletter-Submit by August 1

December Newsletter-Submit by November 1

Directory Submission Deadline

June printing-Submit memberships by May 1 to be included. Any membership submissions after September 1 will be counted towards the following year's renewal.

Advertising Rates

Advertising with us is a great way to reach other aviculturists who raise and work with birds. Where else can you get focused advertising to reach bird enthusiasts?

Display Ad In 1 Newsletter Issue:

Full page-\$20 ½ page-\$15

¼ page/business card-\$10

Marketplace Ad In 1 Newsletter Issue:

30 words or less-\$2 30-60 words-\$4

Calling for Submissions

We would love to see your birds! Send us your photos by mail, email or text to our Editor, Felicia Smith. They could be included in the next newsletter!

We are also looking for article suggestions. Do you have information to share on bird related topics? You could have an article in our next newsletter.

Remit to: fsjewelrydesigns@gmail.com or
(616) 437-5636

Updates For The MBGBA

For the most up to date information on swaps, events, cancelations, and news, please visit our Facebook page by searching: Michigan Bird and Game Breeders Association.

You can also check out our website at:

www.MBGBA.com

Contact us by email: themgbga@gmail.com

MBGBA Members:

Renewals will come due January 1, 2026.

Dues for 2026-2027 year will be \$30 per year/per family. Fee covers yearly directory and 3 newsletters. Swap prices will remain the same with members receiving a 50% discount on seller fees. Sellers thus only pay \$10 per swap. The seller fee for swaps covers our required insurance and lot rent.

Newsletters will be mailed during the months of March, September, and December, approximately. The Annual Directory will be mailed out in June. In order to be included in the directory, please have renewal applications in no later than May 1st. Thank you everyone!

NEW Mailing Address

Please send all mail correspondence including membership submissions and renewals to:

MBGBA

15263 Stout Ave

Cedar Springs, MI 49319

Treasurer Report

As of 9/3/2025:

<i>Annual Directory Cost (June 2025)</i>	<i>-\$574.82</i>
<i>Editor Fee, Printing, Postage</i>	
<i>Clare Lot Rent</i>	<i>-\$200.00</i>
Deposit (Carson City Swap)	+\$640.00
Deposit (Clare Swap)	+\$1,018.00
Deposit (Donation)	+\$15.00
Account Balance	\$7,289.56

- We have 150 followers on our NEW Facebook page. Please join our group and share with your friends to get the word out. Let's grow this community of bird enthusiasts!
- We have over 90 Members receiving the newsletters and directory.
- Carson City, MI Swap Report 5/17/2025
 - 15 selling members, 11 selling non-members, 9 new member applications. Deposit \$640.00
- Clare, MI Swap Report 7/26/2025
 - 22 selling members, 27 selling non-members, 8 new member applications, 3 merchandise sales. Deposit \$1018.00



Bird Group: The Goose

By Felicia Smith

There are many different types of geese, ranging from wild species found in various corners of the globe to domestic breeds that have been raised for their unique qualities and companionship. Geese in the wild are explorers, capable of flying great distances and adapting to various environments. Domestic geese, on the other hand, offer a variety of purposes and are often seen as beloved farm animals. This article will explore the characteristics of various goose breeds, including where they live, how they behave, and what makes them remarkable. So, read on and get to know these wonderful birds!

One of the biggest types of domestic geese is the **Emden Goose**. They are the most common goose breed used for commercial meat production due to their large bodies and fast growth rate. With their pure white plumage, ocean-blue eyes, and short, light orange bills, they look like any other white farmyard goose. Their legs are also orange, which complement their overall look. These geese are herbivores and excellent foragers, often seen grazing on grass and other vegetation. Their temperament is generally calm and gentle. However, males or ganders can be quite protective and vocal, which makes them effective as alarm birds against potential threats. Emden Geese don't lay many eggs and produce only around 30 eggs per year, but they are often broody and make excellent mothers. They hail from Germany originally and can live up to 12 years.

Just like the Emden Goose, the **Toulouse Goose** is known for its large size and is raised primarily for meat production. But apart from their meat, foie gras is what they are mostly used for. These geese are raised in a special way to produce high-quality foie gras that people enjoy in fancy meals. In terms of appearance, Toulouse Geese have a distinctive gray color and are recognized by the American Poultry Association (APA) in two varieties: the original Gray and the Buff. Toulouse Geese have a gentle demeanor, generally displaying a calm and

docile nature. They are not prolific layers, but their eggs are quite large and white. They come from France and can live up to 22 years.

With its long, white, curly feathers, the **Sebastopol Goose** easily stands out from other goose species. They were originally developed in central Europe in the 1800s to have their curly feathers, which were then used in making pillows and quilts. Due to the structure of their feathers, these geese are not great flyers. Nonetheless, they are adaptable and can thrive in various environments. Prized for their beauty and adaptability, Sebastopol Geese are mainly kept for ornamental purposes. These birds make excellent companions and show birds because of their quiet and friendly demeanor. They can live up to 25 years.

Native to Germany, the **Pomeranian Goose** is known for its large size and sociable nature. They come in four color varieties: white, gray, saddleback gray, and saddleback buff. One characteristic that sets Pomeranian Geese apart from other breeds is their distinctive single-lobed paunch. These geese are specifically bred to have this unique trait. However, it's worth noting that in North America, Pomeranian Geese tend to have two lobes because of genetic diversity and inbreeding. In terms of behavior, Pomeranian Geese are quite engaging and chatty. They'll be sure to let you know if someone comes around with their noisy greetings. Furthermore, these birds are valued for their meat and egg production. They are great layers and can produce up to 70 large eggs per season. They can live up to 20 years. Their combination of distinctive physical traits and versatile utility makes Pomeranian Geese a popular breed.

The **Steinbacher Goose** is a rare type of goose with a rich history. Originating from Germany, these geese were initially bred for fighting but are now admired for their calm and confident demeanor. With their erect posture and full breasts, these birds have a striking appearance. Their color variations include gray, blue, buff, and cream. Their beaks are particularly notable, being orange with black edges that look like lipstick

markings. People keep these geese for their meat and eggs, but they are also popular in exhibitions due to their unique look and proud posture. They can live up to 20 years. Unfortunately, Steinbacher Geese are considered to be an endangered breed. This makes it even more important to take good care of them and help their numbers grow so more people can enjoy these amazing birds in the future.

Small and endearing, the **Roman Tufted Goose** is a versatile bird beloved in various parts of the world for different reasons. They are native to Italy. However, throughout Europe, they are valued as utility birds, bred mainly for their meat due to their ability to mature quickly. The presence of the tuft of feathers on their heads is considered optional. Meanwhile, in North America, the breed is mostly kept for ornamental reasons, with a special focus on breeding them for their distinctive tufts. These geese are pretty smart and alert, making them good at keeping an eye on things, like little watchdogs. Despite their smaller size, they provide a good amount of meat, which makes them useful for culinary purposes. They have a lifespan of up to 25 years and are white in color.

The **American Buff Goose** is a captivating breed that hails from the United States and is distinguished by its warm, apricot-colored feathers. Their back and sides have buff-colored feathers with a beautiful creamy white edging that gives them an elegant look. Oddly enough, during laying or when there isn't any green grass around, their orange legs could turn pink. They can be very calm and approachable. They are dual-purpose birds, raised for both meat and eggs. It can also be mentioned that American Buff Geese are excellent parents to their goslings. Additionally, there is a tufted variant of this breed, which is a crossbreed with the Roman Tufted Goose and has a tuft of feathers on its head. They can live up to 20 years.

Despite its name, the **African Goose** is not actually from Africa. It's a domesticated breed that originates in China. With a large dewlap and a pronounced black knob on their heads, they are often confused with the Chinese Goose due to some

similarities in appearance. These massive birds can weigh up to 20 pounds, which makes them a popular choice for meat production. They are known for their tasty, lean meat and are considered an excellent choice for roasting. Moreover, they are social animals, often kept in flocks of up to 30 birds, and are known to be excellent foragers. They live up to 15 years and are brown, gray, and white in color.

Native to North America, **Ross's Goose** is a smaller version of the familiar Snow Goose. They're similar in that they both have mostly white bodies and black wingtips. But what sets them apart is that Ross's Geese have shorter necks and visibly stubbier bills. These geese like to be around their own kind, and you can often see them in large groups. Sometimes, they even mingle with groups of Snow Geese. For a long time, many people thought these geese were endangered. However, things have changed recently. Due to Arctic warming, more grasslands have become available for these geese to feed on, which led to a significant increase in their numbers. This positive change shows how adaptable Ross's Geese are; they take advantage of the changing environment to ensure their survival and growth in the wild. They can live up to 20 years.

The **Bean Goose** is a remarkable bird that calls the cold northern regions of Europe and Eurosiberia home. Historically, these geese were known to graze in bean field stubbles, which is believed to be the origin of their name. Bean Geese are migratory creatures that travel to warmer parts of Europe and Asia when winter comes. They are not all the same, though. This breed has two varieties: one lives in forested areas called taigas and the other in open, treeless lands known as tundra. Each has its own distinct characteristics and living conditions. Their diet mainly consists of grass, roots, and other vegetation, which align with their natural habitats. In terms of appearance, their bodies are covered in dark brown feathers, and they have a black bill with an orange stripe in the middle to match their orange feet and legs. They can live up to 25 years.

The **Greylag Goose** is the ancestor of nearly all domesticated and farmyard varieties of geese. It was one of the first animals to be domesticated, with evidence suggesting this occurred in Ancient Egypt over 3000 years ago. Today, these geese are widespread. They are native to Europe and Asia, but their adaptability allows them to thrive in various habitats, including wetlands, marshes, and lakes. In terms of diet, Greylag Geese are not particularly fussy eaters. Although their main food sources are plants, grass, and roots, they also happily eat small fish and insects. These birds are social animals, often seen in large flocks. They make about nine different kinds of honks and cackles, varying from quieter calls among family groups to loud, high-pitched alarm calls and sociable honks. They have a brownish gray coloring that fades into black on the longer feathers. They can live up to 30 years.

Also called Brent Goose, the **Brant Goose** is a type of goose known for its compact size and short neck. With its dark brown body, black head, and white collar, this small goose has its own unique charm. Interestingly, there are variations within the species, with some having different belly colors and patterns. Brant Geese are native to the Arctic, where they nest in wetlands surrounded by lush grasses and sedges. During winter, they migrate to bays, estuaries, and lagoons. Here, they form flocks and feed on aquatic vegetation like eelgrass. Their behavior is also quite intriguing, often producing calls that are reminiscent of Sandhill Cranes. They can live up to 28 years.

The **Swan Goose** is a beautiful breed of goose renowned for its unique looks and habits. They are large, long-necked water birds that are grayish-brown in color. Originating from regions like Mongolia, northernmost China, and the Russian Far East, these geese migrate to central and eastern China during the winter. They prefer habitats close to freshwater lakes and fast-flowing rivers. That said, these birds hardly ever swim and spend much of their time grazing on plants. They mainly eat grass, leaves, roots, sedges, and water plants, but they also occasionally eat seeds and nuts. Wild Swan Geese are

increasingly becoming rare these days, but domesticated varieties of the species can be found in many regions outside of their natural range. In fact, some common domestic geese, like the Chinese and African geese, are actually descendants of the Swan Goose. They can live up to 20 years.

Native to the southern parts of Chile and Argentina, the **Kelp Goose** is a fascinating breed. These geese exhibit sexual dimorphism, meaning males and females have different appearances. Males are easy to spot with their all-white feathers and black beaks, while females sport a dark brown color with gray stripes across their chests. What is really interesting about these geese is their diet. They love eating kelp, a type of seaweed. In fact, they love it so much that they will travel up and down the coast just to find it. When it comes to nesting, Kelp Geese like to keep their eggs hidden in tall grass. They lay about 5 to 7 eggs at a time and incubate them for 30 days. They can live up to 15 years.

Also known as the Beach Goose or the Painted Goose, the **Emperor Goose** is a rare and beautiful bird from Alaska. With a mix of blue-gray and black feathers, a white head, and bright orange legs, it really stands out. These geese prefer habitats like rocky beaches and brackish wetlands, where they feast on a diet of mussels, barnacles, eelgrass, and sea lettuce. Most of them choose to nest in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, but some can be found as far as Eastern Russia. Despite facing a decline in the late 20th century, the Emperor Goose population is showing signs of recovery. However, they still remain on the IUCN Red List, which indicates a need for ongoing conservation efforts. They have feathers that are gray, with black lines then white tips. They have a short lifespan of up to 12 years.

The **Snow Goose** is known for its pure white plumage, which is where it gets its name. Though, some have a darker gray-brown color and are called Blue Geese. Not long ago, people thought these birds were two different species, but it turns out they are just two color morphs of the same bird.

Native to the Arctic tundra, these geese migrate south during winter and form massive, honking flocks. When in flight, these gatherings are quite a sight, looking like a “snowstorm” of white birds across the sky. During their migration, they settle in southern coastal marshes, bays, and wet grasslands. When spring returns, they head back north to their breeding grounds. Snow Geese are monogamous, with pairs sticking together for life, as long as 25 years. They lay 2 to 6 eggs annually, and their chicks are quite independent. These goslings are capable of swimming and feeding themselves within just a day of hatching.

The **Bar-headed Goose** is a truly extraordinary bird. With two distinct black stripes on their white heads, they stand out among other geese species. But what really makes them special is their incredible flying skills. They hold the title of being one of the world’s highest-flying birds, conquering the mighty Himalayas during their migratory journeys. Remarkably, they’ve even been spotted soaring over Mount Everest and heard flying across Mount Makalu, the fifth-highest mountain on Earth. During their long journeys, they show off their amazing strength and stamina. These geese are able to fly more than a thousand miles in just one day. Their powerful wings and robust bodies enable them to navigate through challenging crosswinds without being swept away. They can live up to 20 years.

An interesting bird with a unique look is the **Barnacle Goose**. Their faces are bright white, contrasted by a black head, neck, and upper breast. With their soft white bellies and wings that shimmer in shades of gray and black, they look like they’re wearing elegant suits. What’s truly intriguing about these geese is the old legend surrounding them. People once believed they grew from driftwood, which led to their unique name. This misconception grew because Barnacle Geese nests were never spotted, and goose barnacles also have black-and-white stripes. In terms of behavior, Barnacle Geese have a unique nesting strategy. They often build their nests on high mountain cliffs to keep them safe from predators. But this safe spot comes with a

challenge. Baby geese have to leap off the cliffs to start their life's journey. They can live up to 24 years.

The **Cackling Goose** is a type of goose that often gets mistaken for its larger counterpart, the Canada Goose. These geese are like miniatures of the Canada Goose in appearance. However, there are subtle differences that set them apart. Cackling Geese have thicker beaks and shorter necks, which are even more noticeable when you see them fly. Their heads are typically more rounded, and their calls are notably higher-pitched compared to the deep honks of Canada Geese. These geese thrive in marshes and fields, where they often forage in large flocks. They are often seen mingling with their larger relatives and other birds. In the winter and during migration, you can usually find them in the southern Great Plains, the Central Valley of California, and the Pacific Northwest. They can live up to 25 years.

Renowned for their widespread presence, the **Canada Goose** is a prominent figure in North America's bird population. Throughout the year, these adaptable geese can be seen in every neighboring state in the United States and every province in Canada, which makes them one of the most recognizable birds on the continent. With at least 11 subspecies known, the diversity of the Canada Goose is a fascinating trait. These subspecies vary slightly; they often get smaller as you move north and take on darker colors as you move west. Unlike many waterfowl, Canada Geese primarily forage on land. Their diet is diverse, ranging from grassy plant leaves, flowers, stems, and roots to a mix of seeds and berries. These hardworking feeders graze for up to 12 hours a day to make sure they get all the nutrients they need to stay alive and be healthy. They live up to 23 years.

Often considered one of the most attractive species of geese due to its vibrant colors and unique markings, **the Red-breasted Goose** is undoubtedly a sight to behold. These geese are relatively small, but their stunning red, black, and white plumage certainly makes them stand out. In their natural

habitat, these geese are quite sociable and tend to stick together in tight-knit groups. However, when they feel threatened by other birds, they will stand their ground and defend their area aggressively by puffing up their feathers and making a variety of hisses and squawks. Sadly, despite their beauty and resilience, these geese face challenges. Their numbers have been dropping significantly, and it's believed that only around 40,000 remain in the wild today. That said, this breed has garnered attention in wildfowl collections and is becoming more common in captivity. They can live up to 15 years.

Commonly known as the Nēnē, the **Hawaiian Goose** is the world's rarest goose species. With a soft and gentle call that inspired its name, the Nēnē is a symbol of Hawaii and is recognized as the state bird. They are closely related to the giant Canada Goose and migrated to the Hawaiian Islands over 500,000 years ago. Over time, Hawaiian Geese have adapted to the difficult terrain of Hawaii's lava rocks by developing unique traits such as padded toes and reduced webbing. You'll find these geese in places like Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, where they roam freely. Seeing these birds in person, along with learning about the efforts being made to preserve them, leaves a lasting impression. Hawaiian Geese are not just a rare sight; they are also protected by law due to their endangered status. They can live up to 20 years.

The **Egyptian Goose** is a beautiful bird with distinctive markings that make it easily recognizable. Male Egyptian Geese have patchwork-like coloration that is accentuated by their long pink legs and the characteristic "bandit's mask" that surrounds their dark yellow eyes. Females are just as beautiful as males, but they are usually smaller and have darker markings on their beaks. If you listen closely, you will notice their calls are different as well. Males make a hissing sound, and females give off a loud quack. Despite their name, these birds are not true geese. They are actually more closely related to shelducks, which combine many qualities of a duck and some external features of a goose.

Native to Africa, this breed has spread to various parts of the world, including Europe and the United States, mainly due to its popularity as an ornamental bird. They can live up to 20 years.

Found primarily in northern and eastern Australia, the **Magpie Goose** is the last surviving species of the Anseranatidae family. They are easy to spot with their black and white feathers and a characteristic knob on their heads, which increases in size as they age. These geese like to live near slow-moving waters and big lakes, where they eat wild rice and seeds from water plants and grasses. An interesting aspect of Magpie Geese is their breeding behavior. They usually breed in trios, with two females laying eggs in a nest built by one male goose. All parents take turns caring for and incubating their offspring. They can live up to 20 years.

The **Andean Goose** is a unique bird that lives in the high Andean mountains. They have a hemoglobin mutation that makes them specially adapted to these elevations and allows them to soar higher than most birds. In terms of looks, both males and females of this species share the same physical characteristics, including the same black and white plumage and a small pink beak. These geese are primarily terrestrial and only ever swim during emergencies. As land birds, their diet consists primarily of grass, sedges, and herbs. Social behaviors of Andean Geese vary seasonally. When they are not breeding, individuals form small flocks to forage and socialize. But when it is time to nest, they become quite territorial and prefer to be alone. They can live up to 15 years.

Known for its unique appearance and social behavior, the **Pink-footed Goose** is a charming bird. With a name derived from their distinct pink-colored feet, these geese also have a brownish body, a lighter belly, and a pink bill to match their feet. Pink-footed Geese are gregarious birds that love being in large groups. They do almost everything together, whether it's feeding, nesting, or molting. When they fly, it is quite a sight with sometimes as many as 40,000 birds, all flying together. During the day, these geese are busy looking for food, and at

night, they prefer to rest on water, staying safe in their large colonies. And they are not just about sticking together; they really care for one another. In their colonies, they help protect and take care of each other's babies, which shows just how close-knit they are. They can live up to 20 years.

The **Blue-winged Goose** is a rare type of goose that can only be found in Ethiopia. They have mottled gray-brown bodies and, as their name suggests, noticeable blue wings. These geese like to live in high places with lots of wetlands and grassy areas, where they find plenty of plants and seeds to eat. Their lifestyle is as unique as their appearance. Unlike many of their counterparts, Blue-winged Geese are night birds and are most active when it's dark. This nocturnal nature helps them stay safe from predators and keep cool. In addition to their limited distribution, this may be another reason why not much is known about the species. They have a lifespan of up to 15 years.

A medium-sized goose, the **Greater White-fronted Goose** can be found in many places across the Northern Eurasia Hemisphere. Named for the white circle at the base of its pinkish-orange bill, this bird is easily recognizable. These geese are pretty versatile in their habitats. They can be found foraging in cornfields, winter wheat fields, marshes, and even lakeshores. Their diet is diverse, consisting of grains, roots, grasses, and aquatic vegetation. Interestingly, they sometimes forage by dabbling in shallow waters, similar to the behavior of mallards. When they fly, it might be a bit tricky to tell them apart from other geese. But if you listen closely, their unique honking sounds, kind of like yodeling, will give them away. They can live up to 20 years.

Native to the southernmost parts of South America, the **Ashy-headed Goose** is one of the more attractive and colorful geese around. These geese stand out from other birds thanks to their unique combination of a gray head, brown back, chestnut neck, and white flanks with black bars. Their legs are uniquely colored as well, being black on the inside and red on the outside.

Ashy-headed Geese like to stay in mountain areas where they make their nests in tall grasses, laying 4 to 6 eggs in a clutch. Unlike some other geese, they are more terrestrial. They spend a lot of time grazing on land and are rarely seen swimming. They live up to 25 years.

The **Cape Barren Goose** is a rare breed found on islands near South Australia and Tasmania. Being herbivores, these geese only eat plant matter. They usually eat tussock grass, which grows naturally on the islands where they live.

What sets these geese apart is their ability to drink salty and even brackish water. This trait allows them to thrive on remote islands year-round. As the seasons change, so does their behavior. Outside of the breeding season, they are social birds and form small groups. But when it's time to nest, they become very territorial. When threatened, these birds will put on a unique display of raising and pumping their wings and neck, which will get faster as the level of aggression rises. In the 1950s, their numbers had dropped to the point of raising extinction concerns. Fortunately, conservation efforts have increased their numbers, but they are still among the rarest geese in the world. They can live up to 17 years.

References:

Hernandez, Kimberly. *30 Types of Geese Breeds*. Bird Helpful. <https://birdhelpful.com/types-of-geese/>. Accessed 9/1/2025.



How I Designed My Coop and Chicken Run

By Felicia Smith

When I first decided to raise chickens for egg production, I had no idea what I was going to need. So, I had some conversations with others who were already established. I learned about different ways to provide shelter, feeders, waterers, roosts, nesting boxes, and of course whether to have an enclosed run or free-range. It took time to wade through all the information and come up with what would work for me based on budget and environment. I will share what we decided and why.

For starters, I knew we would have an enclosed run. Around our property are many types of predators including eagles, hawks, possums, skunk, fox, coyote, and potentially bears or cougars. While I cannot protect from the stronger predators, I can mitigate against the smaller ones. So, I calculated the size of my run based on how many chickens I would have. (It was suggested 10 square feet per bird. The overall size does overlap for use because the birds can move.) I started with a single coop and run, but eventually added a second coop and run. The reason for this is so I could raise up young chicks and rotate the laying flock out as needed due to age.

I laid out the wood boards at the distance I wanted and got to work. I used 4"x4" posts for the corners, 2"x4" intermediate posts, and 2"x4" horizontal support boards in-between each post to stabilize the top and bottom of the fencing. The posts were sunk down 2 feet and reinforced with large rocks and gravel around the base. The corner posts were further reinforced with angled supports to avoid tension drawing on the fence causing inward bowing.



Before attaching the chicken wire, I dug a trench about 12" down along the perimeter of the pen. I then used 36" tall poultry wire fencing and laid it into the trench in an 'L' shape angled away from the run. I then stapled it to the ground level boards and backfilled the dirt. This created another level of protection so animals could not dig under the fence into the pen. Predators would dig into the wire fencing and be unable to continue digging. I wrapped 48" tall chicken wire fencing around the entire above ground run and stapled it in place along the upper and lower boards, overlapping the below ground level of fencing. The overlap caused an offset of hex holes to protect the ground level from small critters. Then I had to use wire to weave the overlapping fencing together at the lower level. This completed the wire fencing around the run area.

The next step was to cover the run with stretchable nylon netting I purchased from Culter's Supply. This discouraged any predators from dropping in from above and picking off my chickens. The netting was stapled to the top horizontal boards. The 1" mesh still allowed snow and debris to fall through without breaking or causing a buildup. (I still have to knock heavy snowfalls off the net with a broom in the winter.) The netting has held up very well over the years without degrading.

After having chickens in the run, I found out they liked to dig dust holes near the edge, causing possible points of weakness by the posts or fencing. I tried a couple solutions and found using large field stones along the fence protected it from the chicken's scratching and digging. The stones were too big to push out of the way and created another barrier around the pen.

The idea for the coop came from my husband. He reasoned, why use a wooden coop that will eventually wear out and deteriorate? Plus a lot of the ones we saw were poorly constructed. They were not meant for the size flock



we wanted either. We decided to buy a Rubbermaid garden shed from Menards. We could then power-wash the walls and doors as needed and it would have a solid vinyl floor to scrape and clean without damaging. Plus, no predators could eat their way in. We only needed to adjust a few things to fit our needs.

To start with, we cut a hole in the side so chickens could go out and in from the run. We would just block the opening with a board at night, or we could install an automatic door opener. (Have not done that yet.) Using the included shed brackets, we created roosts across the walls above. We used 2"x4" boards to allow the chickens to sit on the wide part of the boards and tuck their feet under their feathers in the winter. Because of the brackets, the roosts were removeable for cleaning or adjusting. Plus our roosts are not on the floor level making cleaning and moving around inside easier.



The last item needed for the coop was nesting boxes. We decided on a 6 or 8 hole nesting box from Cutler's Supply (a different size for each coop). It was constructed of plastic and galvanized steel that was very easily cleaned. The nesting hole trays were removeable for cleaning, and the entire construction was very durable. I especially liked the ability to fold up the entrance roosts and block the holes so chickens could not get in overnight and make a mess. The two-level nesting boxes fit nicely into the coop against the wall and took up less space than individual nesting boxes. We have a good layer of pine shavings in each nesting hole with a golf ball to encourage the chickens to lay there. I also tend to sprinkle a little diatomaceous earth in each as a parasite repellent.

The final additions to our chicken areas were how to feed and water them. We purchased larger size feeders that have a handle. We draped chain from the roof of the coop down to hang

the feeder from. This raised the feeder from the floor so the chickens could not scrape food out or step in it. Since there is no top to the feeder, the chickens would try and sit on the lip or roost there. Of course, then there would be poop in the feed. To solve this issue, we took a frisbee and drilled a hold in the center. We then fed a hook through the frisbee to the handle of the feeder and hung it from the chain. Now, the chickens did not have a stable place to land because the frisbee would flop to the side.



Right:
Coop #1



Left:
Coop #2

For water, we opted to use rubber tubs out in the chicken run. These are easily cleaned as needed with a brush and filled from a water bucket. Plus, in the winter, I do not have to worry about water freezing and breaking a plastic waterer. I can just break the ice out and refill. We do not use a water heater as the chickens tend to keep an opening in the ice during the winter. If we have below freezing days, I will pull the water tub into the coop and keep the chickens in. Their body heat keeps the water from freezing.

I am sure as time goes on, we will adjust how we have the chicken run and coop set up. For now, this works for us and is easy to maintain. Plus, we opted for budget-friendly, long term items that will hold up. I hope you got some good ideas from what I have done.

What is the FFA?

By Felicia Smith

FFA is an intracurricular student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership. It is one of the three components of agricultural education. Today, there are 1,042,245 FFA members in 9,407 chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. FFA members are in grades 5-12 and college.



The official name of the organization is the National FFA Organization. The letters “FFA” stand for Future Farmers of America. These letters are a part of their history and their heritage that will never change. “Future Farmers of America” was founded by a group of young farmers in 1928. Their mission was to prepare future generations for the challenges of feeding a growing population. They taught that agriculture is more than planting and harvesting – it’s a science, it’s a business and it’s an art. But FFA is not just for students who want to be production farmers; FFA also welcomes members who aspire to careers as teachers, doctors, scientists, business owners and more. For this reason, the name of the organization was updated in 1988 after a vote of national convention delegates to reflect the growing diversity and new opportunities in the industry of agriculture.

FFA Vision

Growing the next generation of leaders who will change the world.

FFA Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

To accomplish its mission, FFA:

- Develops competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
- Increases awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture and its contribution to our well-being.

- Strengthens the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work.
- Promotes the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
- Encourages achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs.
- Encourages wise management of economic, environmental and human resources of the community.
- Develops interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations and social interaction.
- Builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism.
- Promotes cooperation and cooperative attitudes among all people.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles.
- Encourages excellence in scholarship.

FFA Motto

The FFA motto gives members 12 short words to live by as they experience the opportunities in the organization.

Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve.

FFA is Structured on Three Levels:

A. Local FFA Chapters

The heart of the National FFA Organization is at the local chapter level. FFA chapter may be chartered in any public school with an agricultural education program. Leadership is provided by student officers who are elected each year by the chapter's members, and by the agriculture teacher who serves as the advisor for the chapter.

B. State FFA Associations

FFA is an organization made up of state associations; those state associations are made up of local chapters. State FFA Associations function within the constitution of the National FFA Organization but may also create individual leadership structures, awards, programs and competitions. State FFA officers lead the membership of the state associations and are elected by state FFA

convention delegates. Local FFA Chapters are chartered through the state associations.

C. *National FFA Organization*

At the national level, FFA is led by a board of directors and six student national officers. Together they act on recommendations from the national convention delegates and agricultural education stakeholders to set the vision and policy for FFA. The founding principles, authority, objectives and procedures of the National FFA Organization are established by the National FFA Constitution and Bylaws. The National FFA Organization is a federally-chartered organization.

Today, the National FFA Organization remains committed to individual students, providing a path to achievement in premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. FFA continues to help the next generation rise up to meet those challenges by helping its members to develop their own unique talents and explore their interests in a broad range of agricultural career pathways. So today, they are still the Future Farmers of America. But, they are the Future Biologists, Future Chemists, Future Veterinarians, Future Engineers and Future Entrepreneurs of America, too.

Reference:

National FFA Organization. www.ffa.org. Accessed 9-1-2025.

Display Ad In 1 Newsletter Issue:

Full page-\$20 ½ page-\$15

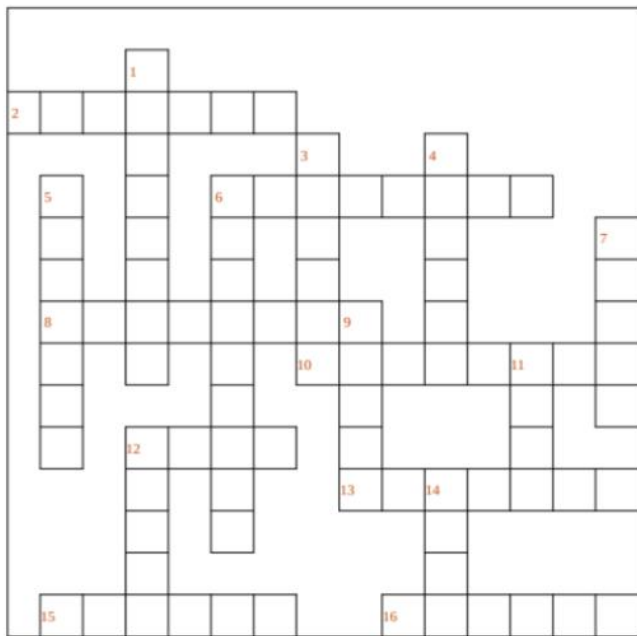
¼ page/business card-\$10

Marketplace Ad In 1 Newsletter Issue:

30 words or less-\$2 30-60 words-\$4

Crossword

Fall



Across

- 2 Halloween month
- 6 Rodent that hordes nuts
- 8 People at the first Thanksgiving
- 10 Thanksgiving month
- 12 Yellow vegetable that grows on stalks
- 13 To gather farm crops
- 15 Thanksgiving main dish
- 16 Falls from trees

Down

- 1 Sport played with a brown ball
- 3 Another name for Fall
- 4 a color and a fruit
- 5 Great for pies or for carving
- 6 Keeps birds away from fields
- 7 Nut from an oak tree
- 9 Birds fly _____ for the winter
- 11 Bundles of hay
- 12 Drink made from apples
- 14 Tool to clean up leaves



Word Search



Fall Word Search

FALL
AUTUMN
LEAVES
HARVEST
PUMPKIN
HALLOWEEN
THANKSGIVING
FOOTBALL
SWEATER
APPLE CIDER
SCHOOL
ACORN
ORANGE
YELLOW
BROWN

S P O R B S Y L E A V E S U A
N T A R D R H G H T E R W O P
U H T P C I O E A S M P E N P
L A L H E H G W A C O V R P L
J N N I O R A I N H R E C I E
U K P E C R S R I O I L F C C
P S N S R E O E V S E T O E I
R G R O N C H A T E S A O X D
O I C I A S O R S O S Y T T E
T V R U L R O A T S E T B T R
R I A G L E L A T E G N A R O
A N Y P U M P K I N R E L Y T
W G O N E R O D H L E H L B F
O Y N E M A U T U M N D R A A
L H S W E A T E R M O C R B L
L S K O O B A C V J B R N N L
E O S E M N E E W O L L A H L
Y A C K P S C H O O L A P O P

ONESTOPWORDSEARCH

Swap Meets & Sales

Remaining 2025 MBGBA Swap Meet Dates

October 4, 2025-Imlay City, MI

These swap dates may change in order to accommodate the locations and involvement of vendors.

Please look for these Directors who will run the following swaps:
Imlay City – Doug Upell & Tom Kaizer

MBGBA Swap Hours: 6 am to Noon
FREE to the general public and buyers.

Seller fees: \$10 MBGBA Members, \$20 Non-members
*Please have funds ready at the gate when you arrive, a director will be checking sellers in upon arrival, prior to set up.
*FREE for FFA & 4-H member sales.

For more information, contact:
Kim Castine, MBGBA President 616-450-5742

All legally held domestic and wild animals, birds and game are welcome.

NO DOGS OR DOG SALES ALLOWED!!

Let's Get Cooking

Egg Noodles-from scratch

2 cup flour	2 tsp salt
3 egg yolks	¼- ½ cup water
1 egg	soup broth

Using a bowl, add flour and make a well in the center. Add egg yolks, egg, and salt, mixing thoroughly. Mix in water, 1 Tbsp at a time, until dough is stiff but easy to roll. Divide dough into 4 equal parts. Roll dough, one part at a time, into a paper-thin rectangle on a well-floured board. Loosely fold rectangle lengthwise into thirds and roll again. Cut crosswise into 1/8" strips for narrow noodles, ¼" strips for wide noodles. For thicker noodles, roll dough to ¼" thickness. Shake out strips and place on towel until stiff and dry, about 2 hours.

Using medium size soup pan, bring soup broth to a boil. You can use onion soup mix, chicken stock, etc. Boil noodles until they float then strain out of broth. Eat while warm.

Spanish Rice

½ lb bacon (10 slices), pieced	½ tsp oregano
½ lb ground hamburger	1 ¼ tsp salt
1 medium onion, chopped (1/2 cup)	1/8 tsp black pepper
1 green pepper, chopped	1-16 oz can diced tomatoes
1 jalapeño, diced	1 cup instant rice (+- 1 cup)
(or ½ tsp chili powder)	2 cup water

Sauté meat in a large pan, drain. Using wok or large pot, sauté onion, green pepper, jalapeño until soft. Combine rest of ingredients and meat to the vegetables and cook until thickened. Adding additional instant rice to absorb excess water if needed.

Exchange Clubs

Pennsylvania Avicultural Society

www.paavsoc.com

Treasurer: Barb Teats (Gray)

Email: fatplants@verizon.net

908-752-9515

Wisconsin Bird and Game Breeders Association

www.wbagba.com

President: Jim Bleuer

Email: Jim.bleueracres@outlook.com

920-379-6188

Annual membership \$15 single/\$20 family; newsletters every other month; 2 swaps a year

Georgia Game Bird Breeders Association

Editor: Dennis Rich

293 Reeves Rd, Barnesville, GA 30204

Dennis_rich@bellsouth.net

Annual membership \$20 Electronic/\$30 print; includes 4 newsletters & directory

United Peafowl Association

Editor: Loretta Smith

www.unitedpeafowlassociation.org

Email: unitedpeafowlassociation@yahoo.com

60016 Appaloosa Drive, Smithville MS 38870

Annual membership \$30, \$50 with directory, options for Canadian and overseas memberships; includes 4 newsletters

2026 Membership Application

Single/Family Membership \$30/year (At same mailing address). All memberships expire on December 31st annually.

Mail application and payment to:

MBGBA

15263 Stout Ave, Cedar Springs, MI 49319

New Member Renewal Exclude info from directory

Yes, Include contact info on Website

Please Print Clearly

Full Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Facebook: _____

List birds/game you raise. If you require additional space, feel free to attach a second page. (Categories continue on next page.)

Pheasants _____

Peafowl _____

Poultry _____

Turkey _____

Waterfowl _____

Partridge _____

Pigeons _____

Quail _____

Cage Birds _____

Ratites _____

Other _____

MBGBA

Felicia Smith, Editor
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