

the shoulder downwards. A full crop in the breeding-bird is imperative, for birds deficient in this respect have not the capacity to hold the food necessary to produce the maximum egg-yield. Apart from this, breeding from stock with narrow breasts always has the tendency to weaken the lung-capacity and constitutional vigour. In both sexes the crop should be well rounded and stand out prominently in front of the wattles. As to size, it is always advisable to choose for the breeding-pen the hen of a slightly larger size than that of the ideal layer, for it is easier to lose in weight of stock than to increase it. A proportion of small birds will always come to vex the breeder, even when the large ones are bred from.

MANAGEMENT OF BREEDING-PENS.

The number of hens to one male depends entirely on the amount of range and the vigour of the male. On a free range good results may be obtained with one male to twenty or even thirty hens, but the number of hens must be considerably reduced when the space is confined. In the latter case six to eight of the heavy breeds, such as Orpingtons, Wyandottes, and Rocks, and ten to twelve of the lighter breeds, such as Leghorns and Minorcas, will be the maximum for the best results.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that birds in a breeding-pen—which, by the way, should always be in a dry situation—must have good exercise. If the run is not large there should be ample litter provided in order to induce them to take exercise. Unless the birds are kept thoroughly fit, vigorous progeny cannot be expected.

The feeding of the breeding-birds is all-important. Solid food is essential. The best of grain only should be used, and the contents of the morning mash should not be of a forcing nature. Good fertility and stock can be obtained from the feeding of grain to the breeders night and morning, the grain being given in a manner that induces the maximum amount of exercise—that is, in deep litter. It is a mistake to provide too large a proportion of animal or other forcing food. At such a time birds cannot be oversupplied with green stuff, while ample fresh water and grit are details which must not be neglected. One big advantage in feeding grain in the litter is that overfatness is not induced in the hens.

MARKING DUCKLINGS.

A correspondent asks if there is any way of marking ducks without the use of leg-bands. The best method of producing a dis-