

External parasites

(continued).

by the occurrence of yellowish nodules under the skin. These nodules are calcareous deposits around dead mites.

Another mite which has been reported from this area is the feather quill mite, *Syringophilus bipectinatus*. As the name implies, this mite is found within the feather quills, together with a great deal of debris.

There are several other mites that have been reported such as the nasal mite, *Neonyssus columbae*; the body mite, *Megninia columbae* and other species which, for the present, are considered extremely rare and of minor importance.

The treatment and control of ectoparasites of poultry have been extremely effective with the use of the newer pesticides, all of which have become available only since World War II. Although there are hundreds of formulations, the active ingredients of these formulations fall into only four chemical groups. The oldest and perhaps the most familiar of these groups is the chlorinated hydrocarbon compounds of which D.D.T., chlordane, aldrin, lindane and heptachlor are the most familiar. They are effective insecticides with high residual activity.

The second group is the organo-phosphorus compounds of which malathion, co-Ral and parathion are the best known.

The third group, the carbamates, contain carbaryl commonly known as Sevin. This compound has recently been found to be of low toxicity and its use against arthropods has increased very rapidly in the last few years.

The fourth and last group of compounds are the botanical compounds such as pyrethrum and rotenone. They are, for the most part, used in conjunction with some of the members of the other groups. They are considered quite safe and their tissue residue problem not as great as those compounds in the other groups.

Ideally, the treatment or control of ecto-parasitic problems, regardless of the size of your operation, ought to be carried out in the following manner:

- (1) obtain a diagnosis from a reliable agency.
- (2) select, with the help of trained personnel if necessary, the most effective product and the most reliable procedure.
- (3) read instructions carefully and follow them to the letter.

W. Mellor & Son

Going with Gurnays

photographs by Anthony Bolton

William (Bill) Mellor the senior member of this partnership has kept and raced pigeons all his life, except for the years between 1939 and 1945 when Adolf interfered with his hobby, resulting in Bill having to serve King and country for six years. The son of the partnership is David, (known to all as Dave), who is a very keen member of the partnership. Bill is a wholesale butcher by trade and his only interest apart from his family are his pigeons. For many years now the name of W. Mellor and Son has been associated with the Gurnay strain. Bill bought the first of his Gurnays at a

Manchester auction sale in 1957; these came from Hawkins Bros. of Stoke-on-Trent. There is a 1961 rung cock bred from those original purchases still in the loft today. This cock is the father of the loft. Over the years the occasional pigeon has been introduced; these have always been Gurnays.

The pigeons are housed in two lofts, the old bird loft is the National type, 12 foot by 6 inches long, well ventilated with dowels and louvres on the front and sides. This loft contains 24 nestboxes, but no perches. The only



NUHW 61X3933, 'Old Bill', winner of firsts from 46 to 533 miles. This pigeon is considered to be the father of the loft.

perches are on the nestbox fronts. The deep litter system is used here, consisting of a mixture of sand and lime. This floor dressing is also used in the nestboxes. The young bird loft is 10 foot long, young birds are raced well, but no tricks are used, just racing to the perch. The breeding system is simple, winners to winners whenever possible. Bill is not an eyesign fanatic, but he does admit that a good eye is part and parcel of a good pigeon. The qualities Bill look for are, strong legs, a good frame, a strong back, plenty of heart-room, and a good well shaped head. The sort of pigeon that can win from the race panner and in the show pen.

The pigeons are separated after the last young bird race and are not put together again until March. During the winter months the hens are exercised in the mornings and the cocks in the afternoons. Young birds are reared in pairs, the old fashioned earthenware nest bowls are used. As soon as the young birds start climbing out of the nest bowls, Bill places a little wheat on the let-board of the nestbox front, when the youngsters see the parent birds eating this wheat, they soon join in. This procedure is kept up for two or three days, when the youngsters are picking up well they are removed to the young bird loft. The young bird loft is also deep litter and the youngsters are fed twice a day. Bill always makes sure that every youngster has a good crop full after the evening feed.

After pairing, the old birds are given an open loft and training starts a week before the first race. The birds are tossed from 30 miles on Monday, Tuesday,



NU72N17824 'Young John'. Wins include 1st Lymington, 1st Rennes, 1975 Meritorious Award Winner. Also breeds winners.



NU65N22695 'David'. Son of Old Bill. Winner of over £1,000, including 1sts from Nantes and Saintes. Also breeds winners.

Wednesday, and Thursday and then into the first race. The old birds do not get any more training after that first stint as they are raced mid-week as well as on weekends, and they race well, winning from 46 miles through to 850 miles.

This partnership has no secret feeding methods. In fact, Bill said he has never ever fed best grade corn in his life. At one period Bill said that he fed on nothing but sweepings from a local mill. This consisted of large maize, flour dust and rubbish. Unfortunately this source has now dried up as the mill has closed down. The present feed consists of 60 per cent large maize, 20 per cent of tic beans, and 20 per cent turkey growers pellets, and a little wheat for weaning the youngsters. Good linseed is used as a tit-bit all the year round. Grit is always available for the birds as are black minerals and calcium powder mixed half and half.

The partnership are members of several clubs, including the National Flying Club, the British Barcelona Club and the Manchester Flying Club. The Mellor Gurnays have only raced one full season in the Manchester Flying Club which was in 1972. During that season they won every trophy in that famous club. A feat that has never been equalled, not even by the late Fred Shaw, and he was one of the great ones. The various trophies won over the years by this partnership are too numerous to mention here; as many as twenty five races have been won in one season. These performances prove that the Gurnays housed in these lofts are as good today as they ever were.



NU67F12349 'Betty Blue'. Winner of many 1sts, including Rennes, Nantes and Saintes in one season. Meritorious Award Winner, also breeds winners.



NU68J8085. 'Master Dave'. Winner of seventeen 1sts from 46 to 533 miles, also 1st Eccles 2B specialist club, £140 pools.