

## Re: Ducks and Chickens compatability

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"Jill" <[news@REMOVETHISkintaline.co.uk](mailto:news@REMOVETHISkintaline.co.uk)> wrote

- >
- > *The birds in general could not care less and often share without a problem*
- > *The difficulties can come in the ground and houssing management*
- > *You say pen*
- > *This suggests a confined area??*
- > *How big ??*
- > *Ducks need water and are not fussy what they do with it --- it gets spread*
- > *all over and they have webbed feet so compound the issue*
- > *This can mean an area that is coping with chickens confined becomes a mud*
- > *bath with the activity of the ducks*
- >
- > *However if the pen is temporary and most of the time the birds are free*
- > *ranging over good grass and there is a pond a ways away then the whole*
- > *effect is dispersed*
- >
- > *Housing – in a confined space the hens are up top and the ducks are down*
- > *below so one gets jumped on by the other*
- > *and chickens come in to lay and ducks are mucky so and sos so keeping the*
- > *house really clean for chickens is much more difficult*

What would you advise in my situation? I currently have 8 RIR hens and a cockerel – 4 hens are over a year old, the other 4 are POLs (2 laying now). We kept the POLs in an ark for the first few days, so the 'oldies' could get over their shock at the new arrivals without too much bullying going on, and now all 8 wander freely around the half acre together, watched over by the cockerel. The oldies and Charlie (cockerel) sleep in the larger chicken house, the POLs are still roosting in the ark, although there is some confusion – an oldie has slept in there a couple of times, and the newbies are laying in the bigger house. Anyway, that's by the by – I'm going to shift the newbies one night into the big house, and move the ark so they have to all roost together!

Anyway – I'm thinking of getting a few ducks (for eggs) – we have water on the land – but a) there isn't enough room in the big chicken house for 4 ducks as well, and b) I would prefer not to have to deal with duck poo in the chicken egg laying area. So – what sort of housing should the potential

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ducks have, and how would I go about making sure they used it in preference to sleeping with the hens? Would they fit in the ark, I wonder (for night purposes only – free range during the day)? It's certainly big enough for 6 hens to roost comfortably, but I'm a total duck novice, so could do with advice from someone who knows more!

Oh, and finally, the ducks would be (big) ducklings on arrival – should I treat them as I did the POLs, and keep them in the ark/run for a while to stop bullying from the chickens? What about access to water during that time (not drinking water, I'm thinking pond type water)? Would a paddling pool in a run do? Do ducklings ever drown if the water they have access to is too deep? How deep is too deep? So many questions! (Sorry!)

TIA

Jo

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Outgoing mail is certified Virus Free.

Checked by AVG anti-virus system (<http://www.grisoft.com>).

Version: 6.0.714 / Virus Database: 470 - Release Date: 02/07/04