

MEANINGFUL CONSERVATION

Owning and breeding heritage chickens supports vital and meaningful conservation. Heritage chickens are ideally suited to small scale and backyard management systems – the very systems for which they were developed.

Heritage chickens also play an important role in food security for communities. By devoting yourself to a breed, you can maintain or restore production abilities to historic levels; carry the breed forward for the next generation of stewards; and supply products, chicks, or breeding birds to your local community.

Heritage chickens are easily bred by stewards of all skill levels by following hands-on evaluation and selection techniques (available at LivestockConservancy.org). They are historic treasures, with diverse traits, forms, and environmental adaptations that will bring much enjoyment to anyone raising them.



White-Faced Black Spanish cockerel (Critical)



**THE LIVESTOCK
CONSERVANCY™**

For more information, contact us:

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YOU CAN HELP

You can support heritage chicken conservation in a variety of ways:

- » Buy heritage chicken meat and egg products.
- » Keep heritage chickens for eggs and enjoyment.
- » Become a breeder.
- » Learn more about your favorite heritage chicken breeds at LivestockConservancy.org.
- » Share your heritage chicken knowledge and experiences with new owners, breeders, and the general public.

The Livestock Conservancy is a nonprofit, tax-exempt charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. ID# 03 0270 281

HERITAGE CHICKENS

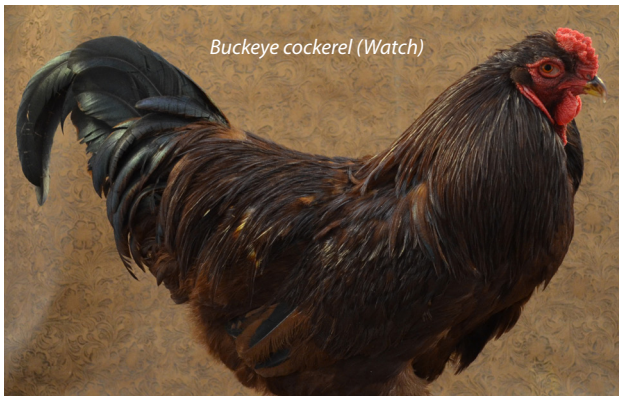


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Pictured above: Buttercup cockerel (Watch)

HERITAGE

The term “Heritage” is defined as something handed down by previous generations. Heritage chickens helped feed American families for hundreds of years as our country grew. The Livestock Conservancy defines heritage chickens as breeds developed prior to the mid-20th century and recognized as breeds by the American Poultry Association. These breeds are naturally mating, have the ability to live a long, productive life outdoors, and have a slower rate of growth compared to today’s commercial chickens. For a complete list of chicken breeds on The Livestock Conservancy’s Conservation Priority list, please visit [LivestockConservancy.org](https://www.livestockconservancy.org).



HOME FOOD PRODUCTION

Without question, chickens are the perfect entry-level farm animal. When kept in secure pens and protected from predators, they are inexpensive to raise and reward your efforts with meat, eggs, and chicks. Chickens are a fantastic match to vegetable gardening, and when managed properly, they can help suppress insects and weeds, and also make and till compost. Chickens require little space compared to other farm animals, making them suitable for urban and suburban settings where ordinances allow them.

REGIONAL ADAPTATION

Heritage chicken breeds represent a wealth of poultry diversity in their appearances and also in their regional adaptations, systems of production, and products.

The Buckeye, Chantecler, and Brahma chicken breeds are well-suited to cold climates and produce ample amounts of both meat and eggs. Breeds like the Andalusian, Ancona, Catalana, and Minorca lay very well and are tolerant of hot weather. Perfect homesteading fowl, such as the Dominique, Java, Dorking, and Old English Game breeds, have naturally robust natures and strong foraging instincts. Several breeds are also valued for their ornamental nature.

Every heritage chicken breed listed on the Conservation Priority List offers valuable genetic characteristics needed for the future of agriculture and rare poultry conservation.



FLAVOR

The outstanding characteristic of heritage breed meats and eggs is flavor. Slower growth means these birds have more time to incorporate the “terroir” of the land they live on and the foods they eat. Heritage chickens naturally love to range and they will forage on a wide variety of food items. This creates a diverse and sometimes intense flavor profile in their meat and eggs and makes for an amazing culinary experience.



Thanks to Carolyn and Lowell Larson for making this heritage chicken brochure possible. Text by poultry expert Don Schrider. Photos by Jeannette Beranger.