

Ernest Patterson Has His Own Animal Kingdom

Lydia Spinning Technician Ernest Patterson proudly boasts of have one of the most unique and varied animal farms to be found anywhere in this area.

Ernest, who has had a keen interest in birds and animals since his childhood, trades, breeds, trains, and boards a variety of animals on his Milam Road farm each year.

In the past 12 months, Patterson has trained between 50 and 60 bird dogs, many of them for executives of leading companies throughout the Southeast and one as far away as California. Also among his customers are a number of area lawyers, doctors, and businessmen.

With 25 years experience, Patterson ranks among the "best" in training skills and abilities. "It takes about 2 months to train a dog right," says Patterson. "I also board a number of dogs for individuals," he added. "Training and boarding require a lot of my time."

"It takes a lot of know how to care for these. I buy 1,500 pounds of dog food at a time during the peak season," he remarked. "You've got to watch the dog's weight if he's going to be a good one." They've got to be in condition to move well."

In addition to his dogs, he has special cages for 60 parakeets all designed for proper movement of the birds as well as feeding, laying, etc.

"I've always loved birds," said Patterson as he carefully inspected a special box where baby parakeets were hatching. "I haul sand from the river to put in the cages so they will be clean and disease free. I try to keep the use of sprays and insecticides to a bare minimum."

Patterson produces several hundred parakeets a year for sale to commercial dealers, pet shops, as well as individuals.

As one tours the Patterson farm, large numbers of pigeons and other birds are found flying about and nesting in the thick groves of trees which shade his wildlife refuge.

"I must have at least 50 to 75 pigeons," he said as he cast a handful of chicken feed on the ground. "They are real pets, but they are also a relatively expensive bird, too."

"Many retired people like to raise pigeons, and they think nothing of paying \$10 to \$20 for a pair of good birds," he stated. With all his birds, he has to purchase about 2½ tons of chicken feed a year.

Recently Ernest purchased a mature male peacock for \$135—making a total of seven in his collection. Special laying facilities have been built so the birds can lay eggs which will be hatched later.

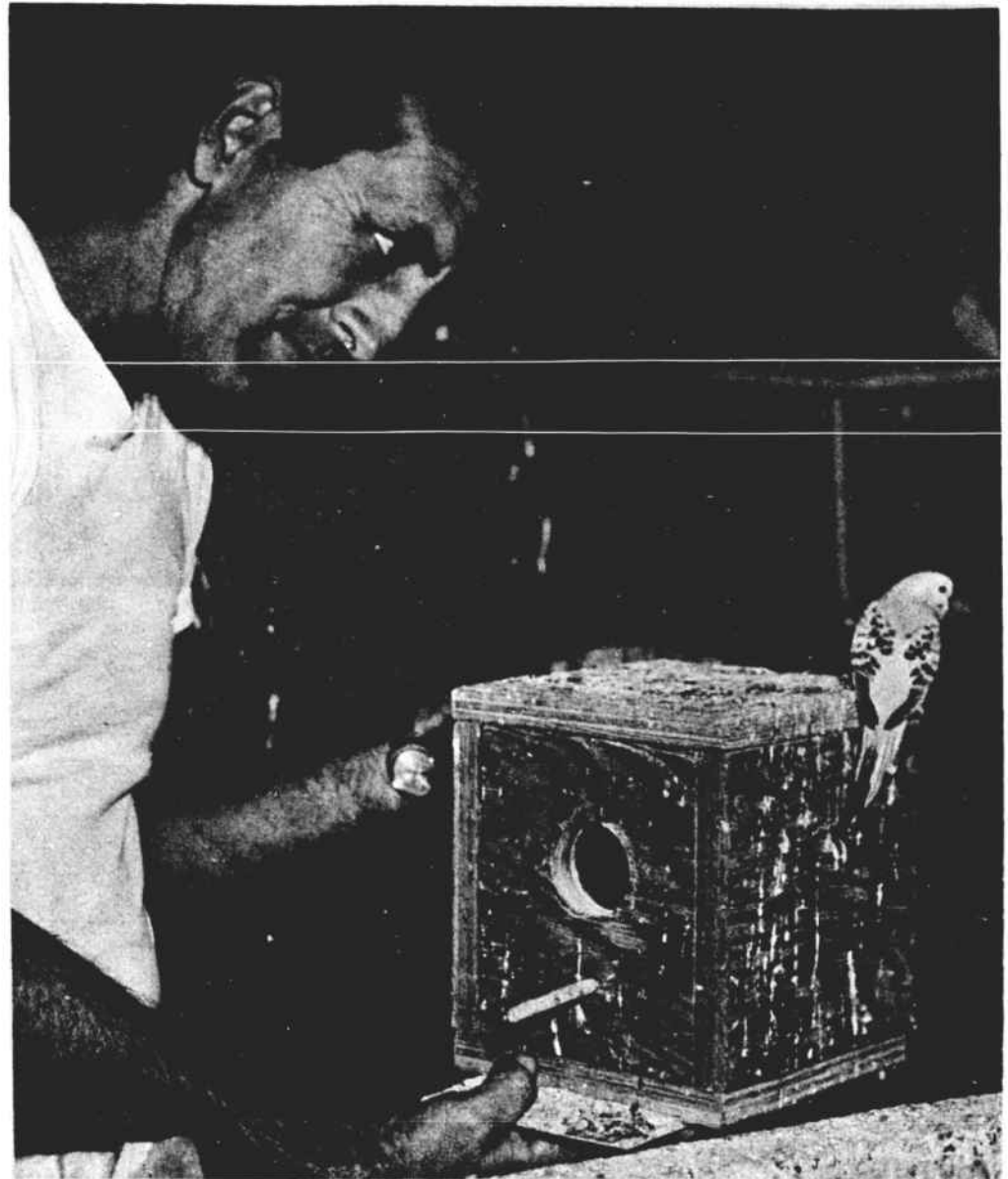
It takes many quail to train dogs on a big scale, so Ernest recently added an incubator to his farm so he can hatch up to 2,500 at a time. This way, he has an ample supply of birds to adequately train his dogs.

As one walks around with Patterson, he proudly points out a 19 acre wooded area which was recently fenced in with net wire.

There are 58 milk goats out there—some of them are registered and would go on the market at \$200 each.

Ernest noted that the particular acreage was full of underbrush and that the goats were being used to clean it for future use. "During the winter last year I had to bring the young ones in the house to thaw them out so they wouldn't freeze," says Patterson. "Their mothers just couldn't take care of them during the severe cold weather."

"Another area has 47 cows," he added, "but the goats are a lot less trouble to raise," he noted as he finished a tour of his animal farm.



ERNEST PATTERSON...And Friend



Dixie Youth Baseball Players

Clinton Mills employees have a number of sons and grandsons who are members of the various Dixie Youth baseball teams.

Seated left to right are Russell Finley, Barry Cathcart, Mike Tucker, Ray Gossett, and Rickey Martin.

2nd row left to right, are Mike Smith, Buddy Craven, Roddy King, Bobby O'Shields, and George McMorris.

3rd row, left to right, are Jimmy Leopard, Bennie Brewer, Jeff Bailey, Ricky Edmonds, Kevin Alexander, Ricky Jackson.

Absent, Doug McCall and Russ Emerson.

Bryan Coleman and Barry Whitman, both Clinton Mills employees are Dixie Youth coaches.

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