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## A Rarely Seen Behaviour: Domestic Cock *Gallus gallus domesticus* Can brood chicks, KPK, Pakistan

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### Abstract

The objective of the research work was to observe the Rarely Seen Behaviour in Domestic Cock *Gallus gallus domesticus* can brood chicks. Along with the hen in rare cases, male fowl *Gallus gallus domesticus* is responsible to brought up and take care of chicks. It is useful information for the behaviourist in future studies.

**Keywords:** Domestic Cock, Behaviour

### Introduction

*Gallus gallus domesticus* is a chicken subspecies of genus *Gallus* Linnaeus 1758 males of one of its breed called Oxford Old English Game fowl mostly used for cock-fighting game. *Gallus gallus domesticus* is a polygamous domestic bird where mother (hen) is responsible for the custody the chicks. Mother directs all the chicks to be with her hence strengthening as well as developing the chick behaviour [1]. Hen provides required heat to chicks from his body so chicks spend all the time with mother either for heat gaining or for protection [2]. Hen produces a special voice to call its chicks for food, known as "food call" [3].

### Observations



**Figure 1:** Male called Oxford Old English Game fowl brooding chicks

About 20 domestic chickens of different breeds were reared in an aviary situated at Jangle Khel, District Kohat, KP Pakistan in March 2014; it was observed during a stormy day that one Oxford Old English Game fowl was brooding the chicks of one of a hen. This unseen behaviour was recorded in a camera (Figure-1). This type of behaviour of Oxford Old English Game fowl is rarely reported [1]. This fowl was not only involved in brooding 6 of the chicks (4 are visible in this view) but also was spending a large duration of time with them. Fowl was scrabbling and burrowing the earth, extracting worms and was feeding those chicks by constantly producing "food calls". Meanwhile the hen (mother of those chicks) was in relax mood enjoying the weather that behaviour was lasts only for 2 stormy days.

### Discussion

Female *Gallus gallusdomesticus* possesses a variety of maternal care patterns, as they are polygamous birds so male involvement in protection, feeding and caring the chicks is either meagre or nil. The current study is in contrast with Nakamori *et al* 2013<sup>[4]</sup> who reported the attachment of the chicks with mother only. Chicks can identify the harmful and non-harmful members of the same flock, so this study is parallel with the observations of Falt, 1981<sup>[5]</sup> who suggested that learning the sound of the mother hen before hatching is not important to differentiate other hens or fowls.

### Conclusion

Along with the hen in rare cases, male fowl *Gallus gallusdomesticus* is responsible to brought up and take care of chicks. Chicks have ability to identify harmful and harmless fowl. Chicks can accept any of the harmless male fowl as their father and can gain body heat as well as food from it.

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