

How quickly time flies — I can't believe I've already completed my 13-week long service leave break from my paying gig and been back at work for a month! It's been a real struggle to get back into the swing of things and I have to say I miss being around the sanctuary, especially in this glorious spring weather we are currently experiencing. Thankfully the recommencement of daylight savings last weekend means the days are extended and I can do a bit of pottering around when I get home from work.

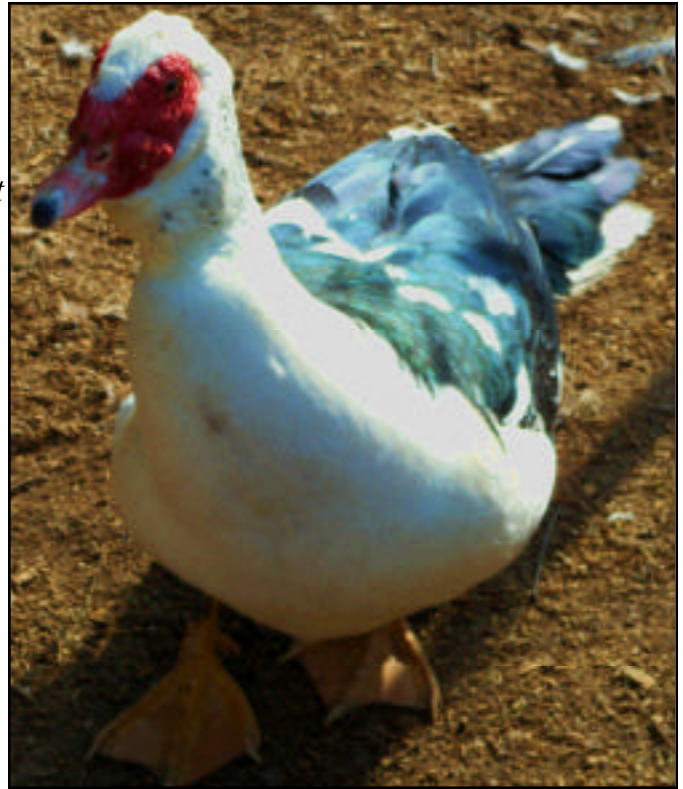
The last few weeks of my break were great as the weather improved as spring sprung and allowed me to get out and do some outstanding jobs — like installing new water tanks, repairing a fence so the sheep could access their “good paddock” (which hasn't been grazed since last summer) and refurbishing a few areas and integrating residents into flocks, including getting all the peafowl to live together.



Apart from attending to the chores there were new introductions to be made with the arrival of some new faces, most of whom have bills and webbed feet. A flock of Indian Runner ducks (below) is now calling A Poultry Place home after a breeder decided to give up her “hobby”. Runners are fascinating ducks and became popular pets after the scene-stealing character of Ferdinand in the film *Babe*. Agreeing to take in the flock meant there is one less person out there trying to cash in on the pet trade trend.



Carl, a big muscovy drake (right), joined us from the city because his human was afraid for his welfare. As she explained: *“Carl gets too close to Louie [her dog] when he has his bone and he doesn’t read the warning growls at all he is very tolerant of him most times, but I am concerned about Carl’s welfare. He has twice received a warning nip on the beak from Louie, when he has ventured too close to his bone. He just doesn’t read the etiquette of other animals terribly well. And he will continue to put himself in danger because he hasn’t learned to keep away from Louie when he has a bone.”* Since his arrival Carl has become a favourite with visitors as he loves to come up and say hello. Two former Sydney ducks — Stinny, a Pekin, and Peanut, a Muscovy, also joined us after their human also feared for their safety as they had recently started to venture onto a busy road when their human was at work and she wanted to find them a safer environment that they won’t be near cars as they had had a few close calls.



South and Chandler (below left) also arrived from Sydney after their human felt she was unable to provide them the standard of living that they deserve and wanted a good home for them. Both are cross Pekin/Muscovies and are certainly characters. They have taken up residence in the house paddock and love it when I’m out there and will follow me around like a puppy. One of South and Chandler’s buddies is another newcomer, a young Plymouth Rock rooster called Flitwizz, apparently named after a character in *Harry Potter*, (below right). He was purchased as a young chick and raised by a young girl before her family got complaints about his crowing and needed to find him a new home.



Apart from new arrivals I had the usual encounters with stupid people. One woman contacted me to ask in advance if I would take in some roosters as she was thinking of “hatching a couple of batches and don’t know what to do with the roosters of the batch (if I get any). If you are currently not taking in roosters, would you have any other ideas on what I can I do with them (uncruelly).” I asked her politely not to as it would be almost certain she would get roosters as basic biology means there is at least a 50 percent chance of chicks being hatched who become roosters. I never heard back from her.....

I had more success with a woman who contacted me about a rooster she had adopted from her daughter's school hatching project. She managed to find him another home but agreed to pass on to the school authorities some information I provided to her with about the down side of hatching projects. She also works in another school that has done hatching projects in the past and going to lobby them as well to stop hosting such programs.

The past few weeks has also seen a couple of personal milestones.

At the Living Green Festival in Canberra at the start of the month a song about me and my work, written by a friend, Elizabeth (pictured with me below) was performed. Entitled *A World Dreamed Up by Bede* it was touching and I felt truly humbled and honoured to have someone going to such an effort.

Some of the lyrics included: *"He's told he's a dreamer cos he's eager for seeing a world where geese are free from force feeding Where ducks aren't rationed to 8 per square metre Like they don't even need any water beneath them Where chickens aren't treated like laying machines squeezed into cages that burst at the seams the males discarded by a system that deems They're simply exceeding this regime's needs While strains bred for meat risk pain and disease Too obese for their arthritic knees Where it's mainstream to disagree with these schemes And vegans are not the ones called extreme They say he's a dreamer but I hope he succeeds Cos I'd also be keen for A World Dreamed Up By Bede"*



At the Festival I put together a photographic exhibition, which this year highlighted the plight of turkeys (see pic above right). The day before the festival I hosted a number of interstate visitors in town for the Living Green and took them on a tour. Once again I was amazed to see people's reactions to meeting the residents, especially the turkeys. Another touching aspect of this year's festival was the effort by a young supporter to help raise funds for the sanctuary. Steffi Linton spent hours making animal artwork (see pic right), which she then sold off and passed all proceeds to me to help meet ongoing costs.



In late August I was the guest on ABC Radio 666 Canberra's afternoon show for a segment called "Canberra Close Up". The segment sees host Alex Sloan speaking in-depth with so-called "fascinating people". I was invited to take part in the segment after Alex saw the video clip of my TEDx Canberra talk "A bird they call dinner" from last year. A written summary of what Alex and I discussed (which basically turned out to be the story of my life so far) is now online, along with the entire audio file if you are interested in listening and can be found at www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2015/09/04/4306090.htm

It's definitely warming up and is predicted to be a hotter, drier summer than recent years, which is not very encouraging news but thankfully the fruit trees and the other deciduous have begun getting their greenery again and will provide extra shade, along with the shade sails I put in place this week.

And I'm relieved to say the hardest task of the year is behind us as well — the shearer visited during this week and gave the woolies their yearly hair-do. I always find the whole shearing thing a stress, even though I realise it's one of those things that have to be done — I think the woolies (complete with new hair-dos pictured right) are much more chilled about it.



**TO VISIT A POULTRY PLACE EMAIL
freechook@bigpond.com**

**DONATIONS ARE WELCOMED AND CAN BE SENT TO BEDE CARMODY
PO BOX 976 CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608 OR DIRECTLY DEPOSITED INTO THE FOLLOWING
BANK ACCOUNT BSB 012925 ACCOUNT 484228991**

KEEP UP TO DATE VIA FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/apoultryplace