

UNITED Swallow Club



Summer 2016 Newsletter • www.unitedswallowclub.com • Since 1969

Hans Schipper Cannot Judge the USC Annual Meet!

Hans announced to the USC that he is having hip replacement surgery which will put him into a long recovery and he will be unable to travel for several months.

USC President, Mike Swanson, quickly checked with Election Commissioner, Chris Auer to find out who had the second most votes for Judge. That Nominee was Ron DeClement. Ron has agreed to come to Des Moines in December as the replacement judge. Ron is long standing

USC certified judge for swallows.

Thanks and Well Wishes go out to Hans. He has been a very reliable judge for our Swallows for many years and we would like to have him again in the future.

It is a pleasure that we're able to rely on our Constitution and By-Laws to guide us to solving this issue.

More thanks to Mike, Chris and Ron. We are back in business this December 9 & 10 in Des Moines.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Summer 2016

Mike Swanson

Hopefully, all of you are having a great year raising your birds. So far I've had a great year raising birds. However, in years past the next three months are usually my most challenging months for getting the young through the molt. I've banded 200+ young.

Numerous things have been happening in the club since the last bulletin. We have a variety of meets that members have been working on and the standard committee is now in high gear updating our standard. Chairman Nate Wayne with committee members Bill Griebel, Gary Romig and Ron DeClement are collaborating on the updating of our standard. Please let them know some of your suggestions. Your feedback is valued and appreciated.

Our annual United Swallow Club Show is being held in conjunction with the Iowa State Pigeon Associations 90th Annual Show on December 9th and 10th, 2016 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines, Iowa. Entries must be postmarked November 2, 2016 for an entry fee of \$5.00 per bird. Late entries must be postmarked by November 9, 2016 for an entry fee of \$6.00 per bird. The Iowa State Pigeon Association's show is a great show and widely attended. Dave Averbeck and Gloria Weisgram are members in charge. Let them know if you have any questions about the meet or would like to help out. Chris Auer is working on donations for the auction so please let him know if you have anything you would like to donate to the USC auction.

The United Swallow Club has a tradition of bringing quality judges to judge our shows. The USC invests a large expense to pay for quality judging which include travel expenses. The main way we can do this is to have a successful auction. Please

support our auction by donating items or by purchasing items. If you cannot attend and would like to bid on items or donate items contact members who are attending the show to bid on them for you!

Several other United Swallow Club meets are happening as well. As you may know the NPA National will be in Vancouver, Washington January 12-14, 2017. The USC is hosting a Western District Meet there. Frank Bailey will be the member-in-charge and Mike Cobb will be the judge. Another Western District Meet will be held at the Pageant of Pigeons with Steve Ball as the judge. Additionally, Perry Mueller and Dave Averbeck are working on a meet at the National Young Bird Show.

If you want to sponsor a district meet in your district please contact your district director. Also you might consider Mike Cobb, George de la Nuez, Phil Gonzales, Dave Averbeck, Chris Auer, Tim Starr, John Navant, Jesse Espinosa or Arnold Chaney to do the judging as they have been actively fulfilling requirements to be a USC certified judge.

So put plans in place now to attend our USC Annual Show in Des Moines, Iowa December 9, 10, 2016 and one of our district meets as well. Enjoy the remainder of your summer and get your birds in show condition for our upcoming show season! A reminder, if you have awards to donate or items to donate for our auction contact Dave Averbeck, Gloria Weisgram, Chris Auer or your district director!



**See Article on Muffs
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By Ron DeClement

Club Officers for 2016 & 2017 (See more officers on page 2)

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Hello everyone, I hope all of you are having a great breeding season. I look forward to seeing a lot of you at the upcoming shows this year. It sounds like a lot of work has already been done to make the annual meet in Des Moines a show not to be missed. I always enjoy having Hans Schipper judge our birds and value his opinion.

Other club news I still have 90 clean leg club bands to sell size 8 mm they are 50 cents each and \$4.00 for postage and the mailer we use it would be great to sell out of these as it is an expense for the club. It is hard to know from year to year just how many bands to order from the NPA for our club. Once again I hope to see many of you at the shows this year.

From the Central District Director

David Averbek,

I hope that everyone's breeding season is either going well or went well. I am looking forward to seeing some of those youngsters in upcoming shows. It has already been a busy year for me and it is only July. My personal breeding season was down this year which is okay, I can concentrate on working towards being a judge. The Central district is looking forward to hosting the Annual meet in Des Moines in December. We will be having an auction with collectibles and birds. If you have anything that you want to donate please let Chris Auer know. His email is auercg23@aol.com. The preferred hotel for the club is the Best Western Altoona Inn, be sure to mention the Iowa State Pigeon Association when making reservations. For those that are not staying there, we will be having an USC annual meeting at the Best Western on Friday evening. If you cannot make the annual show but still want your birds to be shown at the annual meet, you can ship your birds to meet and I will see that they get well taken care of and show ready if need be. Please let me know here is my email averbeck1979@gmail.com or call or text at 314-260-9326. I look forward to seeing everyone.

The Central District will also be having a district meet this year in St. Louis in conjunction with the St. Louis Metropolitan Pigeon Fanciers Association's Annual winter show. This is a great show and will be a good show for those who cannot make the NPA National Show in Washington this year. The dates for the show are January 13-14, 2017. This is an all breed show with several breeds and several specialty meets as well. Please contact myself or Chris Auer for more information. An entry form will be included in an upcoming bulletin.

Finally, I am also in charge of the Swallow Show at the National Young Bird show this year in Louisville, Kentucky. I will not be showing this year due to bad breeding year for me but hopefully we can make this a good show. This year the show will be held on Saturday October 29th, 2016 at the Kentucky Exposition Center Pavilion Building at 937 Phillips Lane, Louisville, Kentucky 40209. Again if you want to show and cannot make it, you can ship birds to me and I will take them to the show. Also the entry form will be in a future bulletin but also can be found on their website at www.nationalyoungbirdshow.com

Thank you and see you at the shows

By: Frank Bailey

Dear fellow United Swallow Club Members, it gives me great pleasure to welcome each of you to the Pacific Northwest.

Most of you have learned by now, that the next site for the NPA Grand National Pigeon Show will be held in Vancouver, WA on January 12,13,14, 2017.

Our local club: (PNWCPC) The Pacific Northwest Color Pigeon Club, will be hosting a "Swallow Meet" at this event.

This meet is being endorsed by your USC and your attendance is being encouraged. We have chosen "All Breed Judge - Mike Cobb" to do the honors. Mike is very well qualified to perform this responsibility and is currently one of just a few that have yet to be certified by your USC's certification process. Our meet promises to offer competitive entries in the following "Swallow" show classes: Thuringer Wings, Thuringer Swallows, Silesian's, Saxon Fairy's and Saxon Swallows.

The local Portland, Oregon International Airport will offer you a convenient manner of arriving and departing.

This website will answer most of your questions: http://www.npauasa.com/npa_grand_nationals/2017.html If you have other questions for me, please do not hesitate to call me: Frank Bailey @ 360-668-1371

Our PNWCPC's - President & local coordinator is very well known to most of you: David Holloway and he can be reached @ 503-648-7893

Looking forward to seeing you at our nations greatest pigeon show:

The NPA Grand National on January 12,13,14, 2017

Standard Committee Report

by Nate Wayne

President Mike Swanson has asked me to chair the newly formed Standard Committee. I have asked members Gary Romig, Ron DeClement and Bill Griebel to serve on this committee with me and they have graciously agreed. President, Mike Swanson, would participate as an ad-hoc member of the committee. Over the next three months I would like United Swallow Club members to communicate to me in writing if possible any concerns or questions they may have regarding our current standard. Input from the committee along with member input will be used to make any recommended changes to the membership for them to vote on. I would like to thank club members and the committee in advance for their help on this project.

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The swallow pigeon is bred with and without muffs. Those with muffs are referred to as Saxon Swallows and those without muffs are referred to as Thuringian Swallows indicating where the birds originated. Foot feathers in birds are not rare and several species of raptors such as owls have foot feathers although the pigeon fancy has developed foot feathers on pigeons far exceeding those found in nature or other domesticated birds. Researchers at the University of Utah identified two genes which determine if the pigeon will have feathered feet or scaled feet. The Pitx1 gene produces normal or scaled feet and the Tbx5 gene produces feathered feet. The tbx5 gene is actually a forelimb gene which produces the feather development found in the wings, on the feet. This is the gene we are trying to activate to produce the muff we want. Of course there are alleles involved and the result is various expressions of the gene which then produce variation in the size, width, length and shape of the foot feathers.

The great swallow breeder Dr. hummel preferred the muff swallow and although he had as many as 1500 swallows at a time, there were no Thuringian swallows in his lofts. The only clean legged pigeons he bred were Hungarian pigeons probably because they originated in Germany along with some swallow pigeon varieties.

The muffs on a swallow and other color pigeons add an extra element of difficulty and producing a bird with ideal muffs can be a challenge. If we look at the drawings of the artists like Gary, we see the muff portrayed exactly as they should look on the birds we breed. Bill Griebel recently sent me a picture of a young black whitetail he raised. The muffs look ideal just as if they were painted. When we get birds like this it makes all the work and time worthwhile. The ideal muff should be a round, fan shaped muff, feathered fully to the hock feathers. It completes the picture when the muff is full to the hock feathers and there is no gap between the muff and hock feathers.

Dr. Hummel in a discussion with Werner Zahn wrote the following on muff:

"The shape of the foot feathers is more important than the length of the feathers, applied to feathers both longer and shorter than the ideal."

"Foot feathers too long (standard length, plus or minus 5 inches) are as great a fault as feathers too short."

"The hock feathers (geier feathers) may be colored or white or may be both (but not mottled) and should not be too long."

These statements give us a general description of what we should be looking for when selecting birds to breed. The roundness of the muff and the sickle shaped feathers produce the look that we see the artists paint. Some faults that we should try to eliminate are feathers that are too long in the front of the muff and then taper back on an angle to shorter feathers near the back of the muff. This fault is commonly seen in the blue, ash and silver colors although it is a fault in every color as the muffs get longer. This is a very common fault. Another problem is straight muff feathers without the desired sickle shape.

The next important point is layering of the muff. There needs to be three distinct layers of feathers. This is not quite as easy as one might suppose. There are a lot of swallows which lack this layering. I look at them every day in my loft. Then the muff should have no breaks or gaps in the foot feathers back to the hock. We must remember that the feathers near the back of the muff have a thinner shaft and break quite easily, which give a gap near the hock that is actually feathered. We need to handle the bird when evaluating muff to see if these feathers are missing or broken. Next, the width of the feather is necessary to produce attractive muff. Several years ago I had red spots and although they had large muff, the feathers were narrow and made the birds appear less attractive. We also want the feathers to lay flat and not raise near the back of the muff.

The color of the muff is the next evaluating point. Ideally the color should match the shield of the wing. When selecting birds though it is important to remember a few points. First in the outer layer of muff we are looking at a single feather which allows light to pass through and this will change the color somewhat. Secondly, another important point to consider is that the birds do not preen their muff the same as they do their body and wing feathers and this will effect both the color and the condition of the feather. Common faults we see in color are grizzling and mold in the muffs of blue, silver, ash red and cream especially in checkered birds, but also in barred birds. Mold in the muff of a blue, ash, cream or silver solid barred or checkered bird is the same as grizzling in a whitebar or spangle. The grizzling is simply produced by adding the toy stencil factor and this is a major fault that should be eliminated from the birds when possible. Blue and silver swallows should have a clear blue feather ending in a darker band at the edge of the feather. One time I saw a blue checkered Silesian of Leon Stevens and this bird had clear blue muff without mold and a nice dark edge to the end of the feathers. Leon showed us all it is possible to get the clear even color even on checkered birds. Another common color fault is frosting near the top of the muff in blue and silver. Darker blue has less of this fault but then we want lighter blue and this is what makes the swallow and the other color pigeons such a difficult and fun bird to breed. To gain one desired feature we get other things we don't want. It just adds to the fun of breeding. If every bird came out with little or no faults it would get boring quickly and we might all switch to barn pigeons. After all, they are easier to breed, have little to no disease issues and are good healthy producing birds with a lot less frustration, until we try to add muff.

More USC Officers for 2016-2017

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Nice muffs



No Sickle Shape to the front muff feathers. They're projecting straight out which is a fault.



Muffs showing gaps or breaks, a fault



Muffs too small



Muff color fault: should match wing color. Blue and Silver should show the dark band on the end of the feathers



Muff feathers should sweep all the way to the back and blend even with the hock feathers

Western District News

By Bill Griebel

Again, we here in the West are proud to announce our two district meets, first in conjunction with the Pageant of Pigeons on December 1,2 and 3 with Steve Ball as our main judge and other members will rotate in and out from breed to breed to gain knowledge and get experience. Because we are trying to save money for a European judge next year, we will do the judging in-house. Second will be a great show in conjunction with the NPA in Vancouver, Washington on January 12-14, 2017. Frank Bailey will be the member in charge and Mike Cobb who is on our new trainee judges list will do the judging of not only the Swallows but the Color Pigeons. Make plans every one, these will be two great shows.

The breeding season in our district has had its highs and lows. Several members have reported some loses with babies to disease problems. This has been compounded by many very hot days. In spite of the problems, we should have another good crop of young birds at our shows.

I don't know how many of you out there look at your bird poop! Now don't laugh! I look at it every day when I feed the birds. The droppings are a window to their health. The poop will tell you the health of your birds and allow you to jump into action if it does not look right. It should be a medium green to dark green/black color with a white spot in it. If it's a light green or very wet you have problems. Those of you that have deep litter that has been there for a while will have difficulties seeing the problems.



Typical droppings of healthy birds (no green)



Typical green droppings of birds with Coccidiosis.
Or . . . you forgot to feed your birds!

More Common Muff Faults



On spangled Swallows the spangle pattern should not appear in the muff feathers



The muff feathers should be wider and there should be more layers of feathers

USC Membership Summer 2016

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