

Re: peacock questions

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.agriculture.poultry/2004-07/0576.html>

From: nuele (*fowls_at_nuele-online.de*)

Date: 07/28/04

Date: Wed, 28 Jul 2004 23:45:11 +0200

Shawn Pennington <mpenn30@hotmail.com> wrote:

> *I would absolutely not have an unspayed female cat or dog*

I did not mean to say that you would, you know. In fact, I thought I would like to agree to what you said, only that there are always exceptions to a general rule, and it's good to think about them.

> *As for exotics, I do have five female potbellied pigs.*

ooh – I love pigs...

> *I do cage my five little pigs but I do it in a field of just over*

> *two acres so they have plenty of room to roam and I let them out in the yard*

> *to traipse about, as well.*

>

> *I am not necessarily against caging animals. It is in their favor, at*

> *times.*

I have seen aviaries big enough for trees to grow in – chicken paradise as no bird of prey can ever enter. Too expensive for normal people...

> *I just find it sad, personally, to see an animal housed in small pens or*

> *coops.*

I perfectly understand what you mean, and I couldn't agree more.

> *I know that cages protect them from predators and such but I am not*

> *for certain that an animal which is afforded the opportunity to live free*

> *for a time and is, eventually, eaten by a predator has it any worse than one*

> *living in a small pen to be, eventually, eaten by a human.*

Or not being eaten but having to live a long life in that way...

>

> *I did lose about half a dozen of my young chickens to hawks last year but I*

> *still think they lived a better life, albeit shorter, than they would have*

> *in a cage.*

>

> *Shawn*

Well, I think that may partly be due to the fact that you don't keep a rooster. A rooster's job is to watch out for possible dangers, and they have special sounds in their repertoire for warning against birds of prey (as opposed to predators on the ground which provoke a different alarm sound).

Hens often are not very wary and spend most of their time looking to the ground, searching for food, while they rely on the rooster to warn them if anything dangerous should happen. Roosters even run towards a predator sometimes, trying to fight it. I've seen that myself once, cockerel and buzzard. Fortunately for the cockerel, there was chicken wire between them!

What's also important is that there is enough shelter close enough to reach in case of an attack. Against birds of prey, chickens like to hide under dense bushes. Anything else that hides them from eyes above is also fine – an old table or.... whatever is easily available for you.

And finally, you can try to scare the hawks off by hanging up old CDs or putting up these silvery glass balls that are sold for this purpose. Whether they really work I don't know because I don't need them. My roosters work fine for my chickens – never lost one (knock on wood) to a bird of prey while neighbours sometimes do.

Nuele (D)