

## The British Waterfowl Association 22<sup>nd</sup> National Waterfowl Exhibition.

The British Waterfowl Association's 22<sup>nd</sup> National Waterfowl exhibition was held on 1<sup>st</sup> November near Solihull in Warwickshire. As a dedicated waterfowl show, this is an exceptional display of over 700 birds and eggs in 200 classes. This show always gets into my diary as I have found it an ideal opportunity to see some of the very best examples of waterfowl as well as getting an opportunity to talk with the breeders, judges or other enthusiasts about their birds.

On display, there were of course the more popular breeds like the Indian Runner and Call Duck but there were also plenty of the harder to find breeds on display. A beautiful White Bibbed Dusky Mallard Hookbill drake with his characteristic curved bill caught my eye. He was very friendly, coming to the front of the cage to nibble at my fingers whilst I was taking a photograph. It was documented by Harrison Weir (1902) that in Holland, owners of Hook Bills used to release their ducks onto the canals to feed and it was their white bibs that identified them to the hunters and stopped them from being shot. I was very pleased to see this duck getting Best Hookbill later on in the day, it was such a credit to Anthony Stanway the owner.

The Geese that were on display were in my opinion all fine examples and having spent some time photographing geese a few weeks earlier at the Hannover poultry show, I was interested to look for breeds that were not on display at the European show. One of these and of particular interest to me was the Brecon Buff. These are one of the very few breeds of geese to have originated in the UK and are still rare to find so it was good to see a good number on display and to be able to talk to their owners about them.

Stan Simmister was Championship Judge. By 2pm, the Champions Row was filling up with the judges making their final decisions. A beautiful Pilgrim Goose owned by Colin Murton took both Champion Goose and Champion Goose or Gander. Peter Hayford's Smooth Breasted Sebastopol took Champion Gander. Champion Drake went to Richard Sadler's Bali. Champion Duck went to Miss Corinne Downing's Apricot Silver Call but this little duck did incredibly well also taking the Best Call, Champion Duck or Drake and the most prestigious Supreme Show Champion award. Tony Axon's Cayuga was chosen by the judges as the Reserve Champion.

It is always a pleasure to see some trophies for Junior competitors. The overall Champion Young Exhibitor and Best Junior Waterfowl award for 11 to 16 year olds went to Michael Kulik's White Call Duck and to William Mayers' Call Duck in the 5 to 11 year old category.

A great deal of hard work goes into organising a show like this and I would like to thank everybody at the BWA for making me feel so welcome once again. I am putting next year's show in my diary already!

*By Tim Daniels of [poultrykeeper.com](http://poultrykeeper.com).*