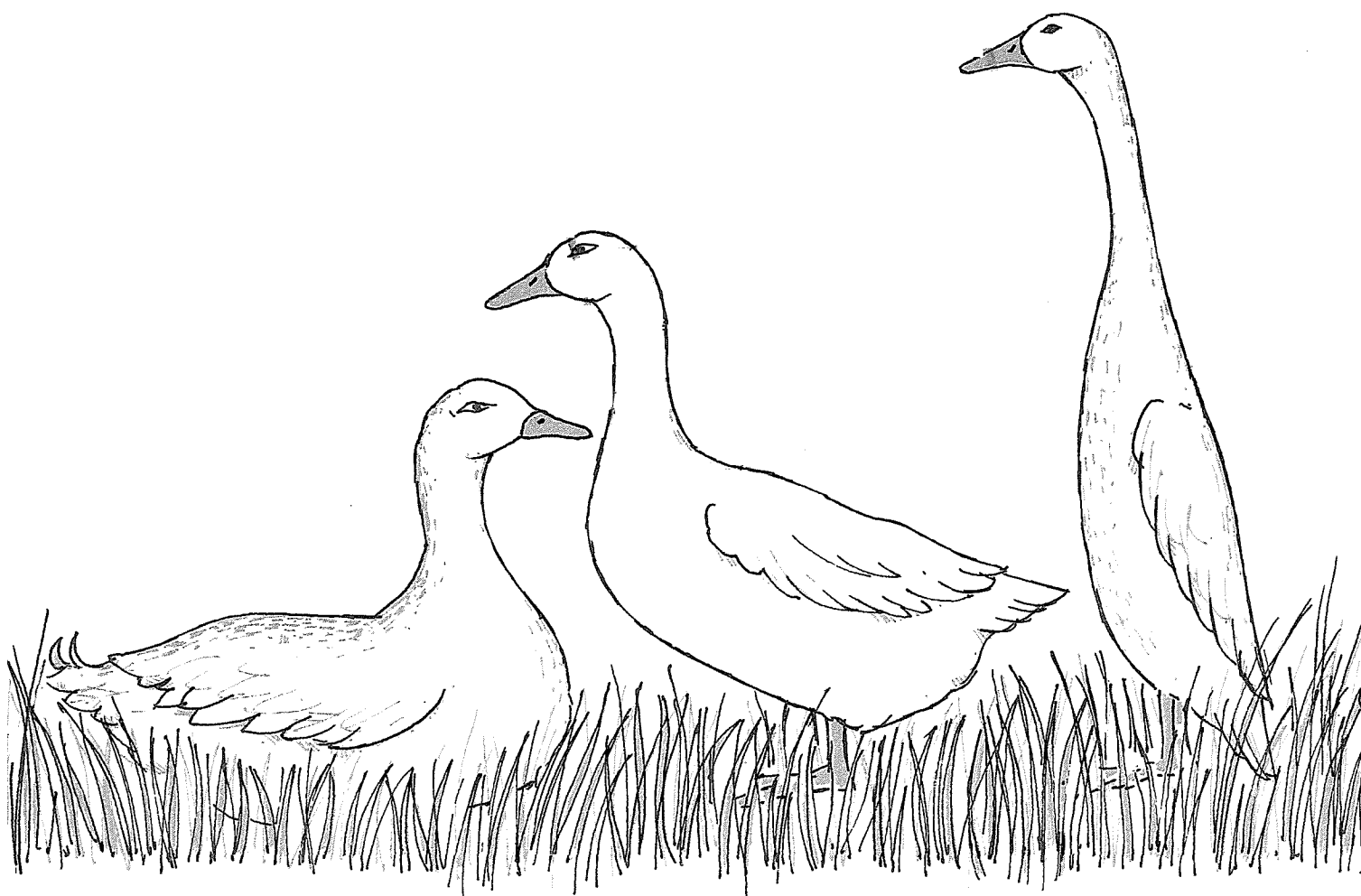


raising ducks 1

how to begin



BETTER FARMING SERIES

The titles published in this series are designed as hand-books for intermediate-level agricultural education and training courses. They may be purchased as a set or individually.

1. The plant: the living plant; the root
2. The plant: the stem; the buds; the leaves
3. The plant: the flower
4. The soil: how the soil is made up
5. The soil: how to conserve the soil
6. The soil: how to improve the soil
7. Crop farming
8. Animal husbandry: feeding and care of animals
9. Animal husbandry: animal diseases; how animals reproduce
10. The farm business survey
11. Cattle breeding
12. Sheep and goat breeding
13. Keeping chickens
14. Farming with animal power
15. Cereals
16. Roots and tubers
17. Groundnuts
18. Bananas
19. Market gardening
20. Upland rice
21. Wet paddy or swamp rice
22. Cocoa
23. Coffee
24. The oil palm
25. The rubber tree
26. The modern farm business
27. Freshwater fish farming: how to begin
28. Water: where water comes from
29. Better freshwater fish farming: the pond
30. Better freshwater fish farming: the fish
31. Biogas: what it is; how it is made; how to use it
32. Biogas 2: building a better biogas unit
33. Farming snails 1: learning about snails; building a pen; food and shelter plants
34. Farming snails 2: choosing snails; care and harvesting; further improvement
35. Better freshwater fish farming: further improvement
36. Raising rabbits 1: learning about rabbits; building the pens; choosing rabbits
37. Raising rabbits 2: feeding rabbits; raising baby rabbits; further improvement
38. Better freshwater fish farming: raising fish in pens and cages
39. Raising ducks 1; how to begin

raising ducks 1

how to begin

P-69

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PREFACE

The first 26 volumes in FAO's Better Farming Series were based on the **Cours d'apprentissage agricole** prepared in Côte d'Ivoire by the **Institut africain de développement économique et social** for use by extension workers. Later volumes, beginning with No. 27, have been prepared by FAO for use in agricultural development at the farm and family level. The approach has deliberately been a general one, the intention being to create a basic model that can be modified or expanded according to local conditions of agriculture.

Many of the booklets deal with specific crops and techniques, while others are intended to give farmers more general information that can help them to understand **why** they do what they do, so that they will be able to do it better.

Adaptations of the series, or of individual volumes in it, have been published in Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Creole, Hindi, Igala, Indonesian, Kiswahili, Malagasy, SiSwati, Thai and Turkish. This volume has been prepared by the Inland Water Resources and Aquaculture Service, Fishery Resources and Environment Division.

Requests for permission to issue this manual in other languages and to adapt it according to local climatic and ecological conditions are welcomed. They should be addressed to the Director, Publications Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.

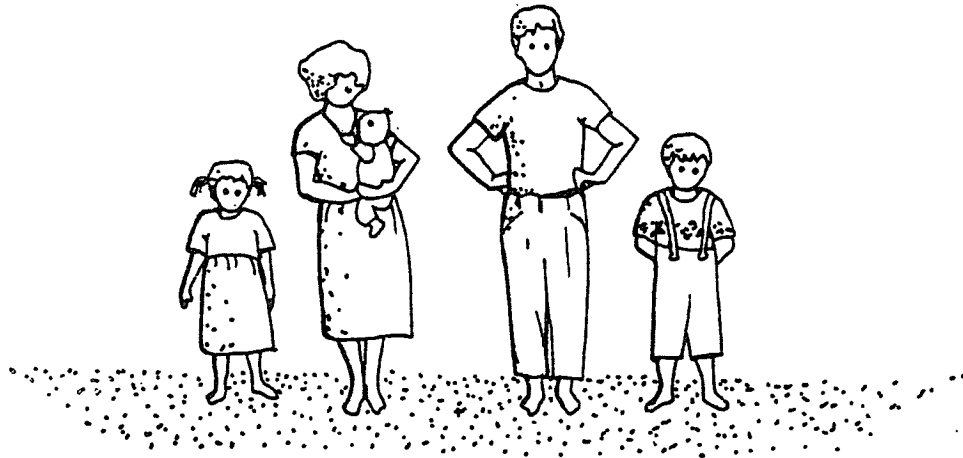
Booklets 27 to 39 in the FAO Better Farming Series were written and illustrated by Tom Laughlin, working closely with the technical divisions responsible.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOKLET

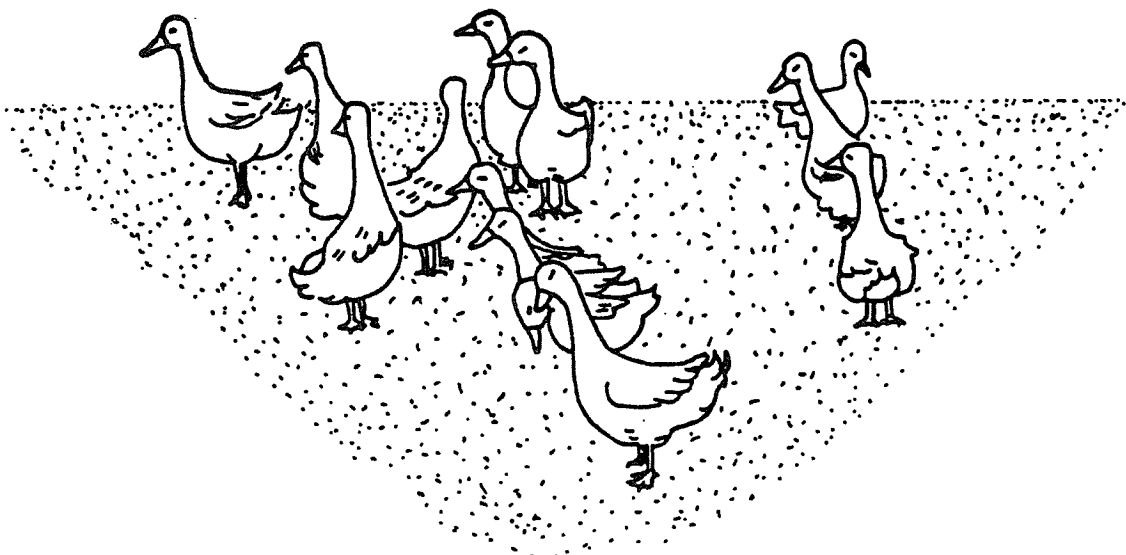
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INTRODUCTION

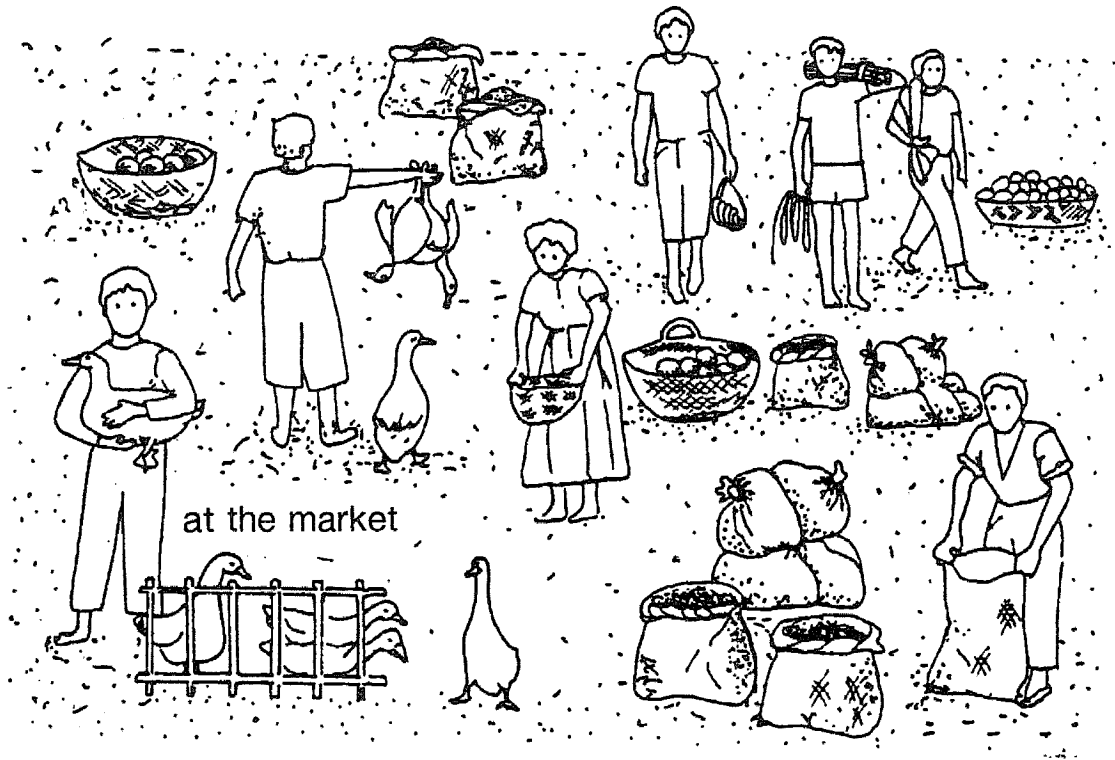
1. Ducks lay eggs and give meat.
They are good to eat
and very good for you.
2. By raising ducks
you will have more food.
This will help to feed your family
and keep it strong and healthy.



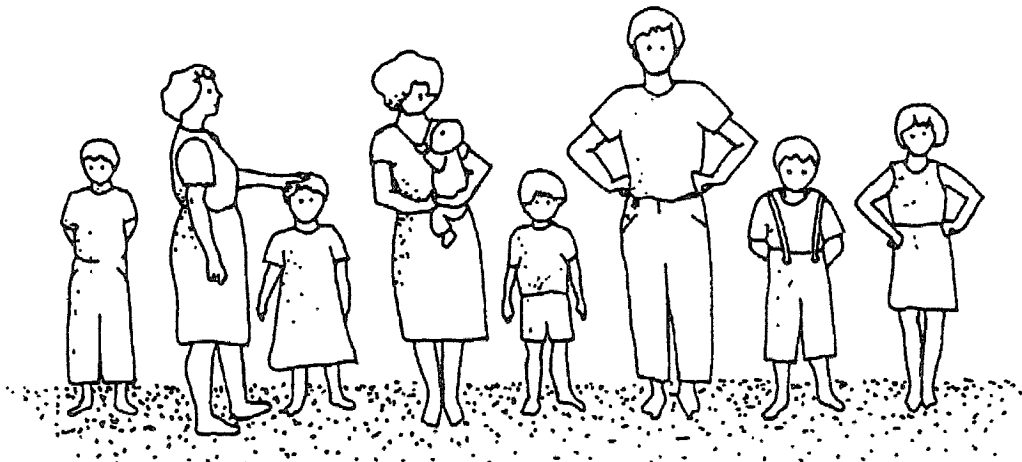
3. Ducks are easy to raise.
They need less care than chickens.
Ducks are strong and hardy.
They do not get sick easily.
4. With very little time and work
you can raise
a small flock of ducks.



5. If your family is **not too big** you may not need all of the eggs and all of the meat for food. Then, you can sell what you do not use to your neighbours or at the market.



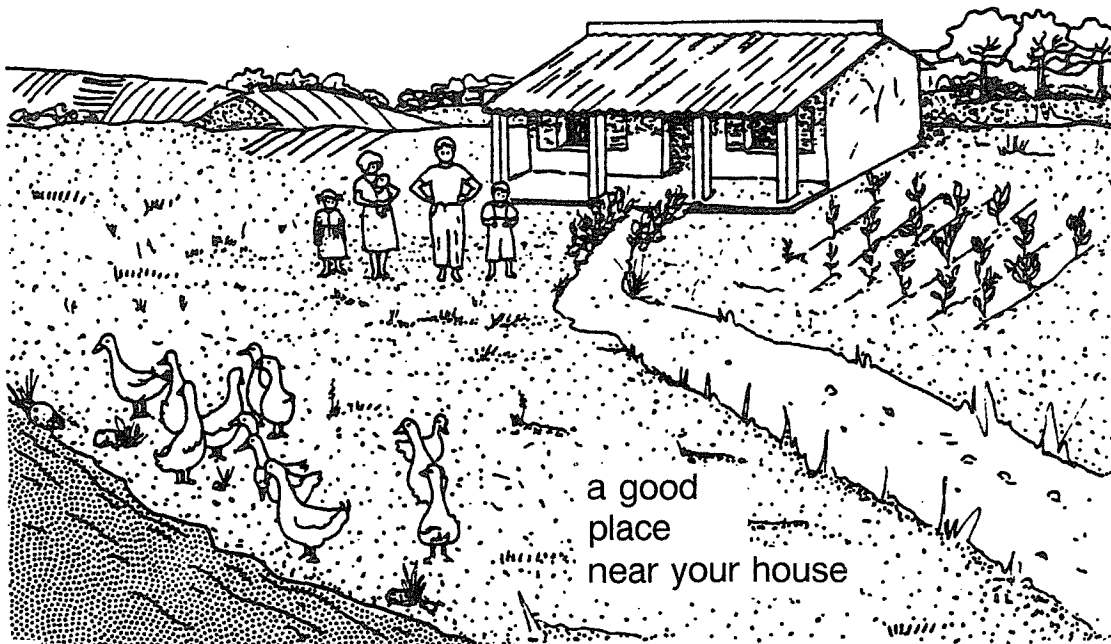
6. With more food and with the money you get by selling eggs and meat you and your family can live better.
7. However, if your family is **too big** you will need to raise many more ducks if you are to have enough eggs and meat to eat **and** to sell at the market.



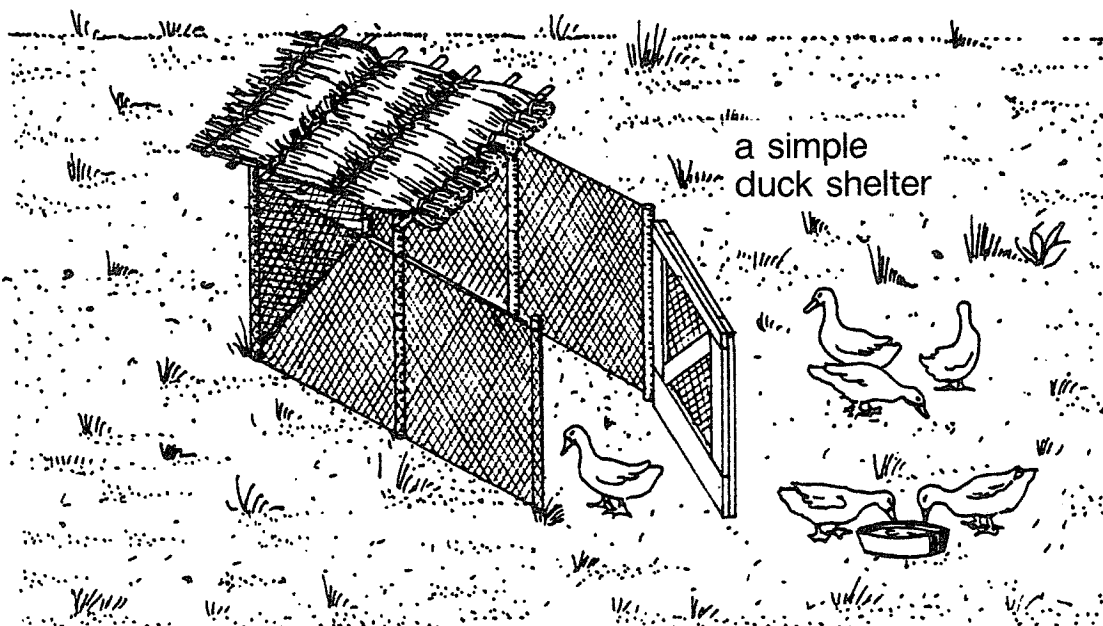
What do you need to raise ducks?

You will need

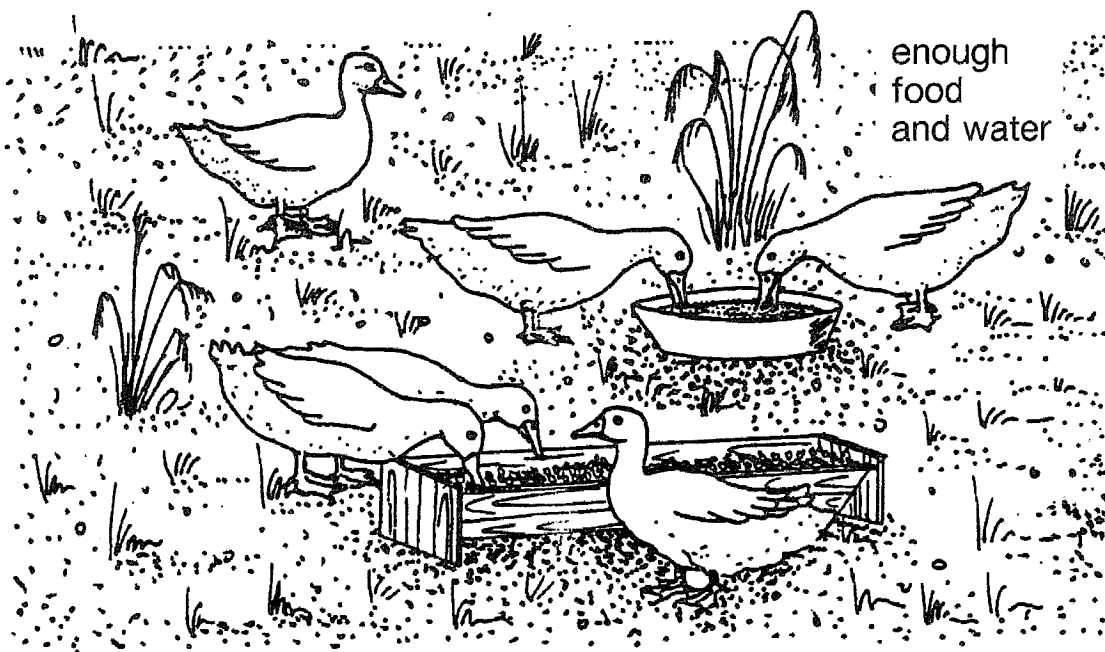
- a good place near your house to keep a flock of ducks



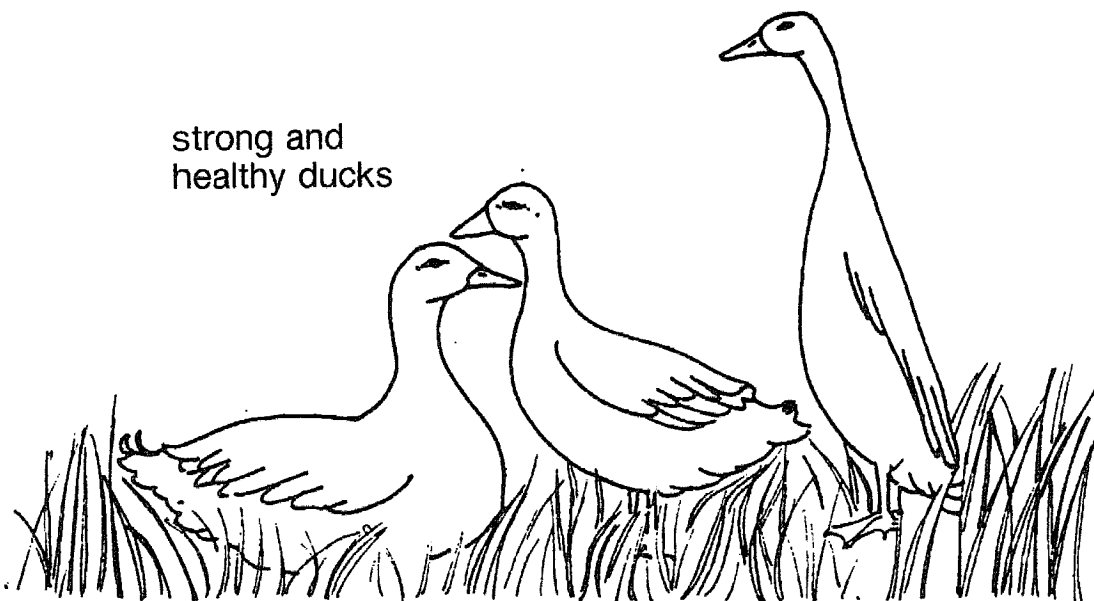
- a simple shelter for your ducks to protect them in cold, hot or wet weather and to keep them safe from their enemies or from people who may steal them



- enough food and water
for your ducks to eat and drink



- enough strong and healthy
fully grown or young ducks
of the kind that you can get
to start your flock
(see also Items 19, 21 and 41).

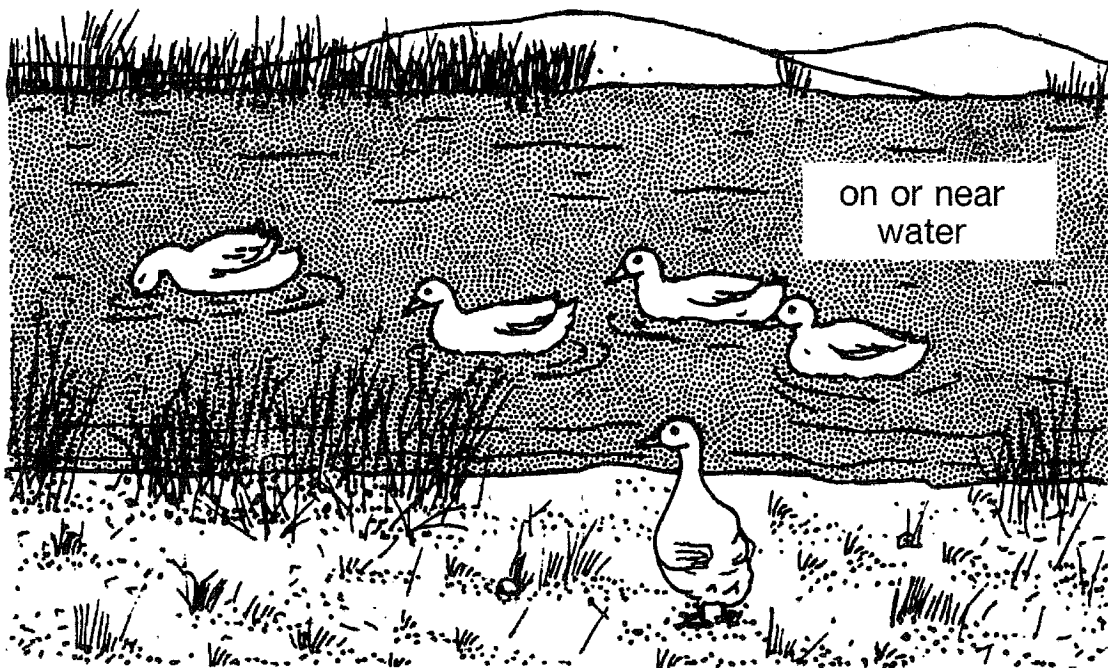


8. If you have or can get
all of these things
you may want to raise
your own flock of ducks.

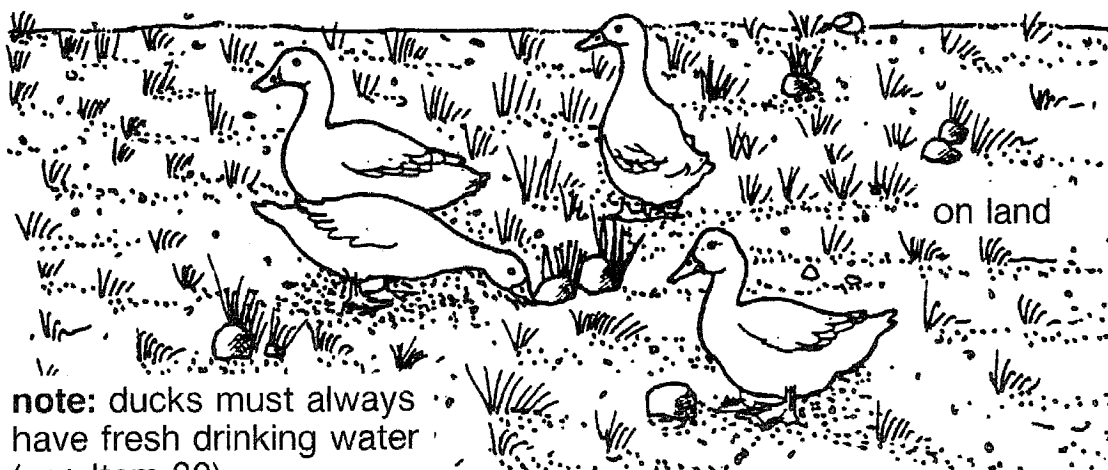
LEARNING ABOUT DUCKS

Where can you raise ducks?

9. Ducks live very well outside by themselves.
10. They are water birds and live best on or near water, such as a lake, pond or stream where they can spend part of each day swimming.

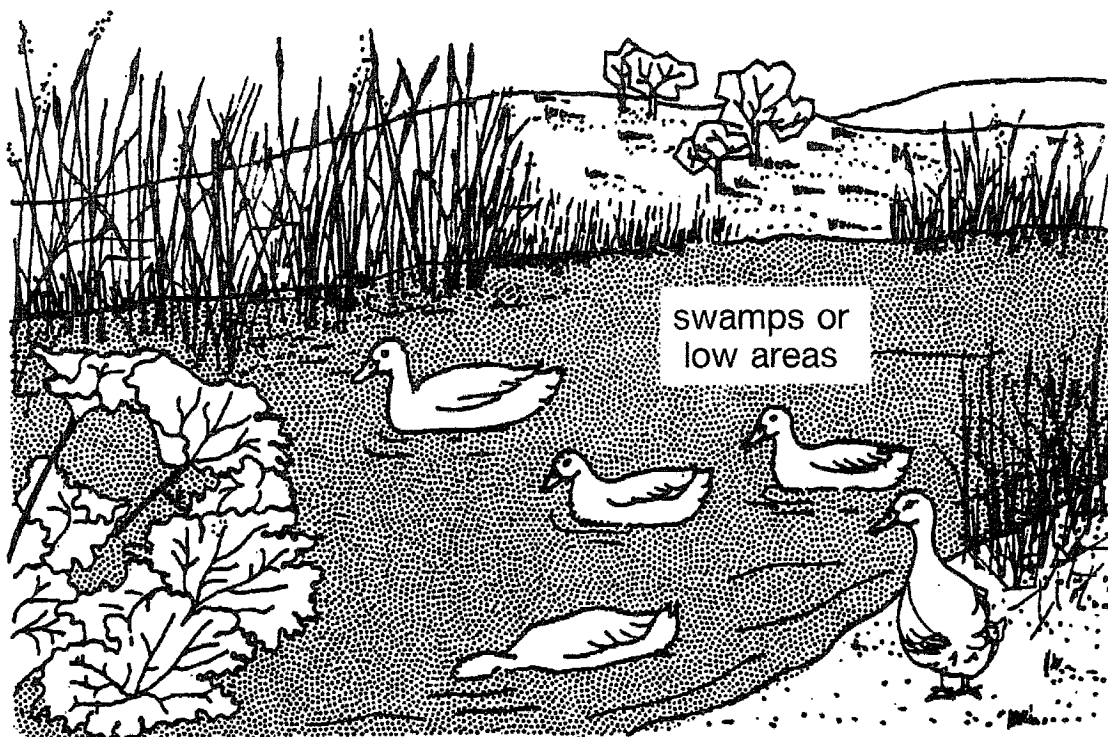


11. However, if you live in a place where there is no water you can still raise ducks. You can raise them on land.

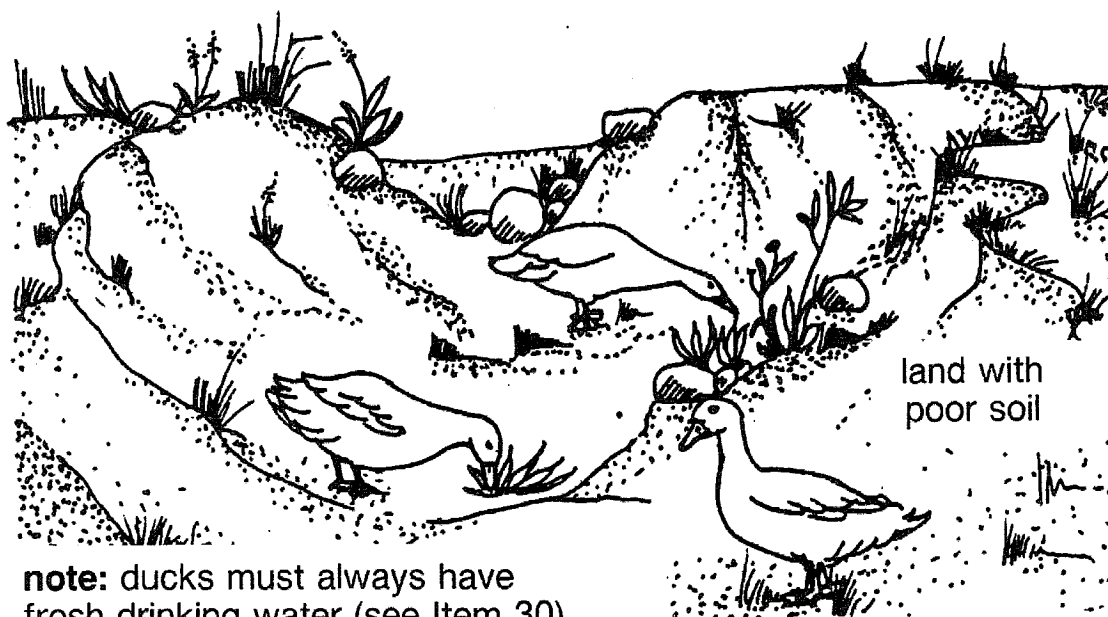


note: ducks must always have fresh drinking water (see Item 30)

12. Here are some places where you can raise ducks.
13. You can raise ducks in low wet land such as swamps or in low areas around ponds or streams.

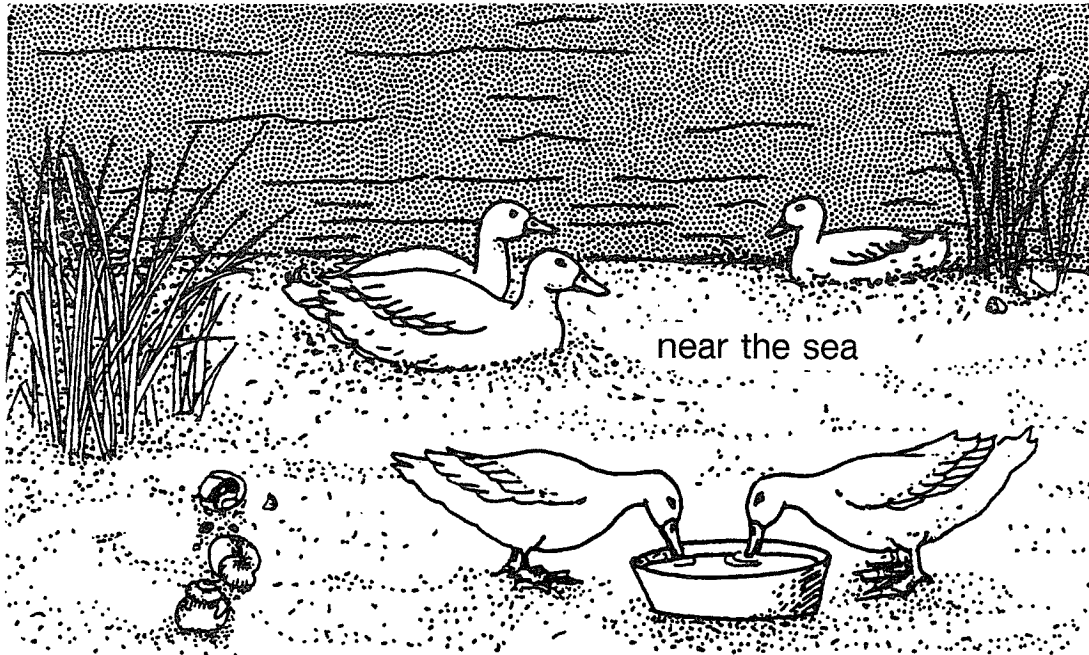


14. You can raise ducks on sloping land or in places that have soil too poor to be used for planting.

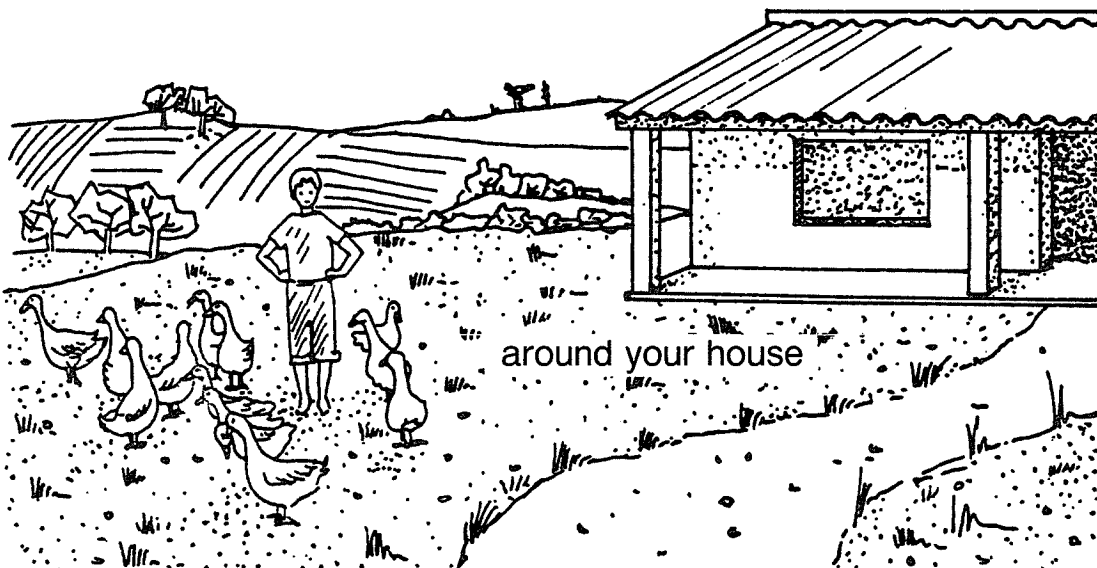


note: ducks must always have fresh drinking water (see Item 30)

15. You can raise ducks near the sea where there is salt water. However, if you do this you will need to give them fresh water to drink.



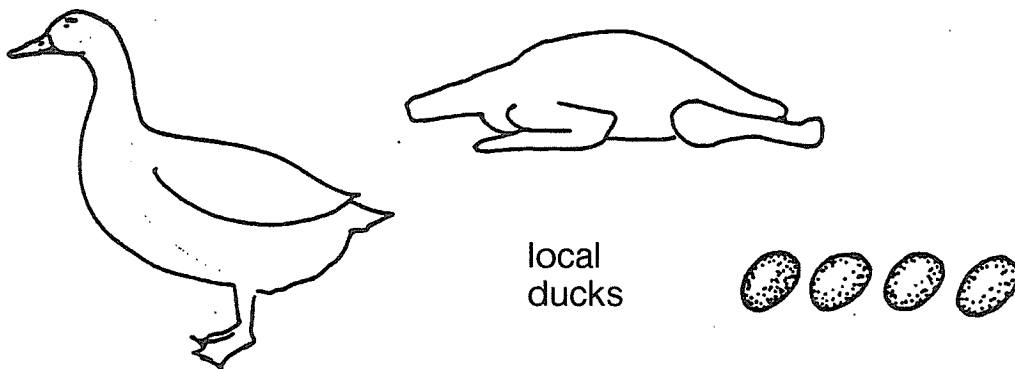
16. If you do not have too many ducks you can raise them around your house.



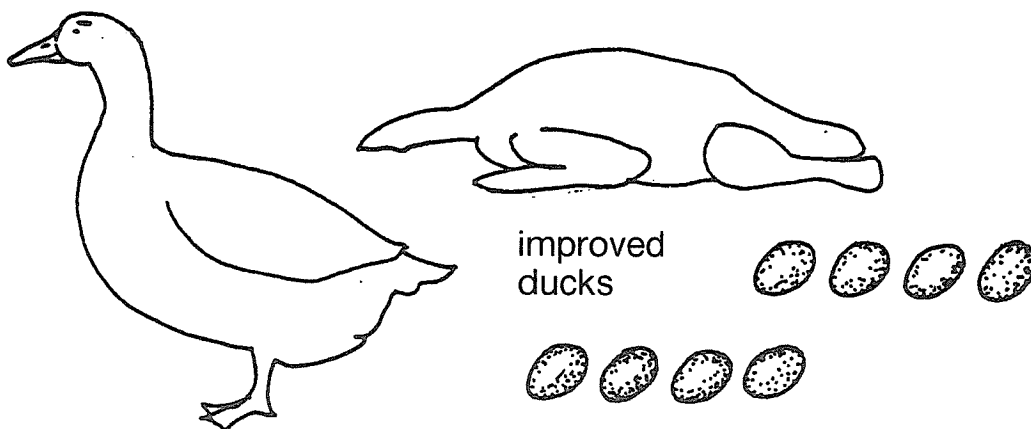
17. You can also raise ducks in your farm fields if you are growing crops that the ducks cannot hurt, (see Items 31 to 39).

What kind of ducks can you raise?

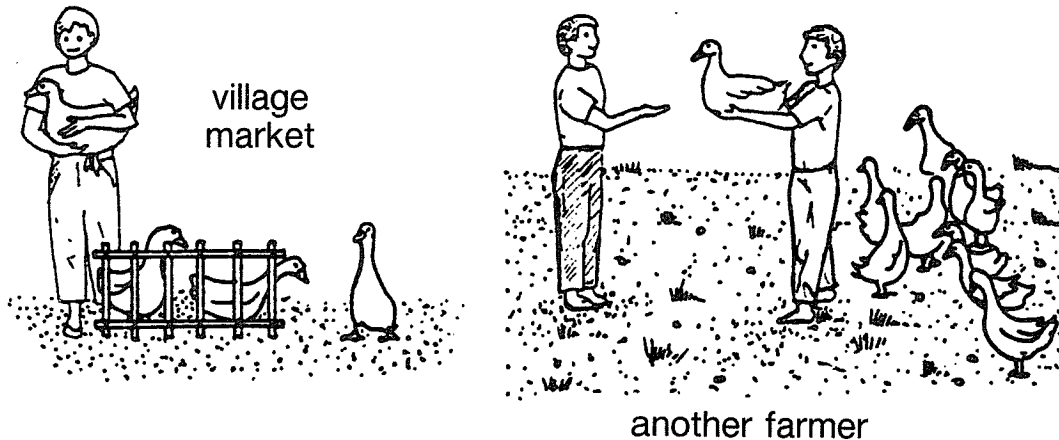
18. There are several kinds of ducks that you can use.
You must find out what kinds of ducks you can get where you live.
19. Usually, you can get **local ducks**.
Local ducks are strong and hardy and used to living in your area.
So, they grow very well and do not get sick easily.
20. However, local ducks are often small, give little meat and few eggs.



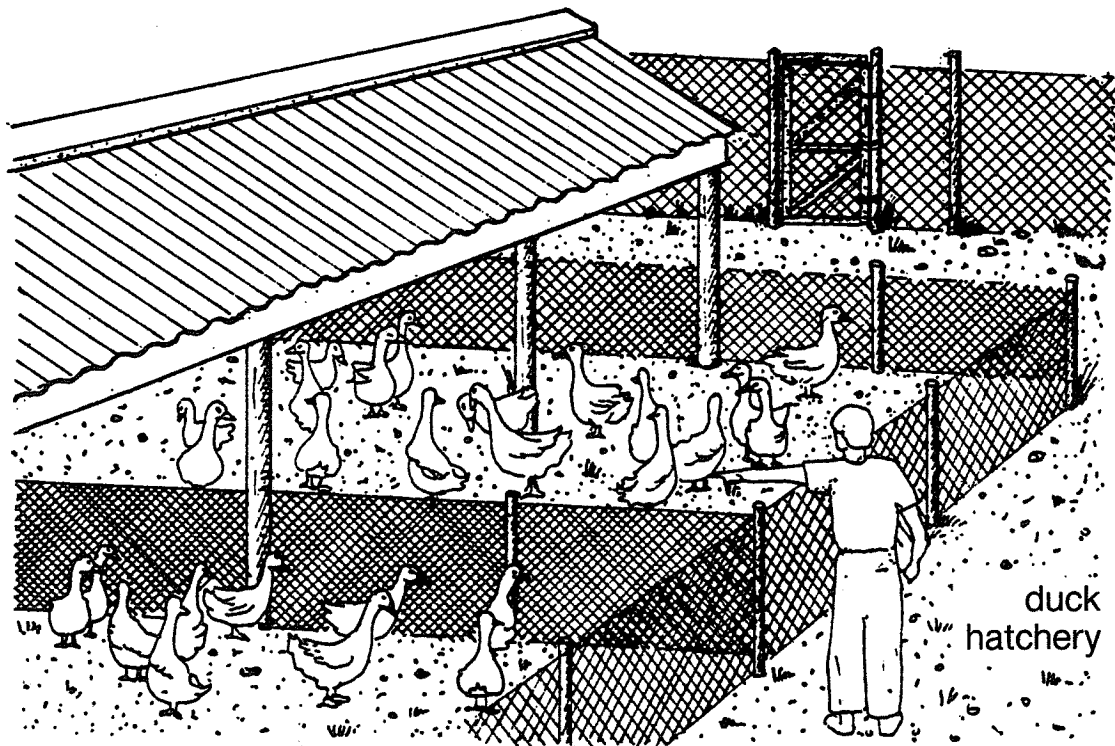
21. Sometimes, you can get **improved ducks** that have been brought from another place.
Improved ducks have been carefully mated over many years and they are bigger and better than local ducks.
22. Improved ducks cost more money but they give more meat and more eggs.



23. Perhaps you can buy ducks at the local village market or there may be another farmer near where you live who will sell you some ducks from his own flock.



24. Perhaps you can buy ducks from a nearby duck hatchery or from a government farm.



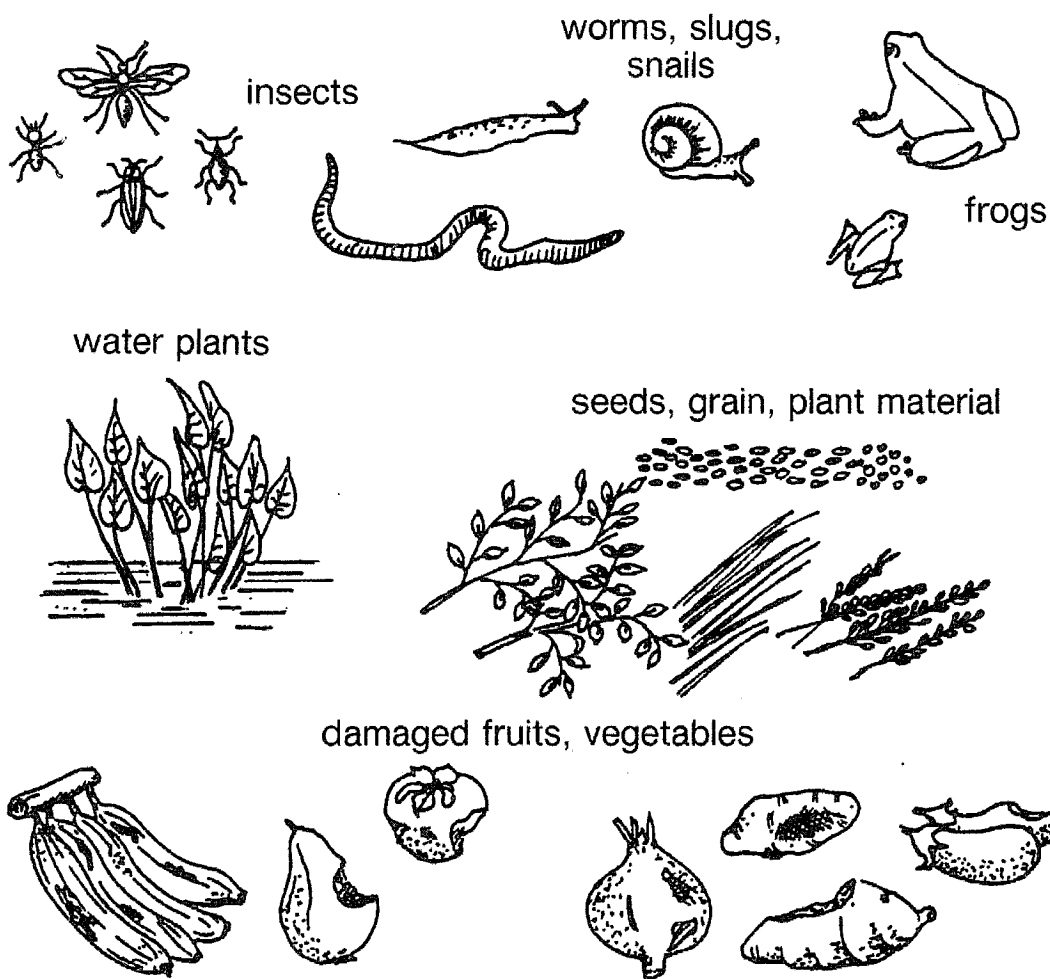
25. If you need help your extension agent will be able to give you good advice on the kinds of ducks you should get and where to get them.

What can ducks eat?

26. Ducks eat just about everything. So, it is not hard for them to find enough food for themselves, even if you feed them nothing.

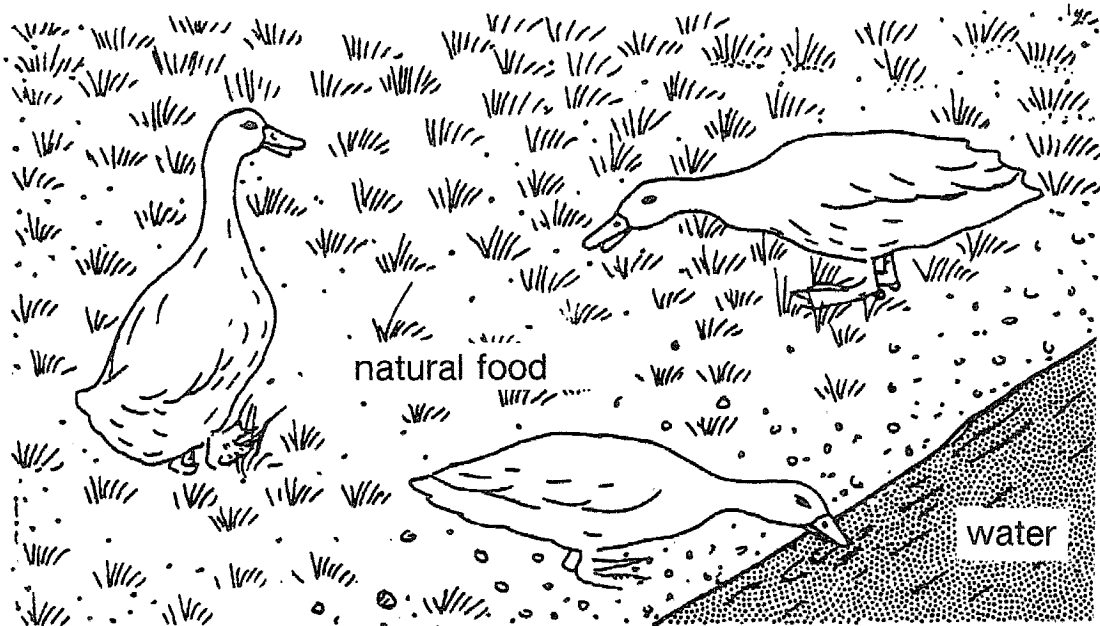
Ducks eat

- insects, worms, slugs, snails, frogs
- grass, weeds, roots
- most water plants
- seeds, grain, plant materials
- materials left on the ground after harvest
- damaged or overripe fruits and vegetables

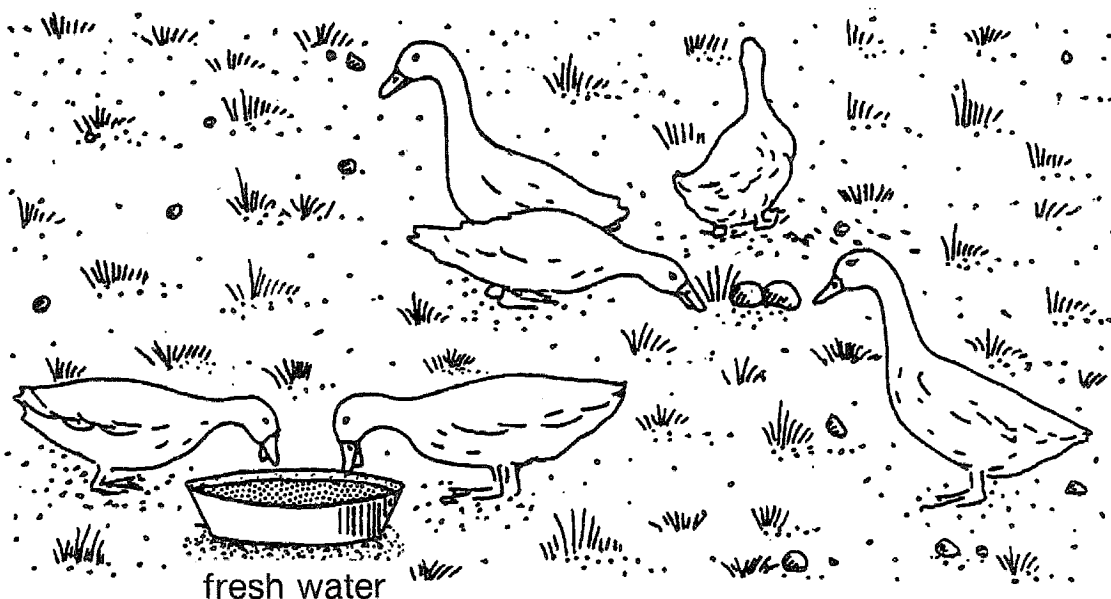


27. You can also give ducks stale bread and food that is left after you have eaten.

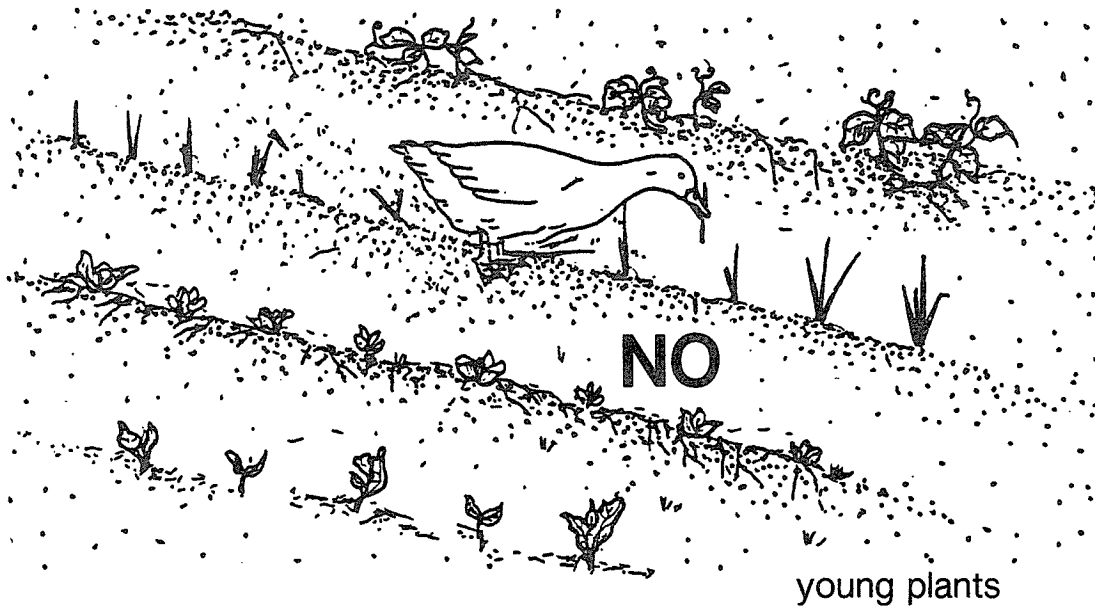
28. **However, always remember that ducks must have fresh water with their food.**
29. So, when you look for a place to raise your ducks, be sure to choose one with a lot of natural food and with enough water for them to eat and drink.



30. If you are raising your ducks where there is no fresh water, see that they have plenty of fresh drinking water all of the time.



31. Ducks can also find food to eat in home gardens and farm fields.
32. However, keep the ducks out of your gardens and fields when the plants are young and tender or the ducks may eat them.

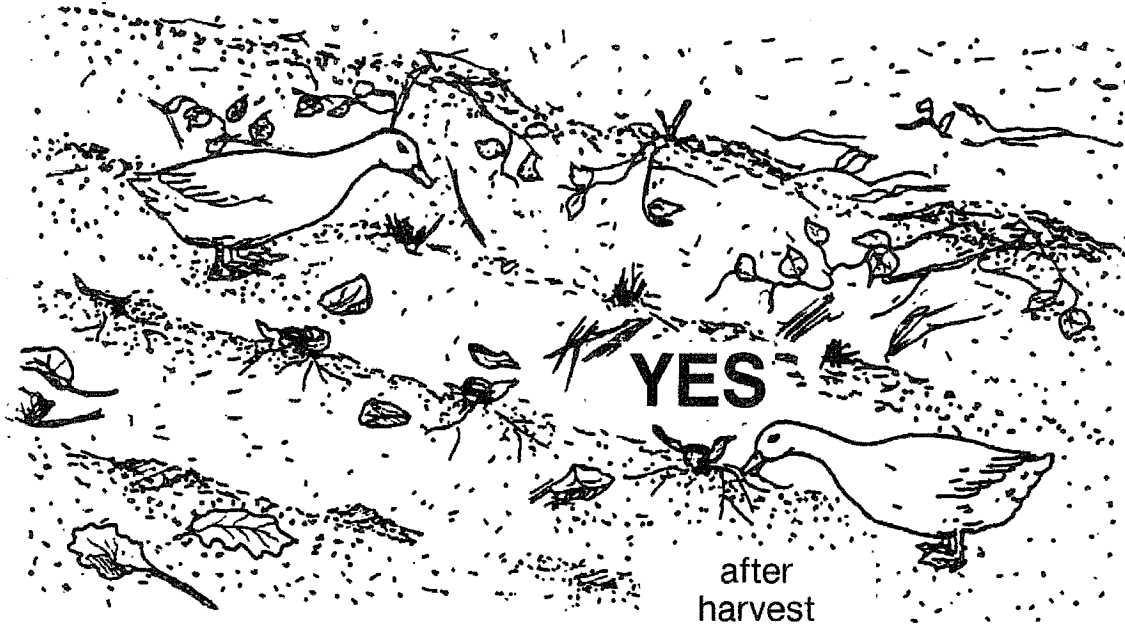


33. After most plants are big, you can let your ducks feed between the rows.

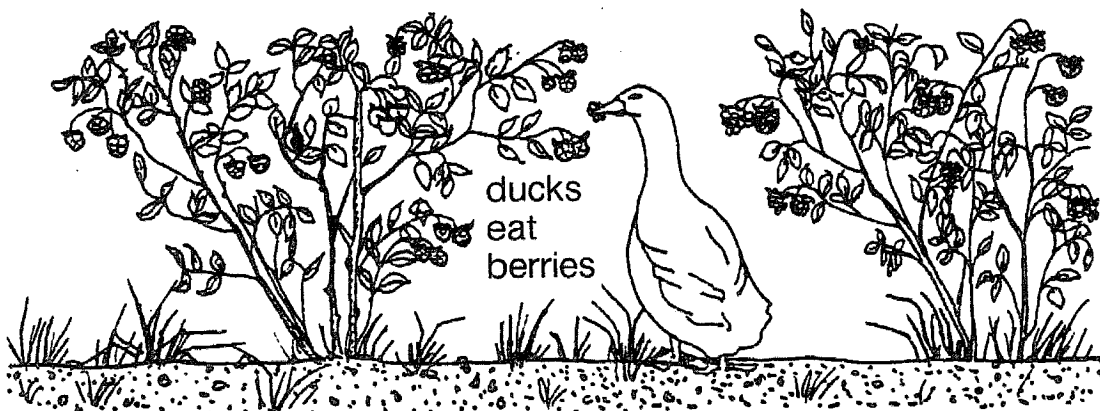


34. When your crops are fully grown and you have harvested them, **be sure** to let your ducks look for food there.

35. After you have harvested your gardens or fields, your ducks will find a lot of food that is very good for them to eat which would otherwise be wasted.

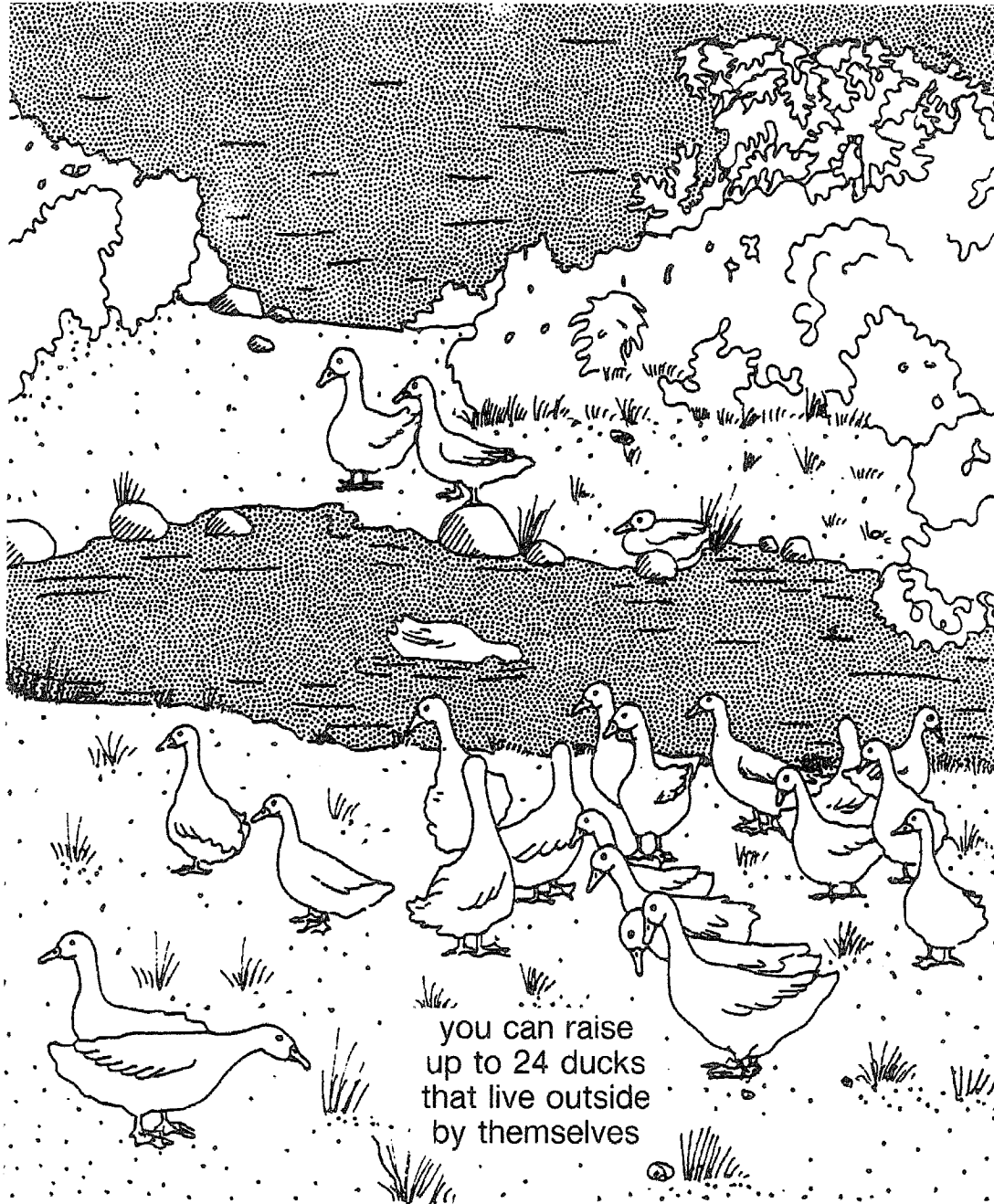


36. **However, when ducks are in your home garden it is a good idea to watch them.**
37. Ducks may eat snails, slugs, worms and other things on the ground such as seeds or fallen leaves. However, be sure that they do not eat the smaller plants as well.
38. **You must also be very careful if you have low-growing berries or fruits for the ducks may eat them too.**



How many ducks should you raise?

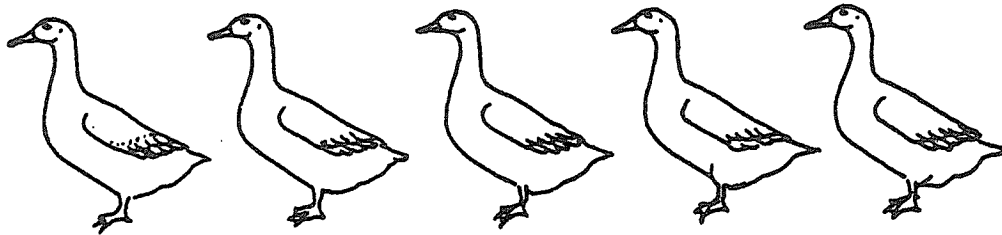
39. If you are going to raise ducks that live by themselves and find their own food, with very little help from you, you can raise up to 24 ducks.



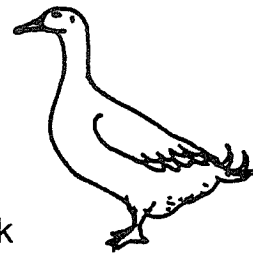
you can raise
up to 24 ducks
that live outside
by themselves

40. However, until you know more about ducks and how to take care of them, it is best to start with a small flock.

41. Start with a flock of 6 ducks,
5 female ducks, and 1 male duck.
With a flock of 6 ducks
you will get 5 to 10 eggs each week.

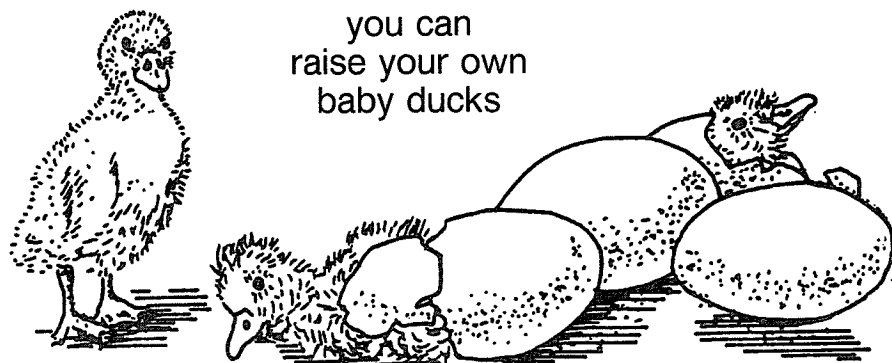


5 female ducks



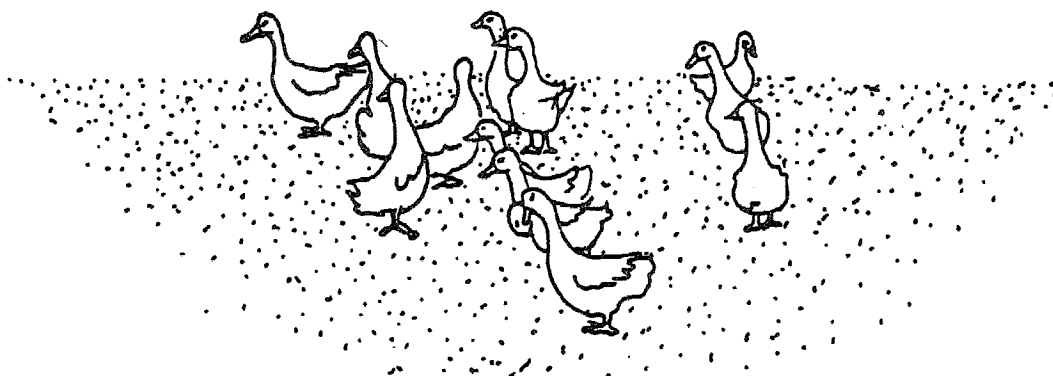
1 male duck

42. In addition, with a male in your flock
the eggs you get will be fertile.
This means that you can raise
your own baby ducks.
43. After you have raised a small flock,
you may find that you could use
more eggs and more meat.
44. Later in this booklet you will learn
how to use some of your eggs
to raise baby ducks
to make your flock bigger.

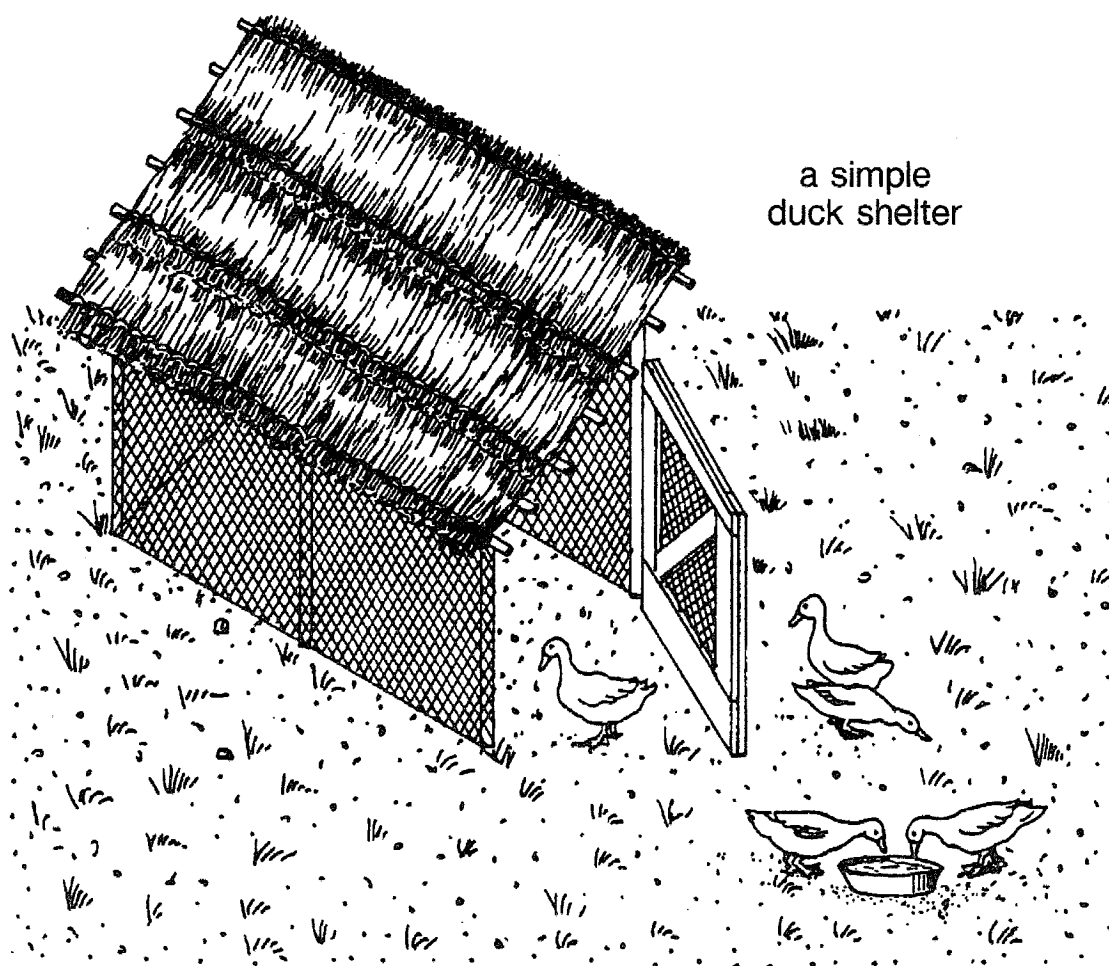


How to keep ducks safe and well

45. Although ducks can live outside by themselves,



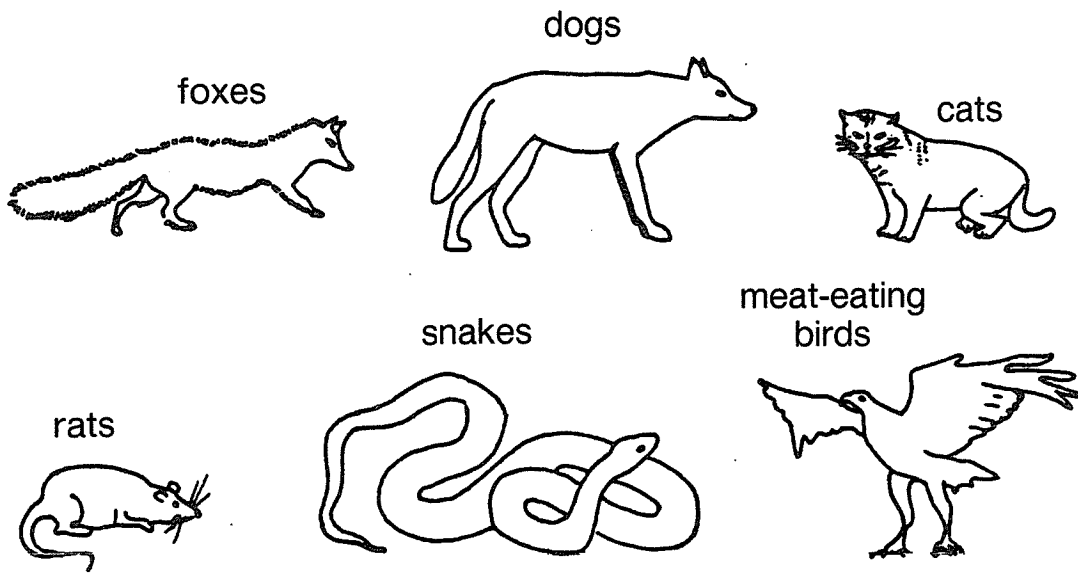
they will live much better if they have a shelter.



46. The main reason for building a shelter for your ducks is to keep them safe from enemies at night when they are sleeping.

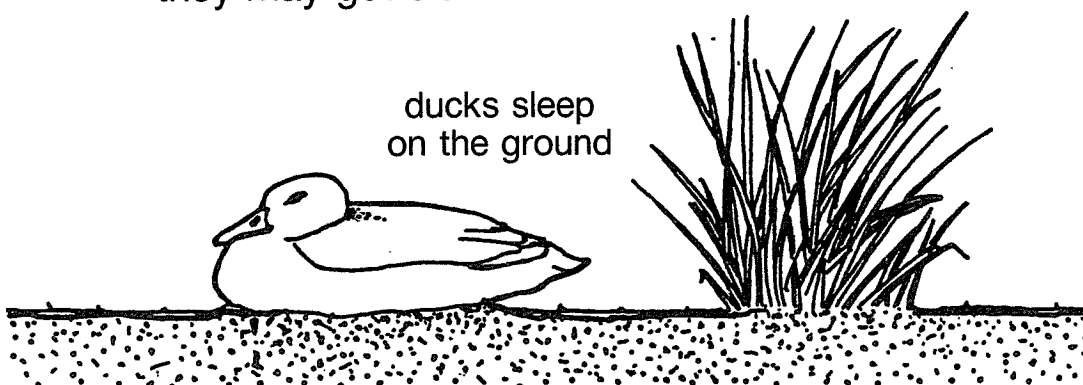
47. Ducks, especially young ducks, have many enemies. You must be careful to protect them from

- dogs, cats, foxes
- rats, snakes
- meat-eating birds
- thieves



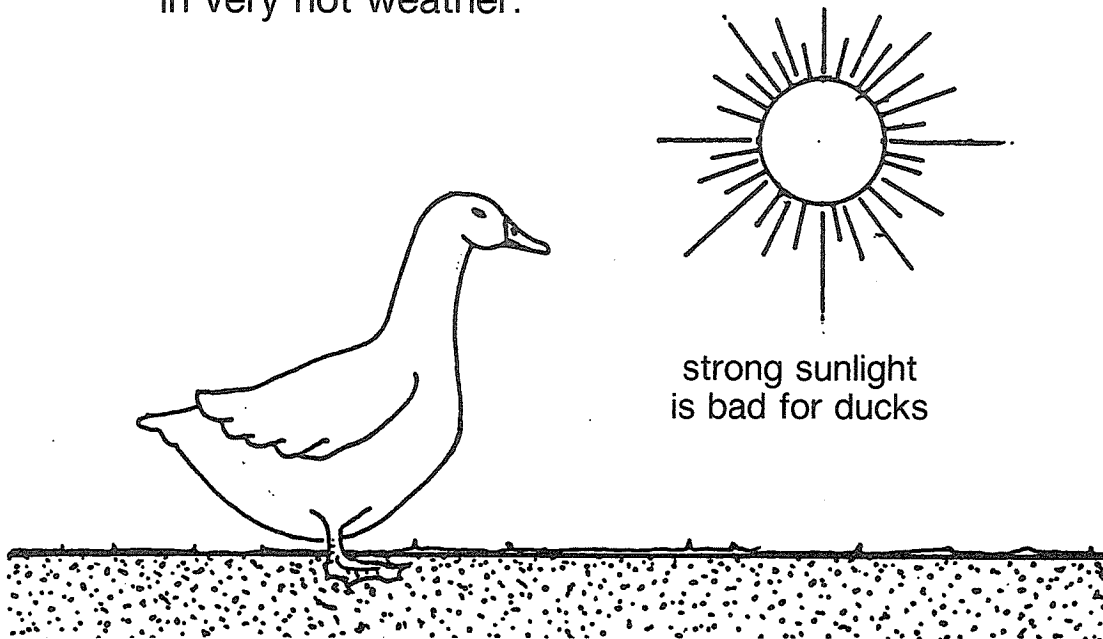
48. There are also other reasons for building a shelter. Here are a few.

49. Ducks sleep on the ground. If the ground is cold or wet or dirty, they may get sick.



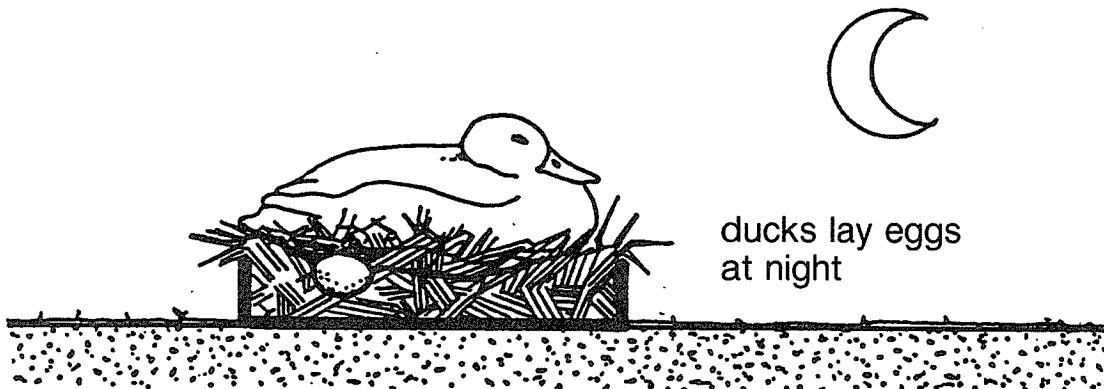
50. If you build them a shelter, you can keep it dry and clean so your ducks will not get sick.

51. Strong sunlight is bad for ducks.
They need protection from the sun
in very hot weather.



52. **If you build a shelter
for your ducks,
they can go inside
when it is very hot.**

53. Ducks lay eggs mostly at night
or early in the morning.

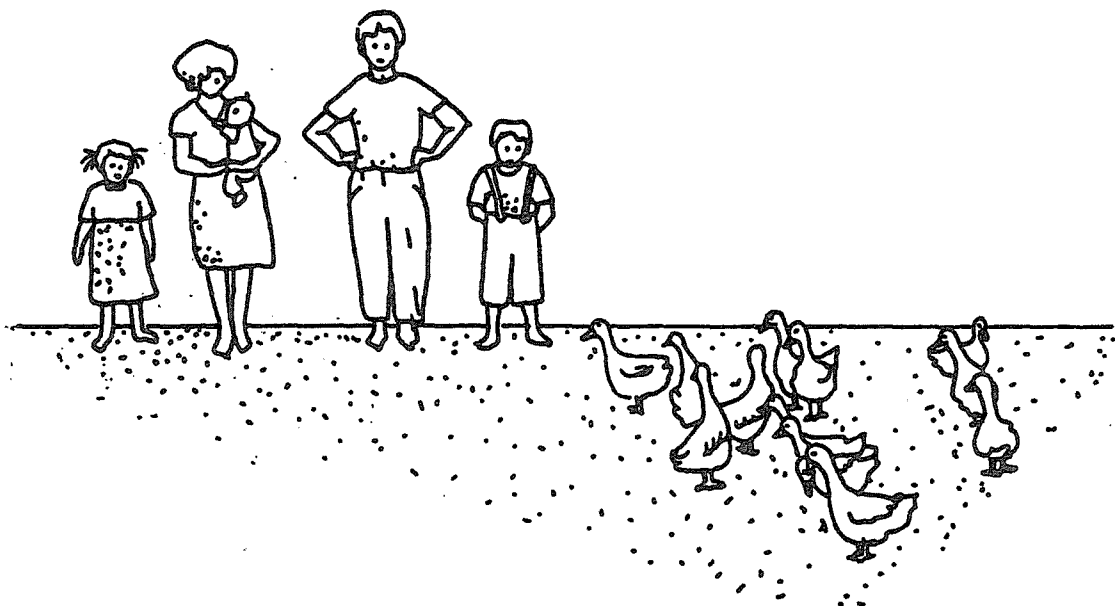


54. **If you build a shelter with nests
and keep your ducks inside at night,
you will be able to collect
the eggs more easily.**

55. You will learn how to build
several simple duck shelters
in the next section
of this booklet.

Now you must decide

- 56. You have already been told a number of things about ducks and about raising them.
- 57. You learned that by raising ducks you can have fresh meat and eggs for you and your family.
- 58. You learned that you can keep as many as 24 ducks that live outside by themselves and find their own food.
- 59. You may have found that you can get healthy ducks to start your own flock where you live.
- 60. So, now you must decide if raising a flock of ducks would be a good thing for you and your family to do.

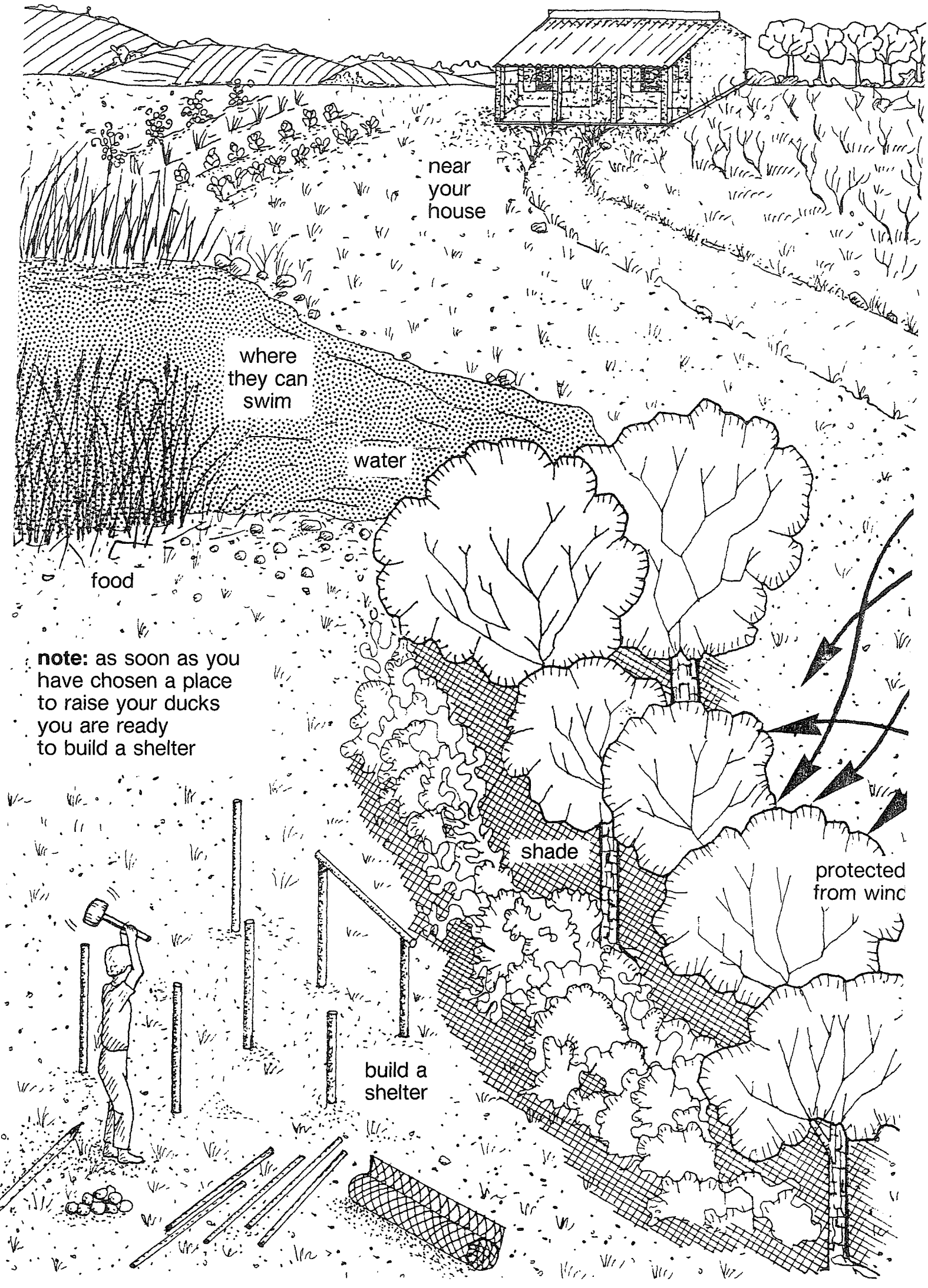


- 61. If you decide to begin,
**you will learn how
in the rest of this booklet.**

HOW TO BEGIN

Choosing a place to raise ducks

62. The first thing that you must do is to choose a place on your land that is good to raise ducks.
63. It is best to keep your ducks where you can watch them easily. So, the place that you choose should be as close as possible to where you live.
64. Look for a place on your land that has enough of the kinds of food that ducks like to eat (see Item 26).
65. Look for a place that has shade for your ducks on hot days. There should also be a place for them to go for protection from wind or on days when it is cold or wet.
66. A good place is one near a pond or a stream where your ducks can easily get to water and where they can swim.
67. Raising a flock of ducks is only one use for your land, so **be careful not to choose** a place for them that could be better used for something else, such as planting crops or growing a vegetable garden.
68. Remember, that ducks can live just about anywhere outside as long as they can find enough to eat and drink.



near
your
house

where
they
can
swim

water

food

note: as soon as you
have chosen a place
to raise your ducks
you are ready
to build a shelter

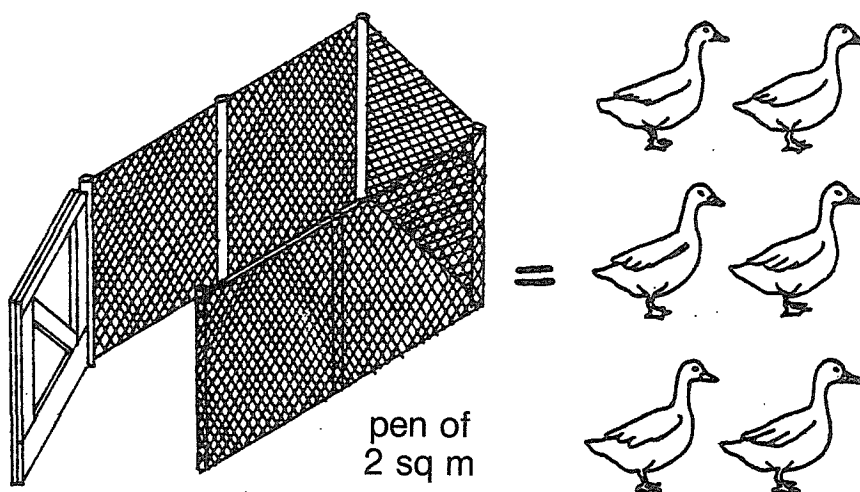
shade

protected
from wind

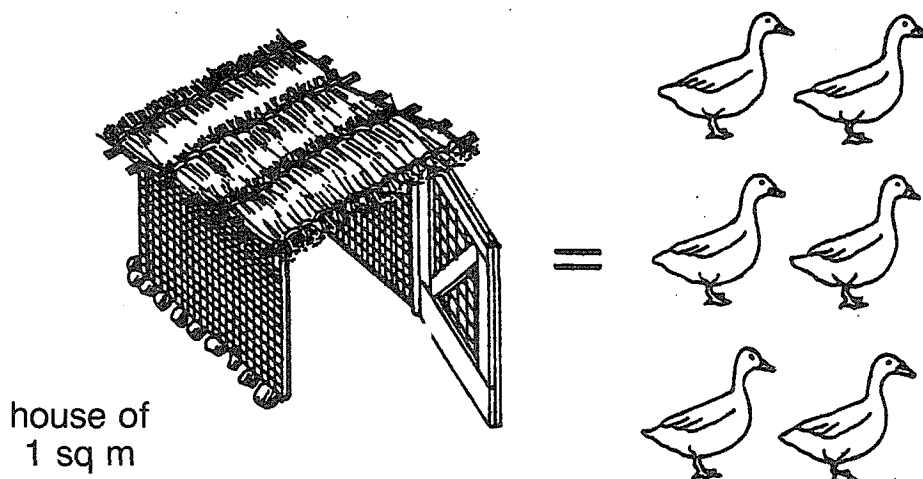
build a
shelter

Building a shelter for your ducks

69. You can build either a pen or a house to shelter your ducks and keep them safe at night.
70. A pen should have about 1 square metre of space for 3 ducks. So, if you begin with a flock of 6 you will need a pen of 2 square metres.

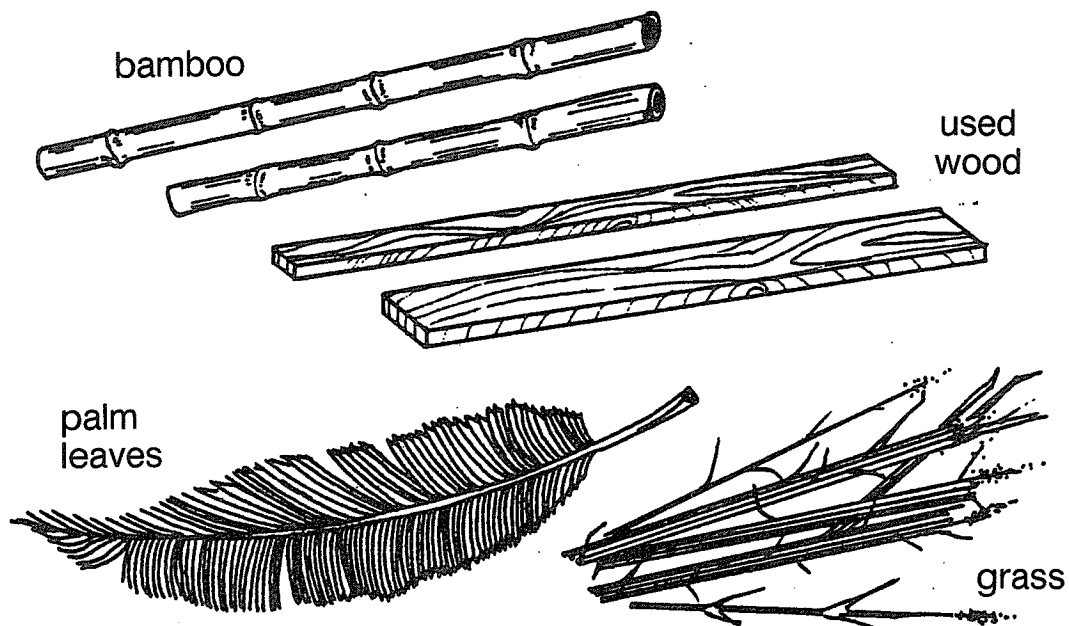


71. A house, where your ducks can sleep, should have about 1 square metre for a flock of 6.

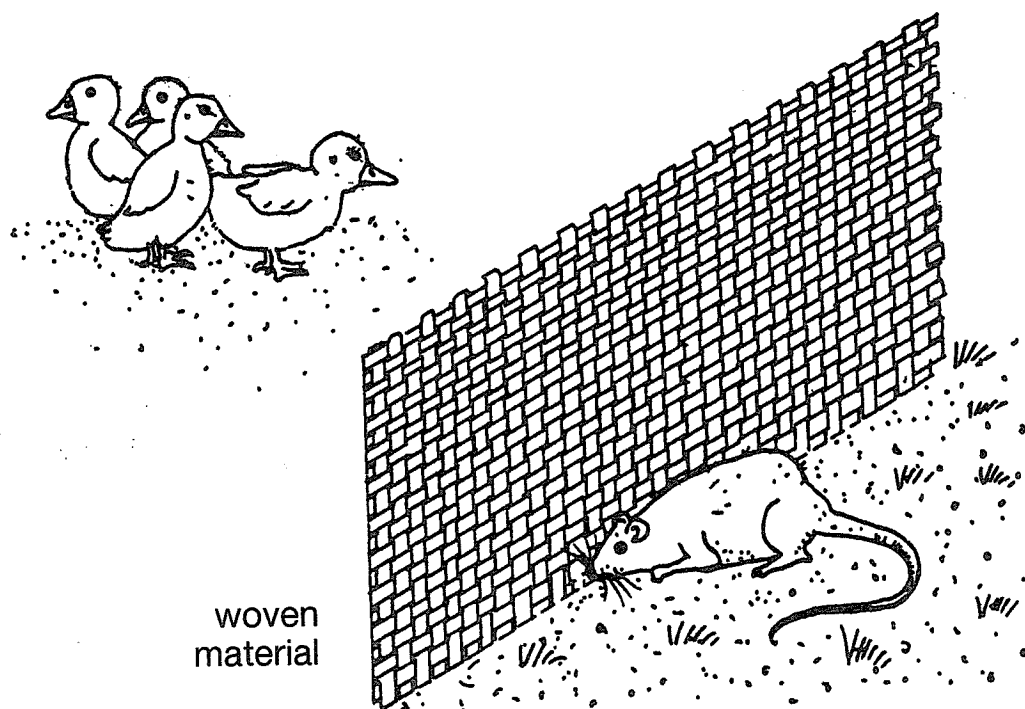


72. **Never try to put too many ducks in either a pen or a house. If a shelter is too crowded, it will quickly become wet and dirty and your ducks may get sick.**

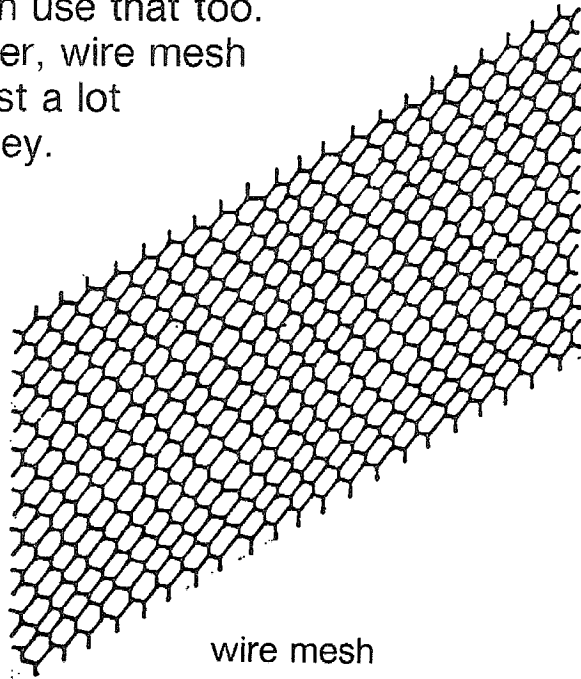
73. You can build a pen or a house using local materials such as bamboo, used wood, palm leaves or grass.



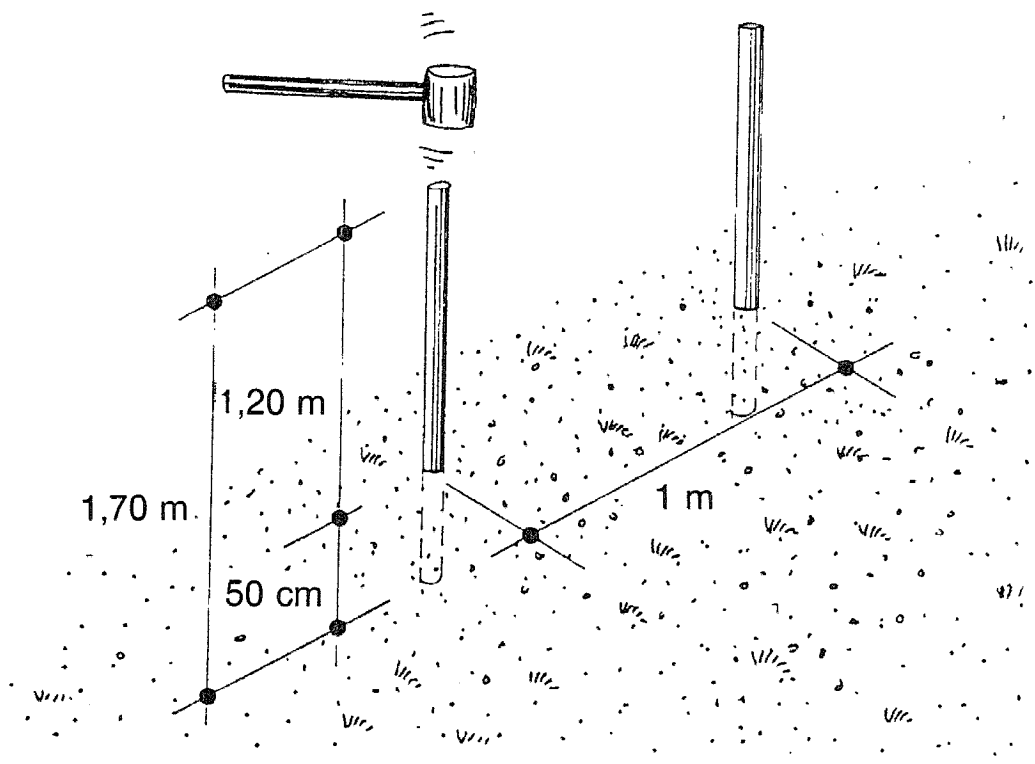
74. A fence of woven bamboo, palm leaves or strong grass makes a good pen cover.
75. However, it must be strong enough to keep the enemies of your ducks out and fine enough to keep small ducks in.



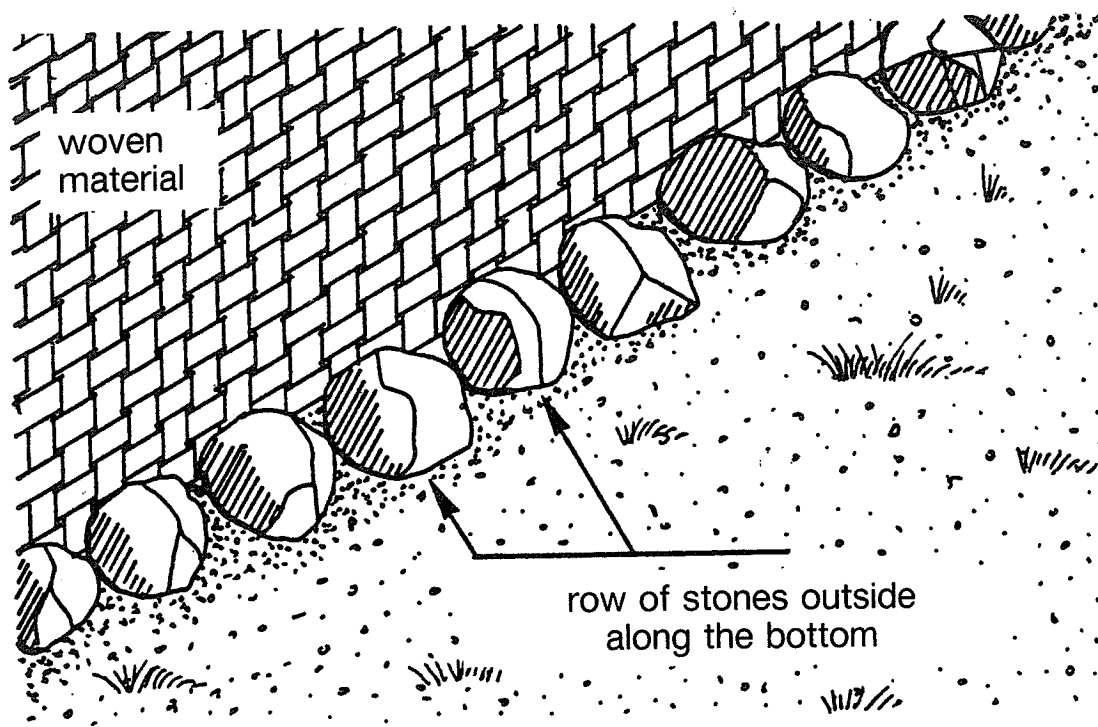
76. If you can get wire mesh you can use that too. However, wire mesh can cost a lot of money.



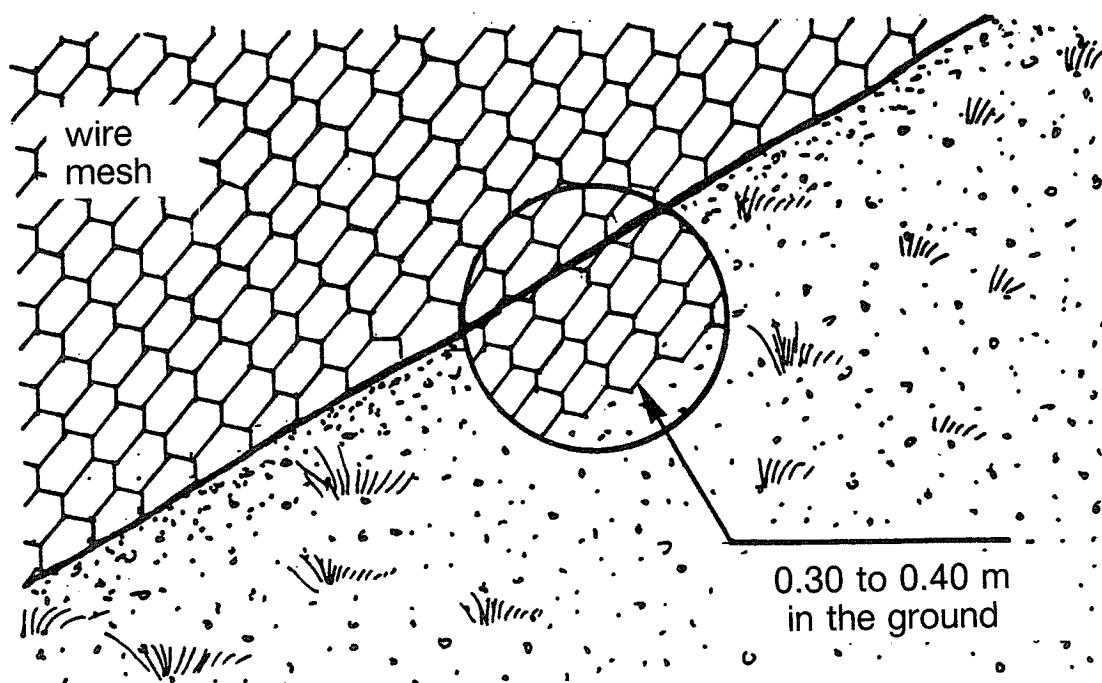
77. Build the fence of your pen using posts at least 1.20 metres high to keep out harmful animals.
78. The posts should be about 1.00 metre apart and about 0.50 metre in the ground.



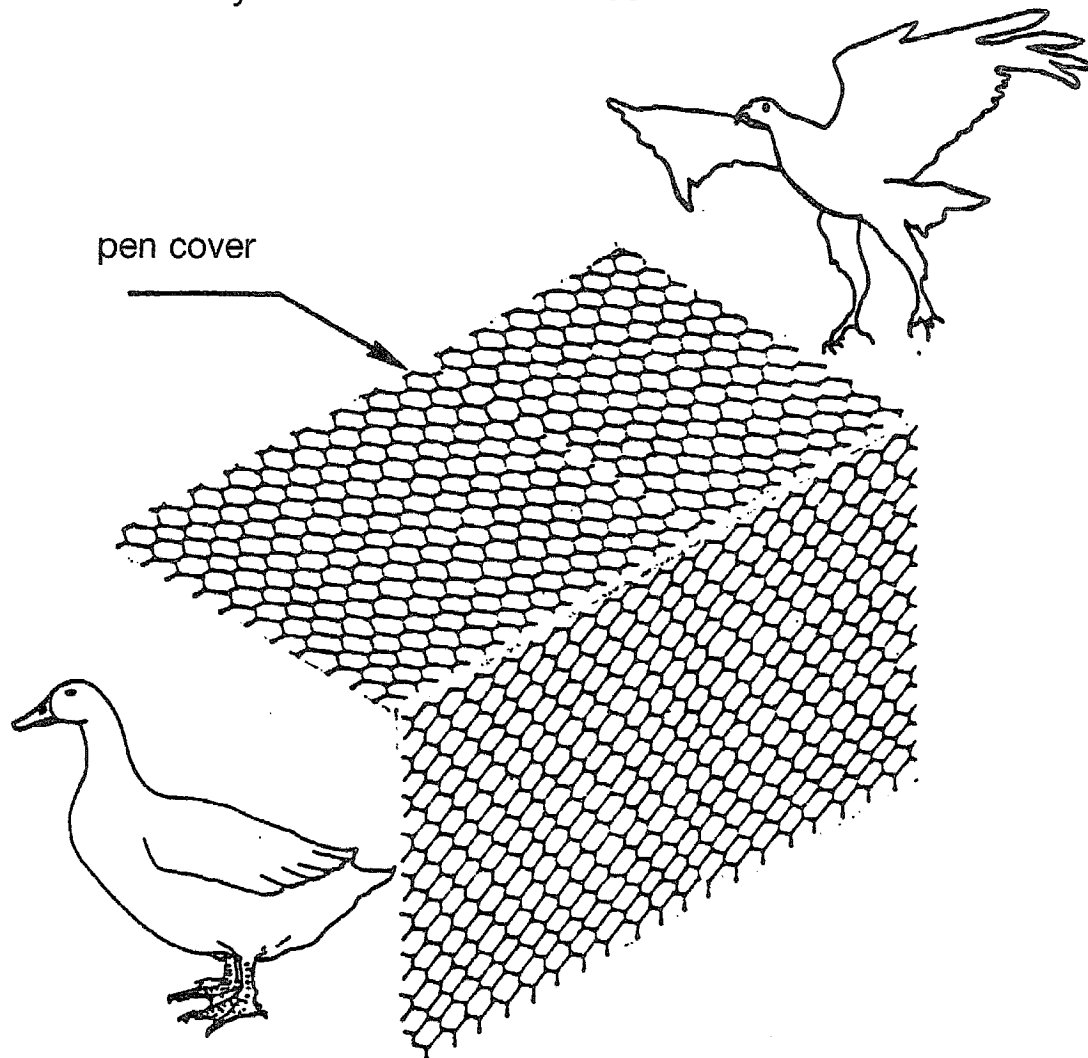
79. To keep animals from digging under the fence of a pen made of bamboo or woven material, put a row of stones along the bottom on the outside of the fence.



80. To keep animals from digging under the fence of a pen made of wire mesh, bury the wire mesh about 0.30 to 0.40 metre in the ground.



81. If there are meat-eating birds nearby, you should cover the pen as well. You can use the same material that you used for the fence.



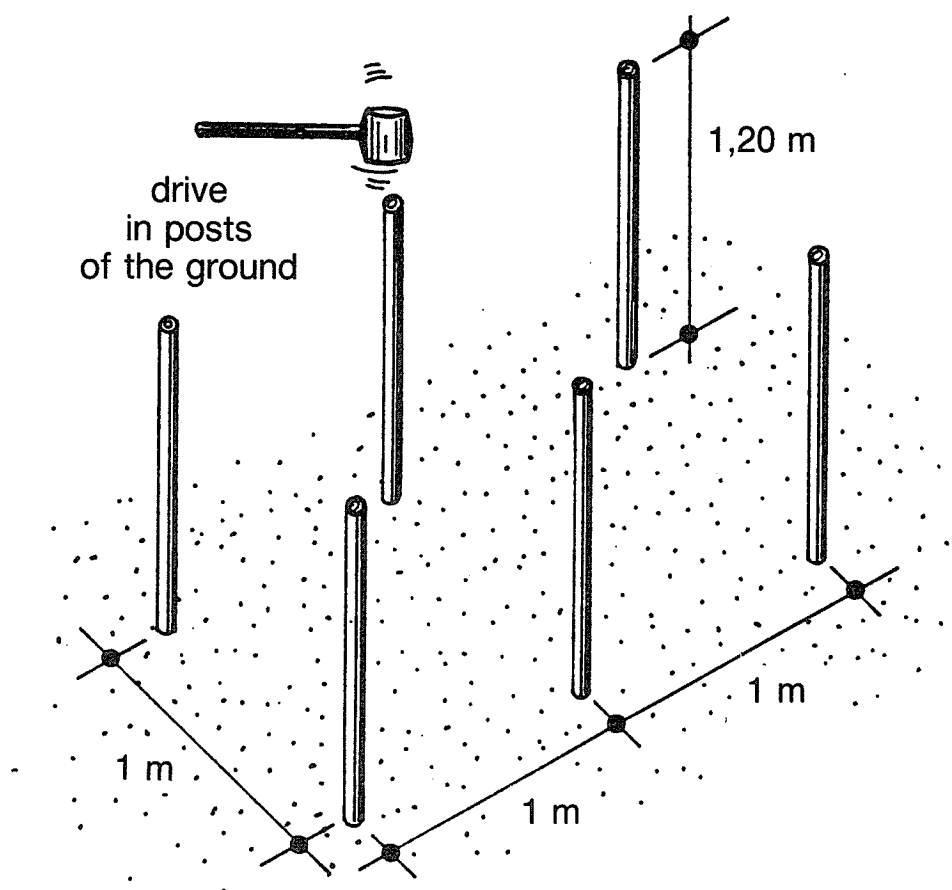
82. Try to find a place for your pen on ground which is higher so that the water will run away. That way your pen will stay dry.
83. Have the pen built and ready for your ducks before you get them. That way they can become used to their new home from the beginning.
84. The drawings on pages 27 to 41 will show you how to build several kinds of pens and houses.

How to build a duck pen

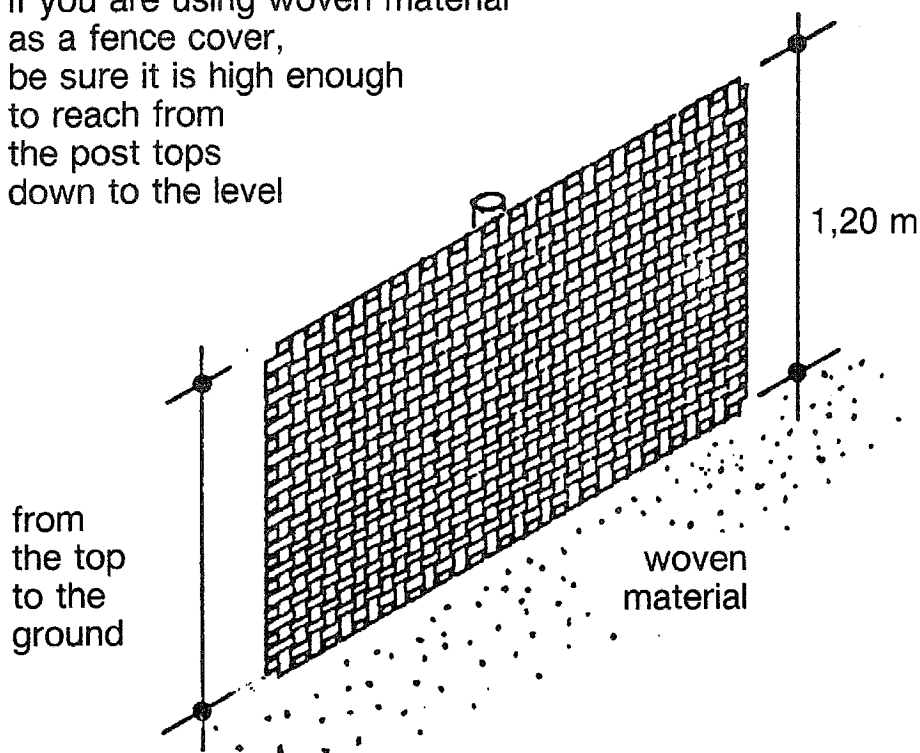
- 1 for a pen of 2 square metres,
you will need 6 posts
of 8 to 10 cm in diameter
and about 1.70 m long
(each post should be buried
in the ground about 0.50 m)



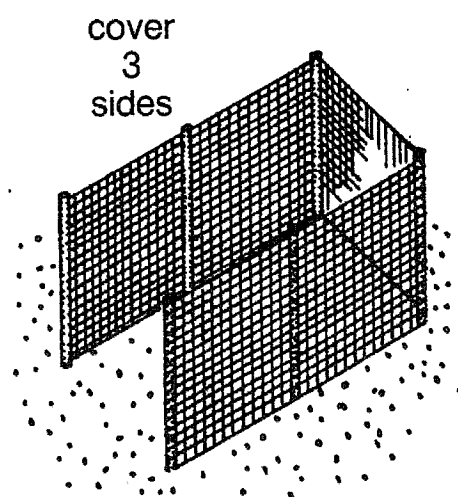
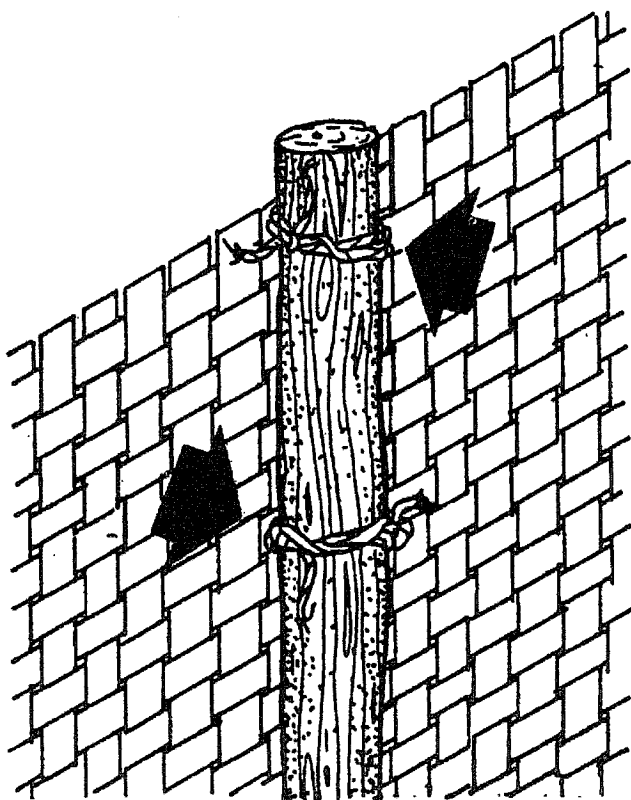
- 2 drive the posts
into the ground
to form a rectangle



- 3 if you are using woven material as a fence cover, be sure it is high enough to reach from the post tops down to the level

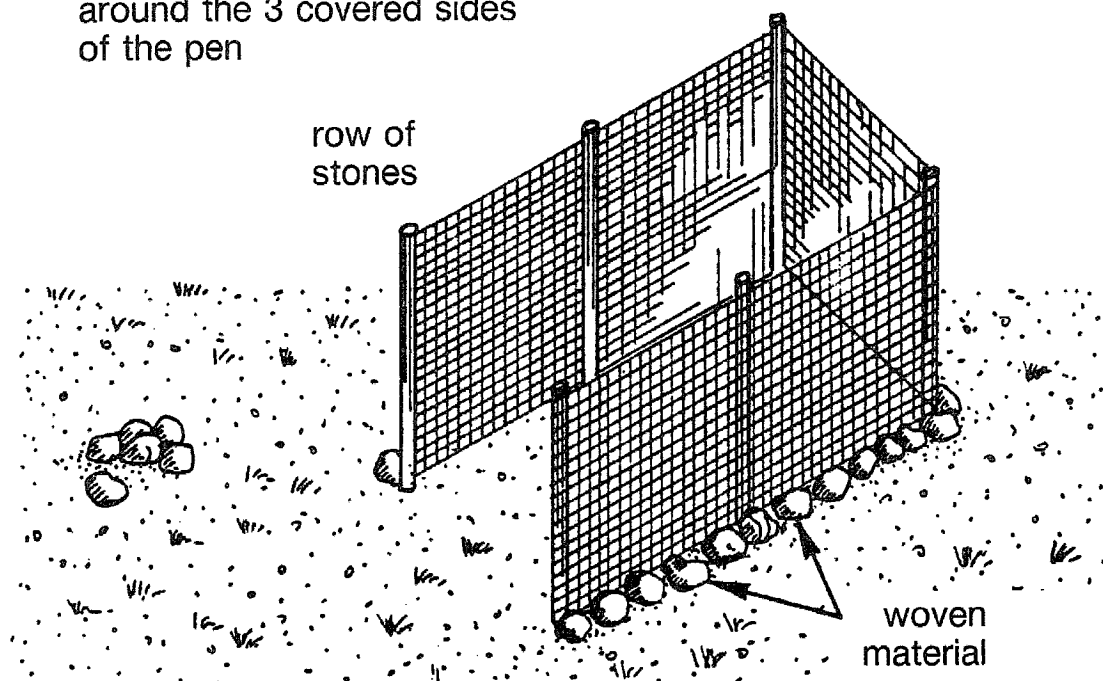


- 4 cover 3 sides of the pen; tie the woven material to the posts using strong cord; you can also use strong plant vines

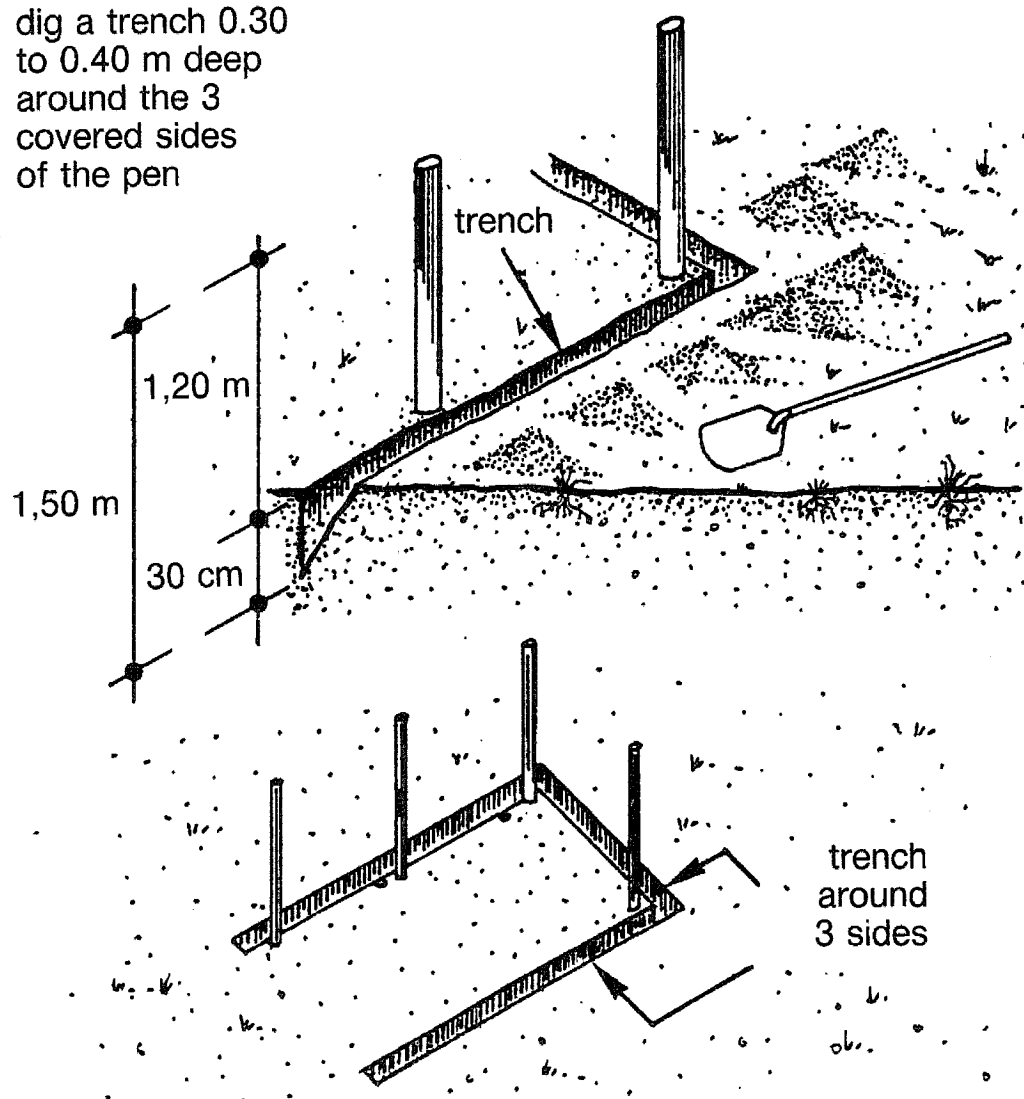


use cord or plant vines to tie woven material

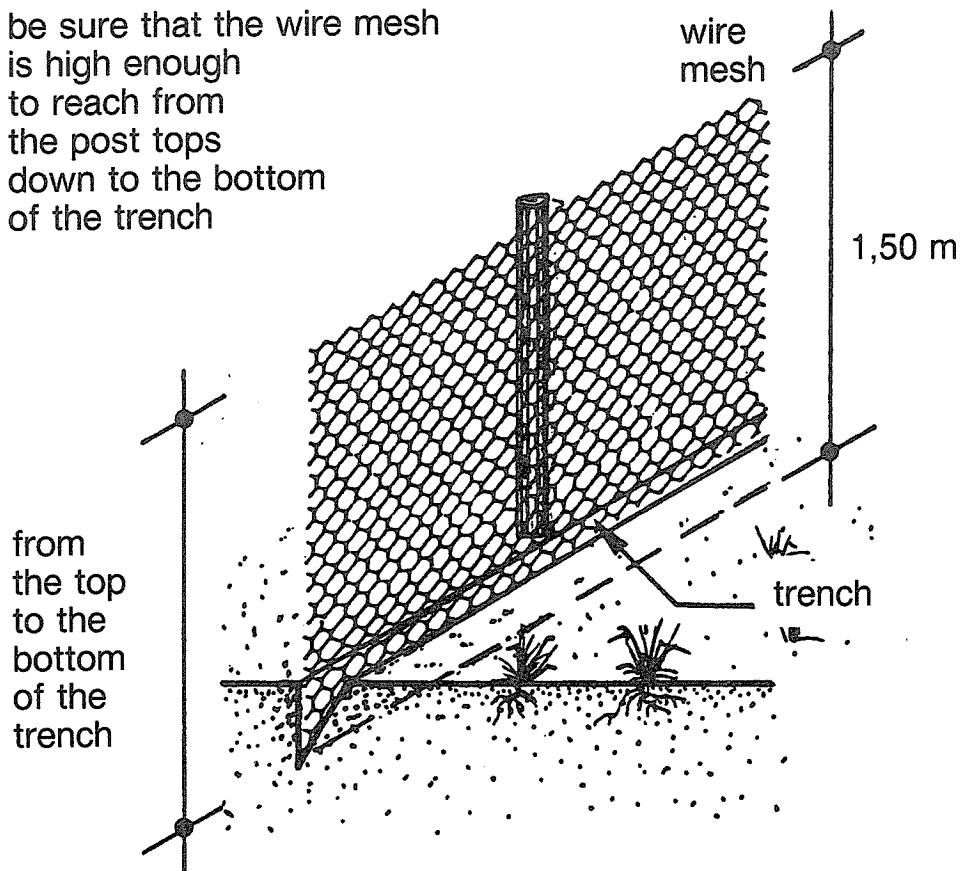
- 5 put a row of stones around the 3 covered sides of the pen



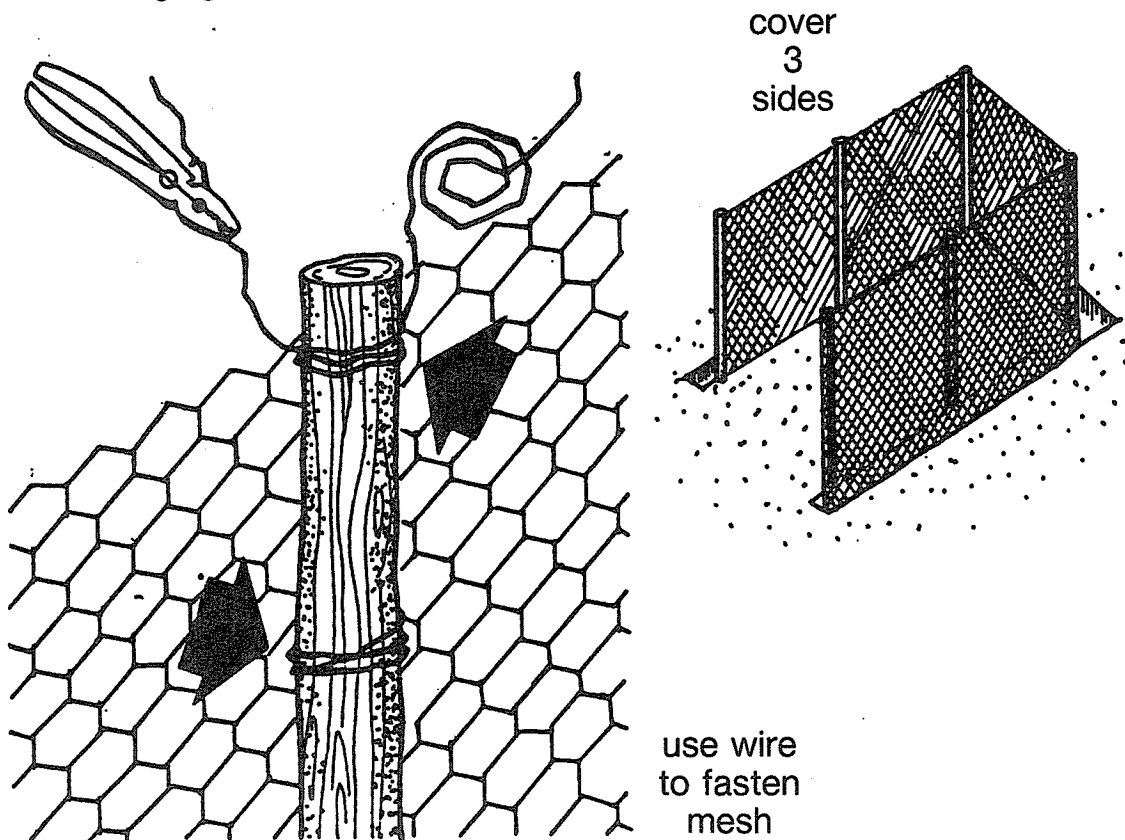
- 6 if you are using wire mesh as a fence cover, dig a trench 0.30 to 0.40 m deep around the 3 covered sides of the pen



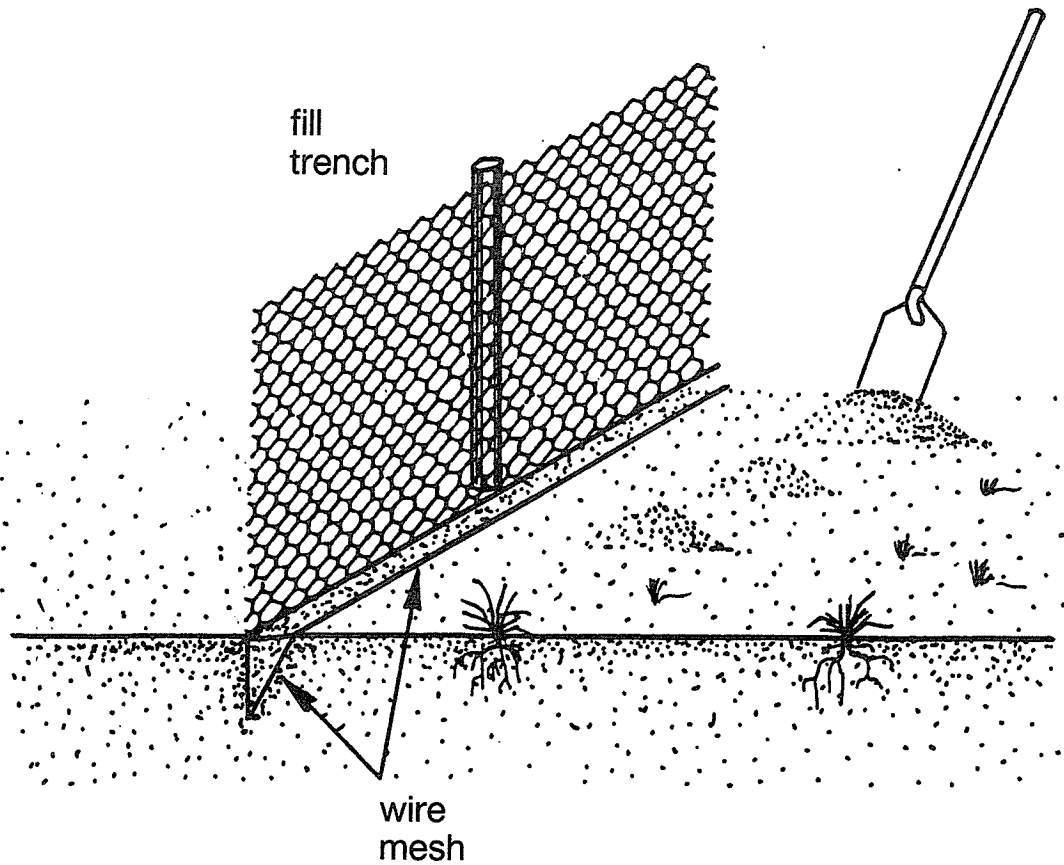
- 7 be sure that the wire mesh is high enough to reach from the post tops down to the bottom of the trench



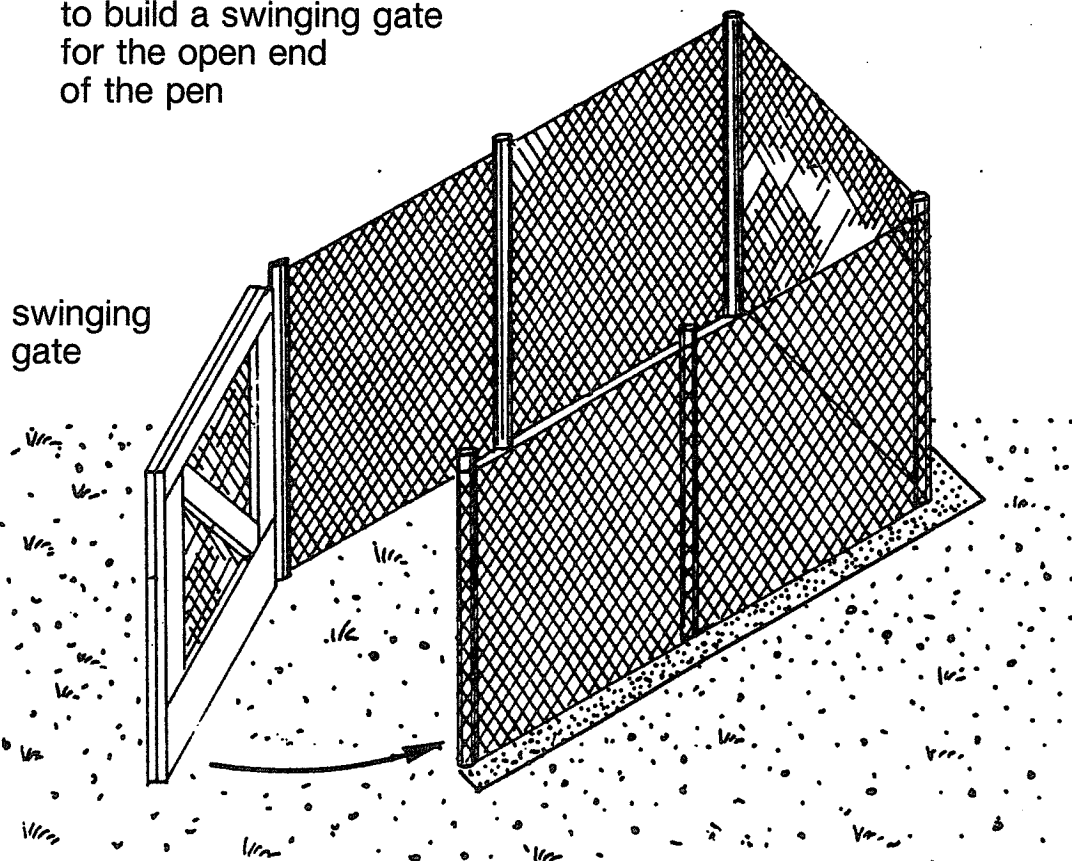
- 8 cover 3 sides of the pen; fasten the wire mesh to the posts using light but strong wire



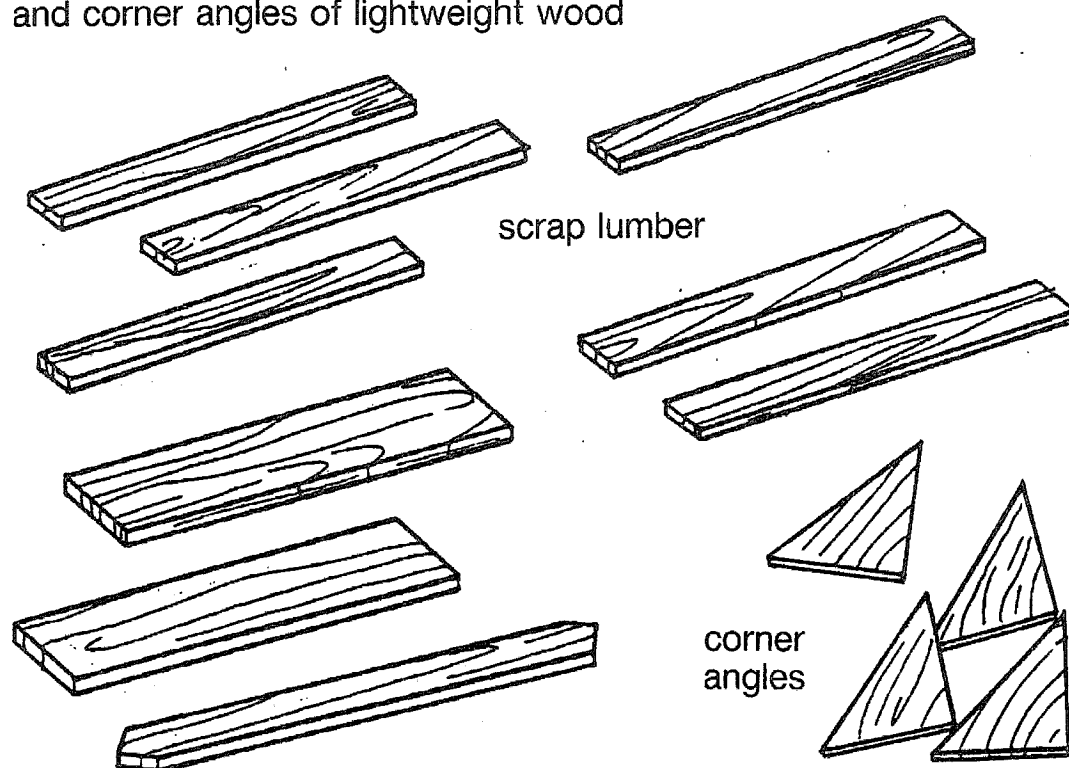
- 9 then, fill the trench



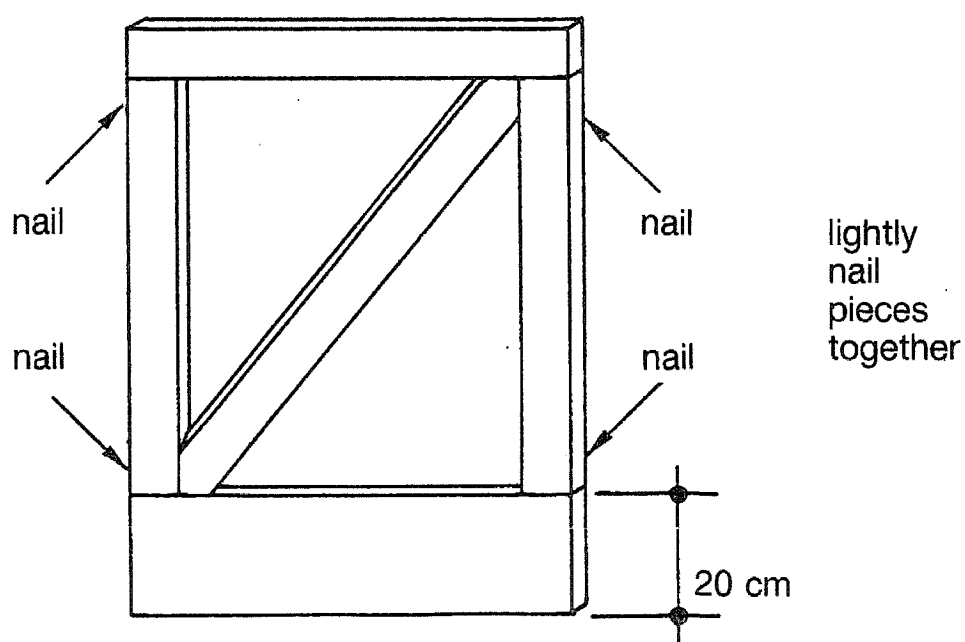
- 10 now, you are ready
to build a swinging gate
for the open end
of the pen



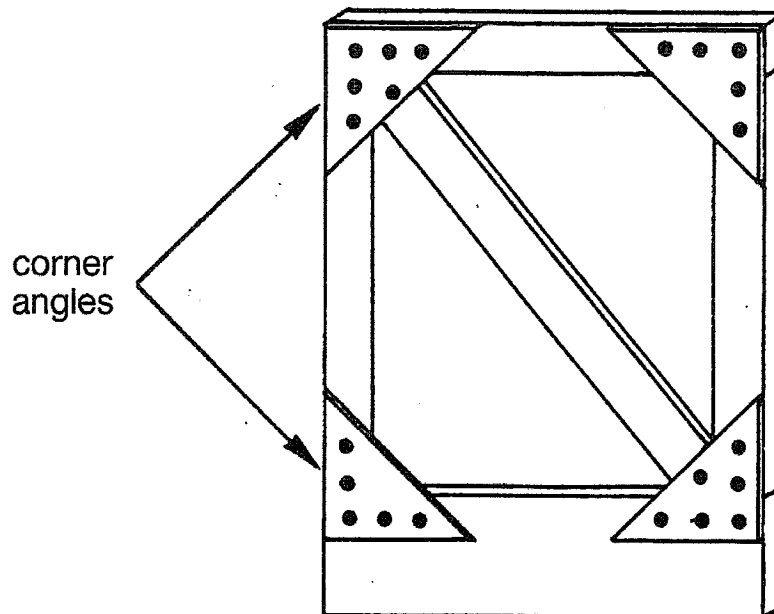
- 11 you can build a gate frame
from used or scrap lumber
and corner angles of lightweight wood



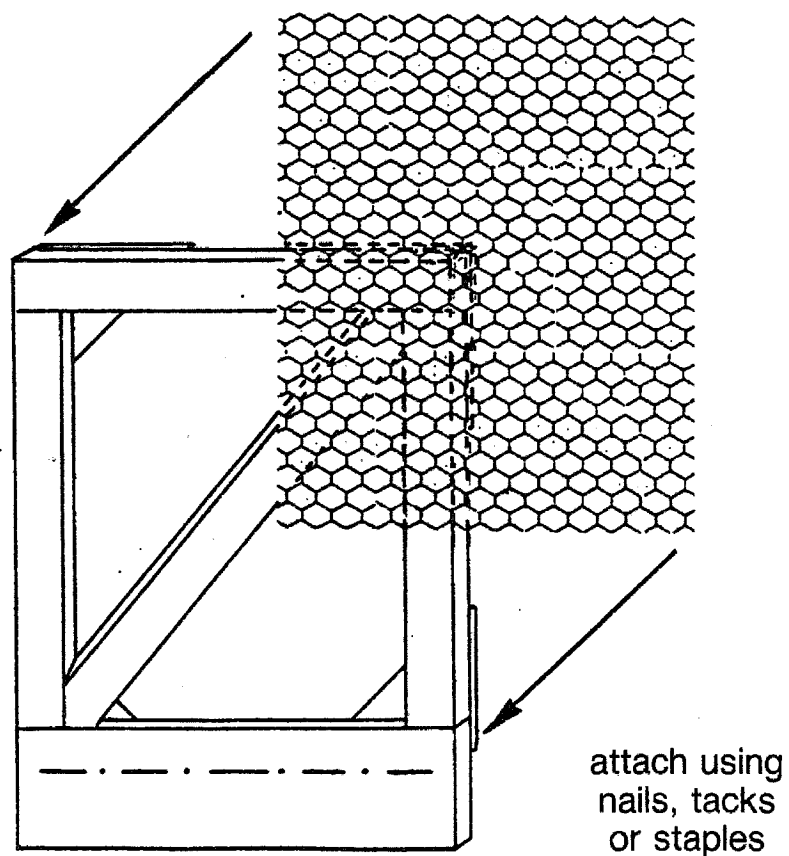
- 12 first, build the inside part
using 4 pieces of wood
for the sides, top and bottom
(make the bottom piece
wider than the sides and top);
a centre brace between two corners
will make the gate stronger;
lightly toenail the pieces
as shown below



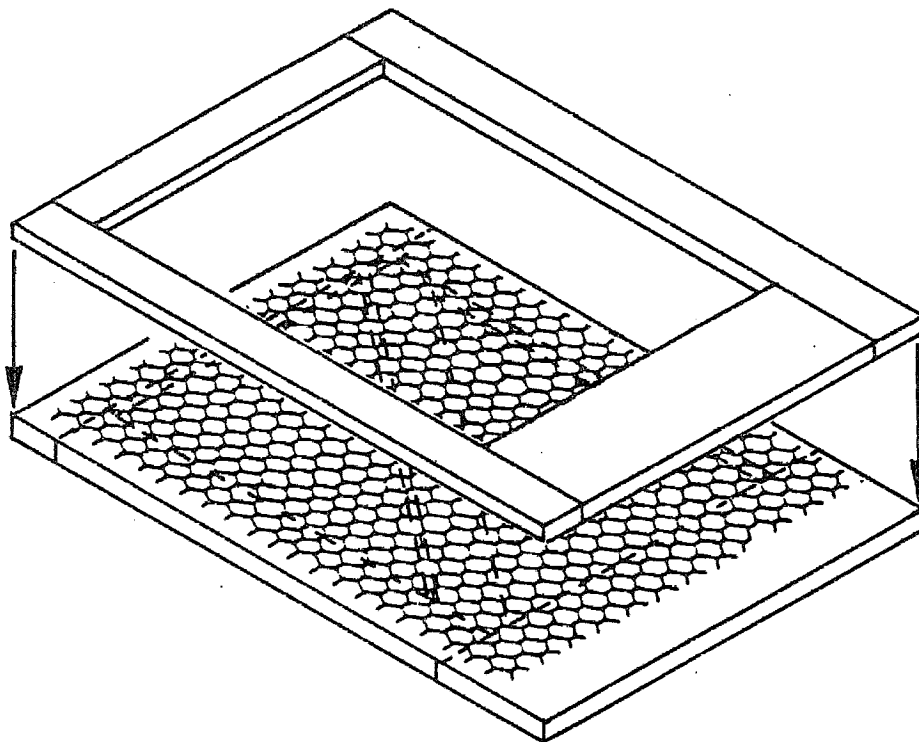
- 13 then, turn the inside part over
and nail on the 4 corner braces



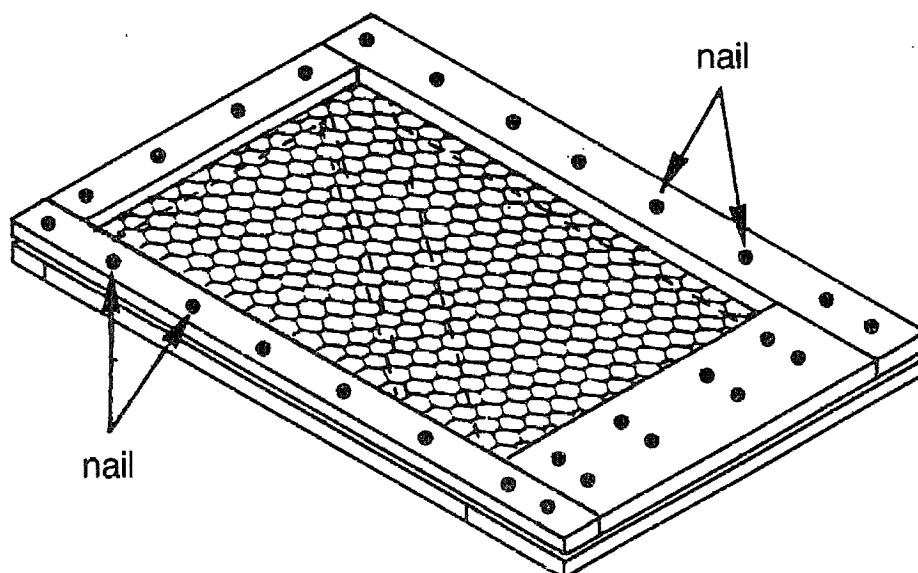
- 14 now, turn the inside part over again
and cover it with the same material
that you used for the fence;
attach the material using
flat-headed nails, tacks or staples



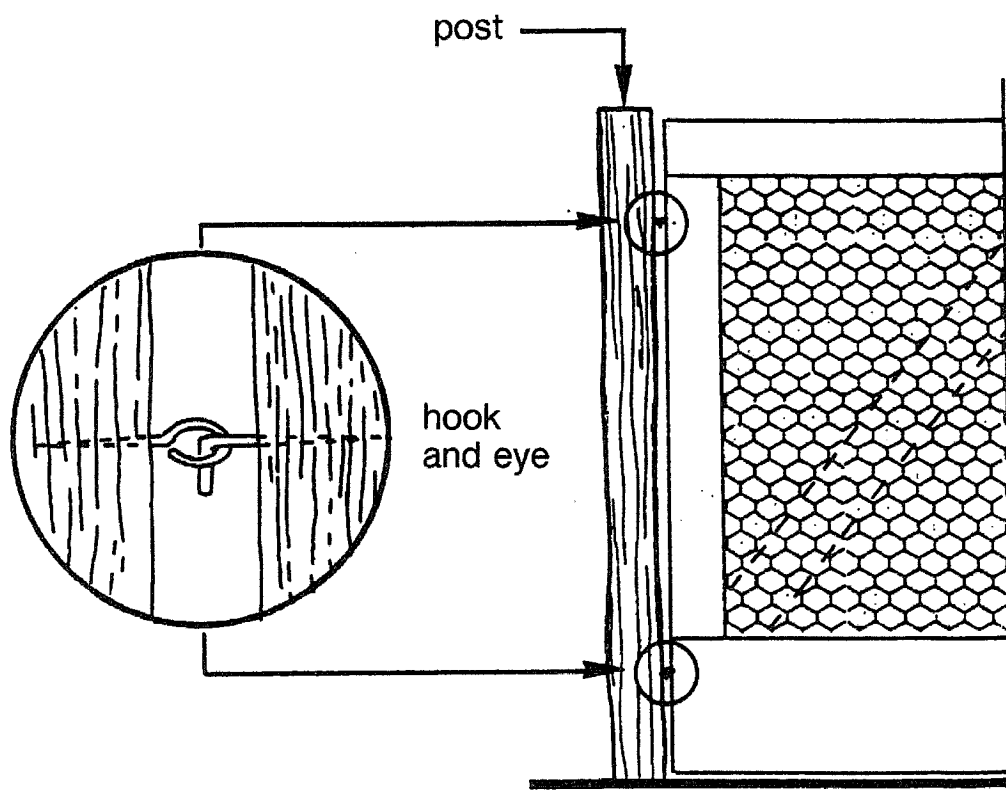
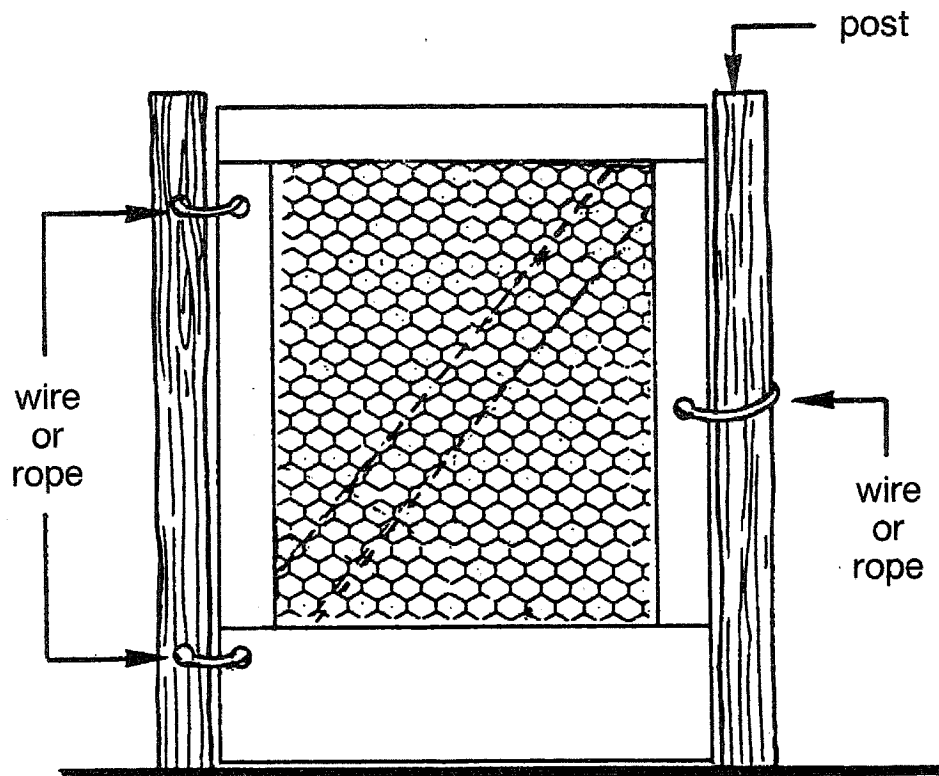
- 15 assemble the outside part
of the frame as shown



- 16 nail on the outside part;
when you have done this
the material will be held in place
between the inside
and outside parts of the frame



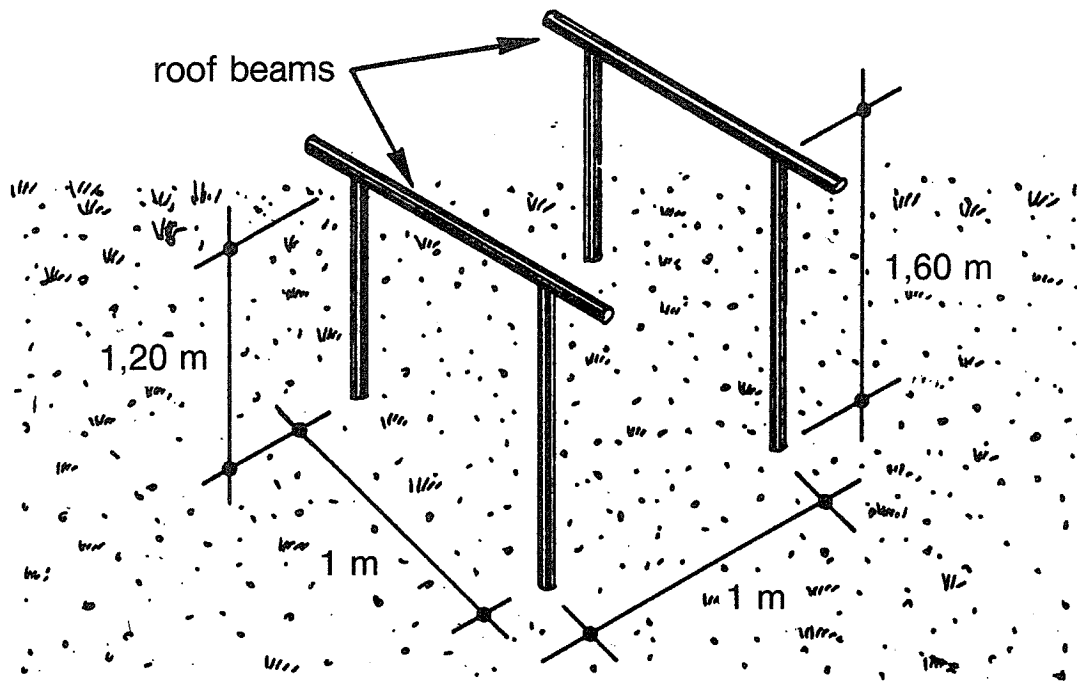
- 17 fit the gate
to the open end of the pen
using rope or wire;
you can also use hooks and eyes



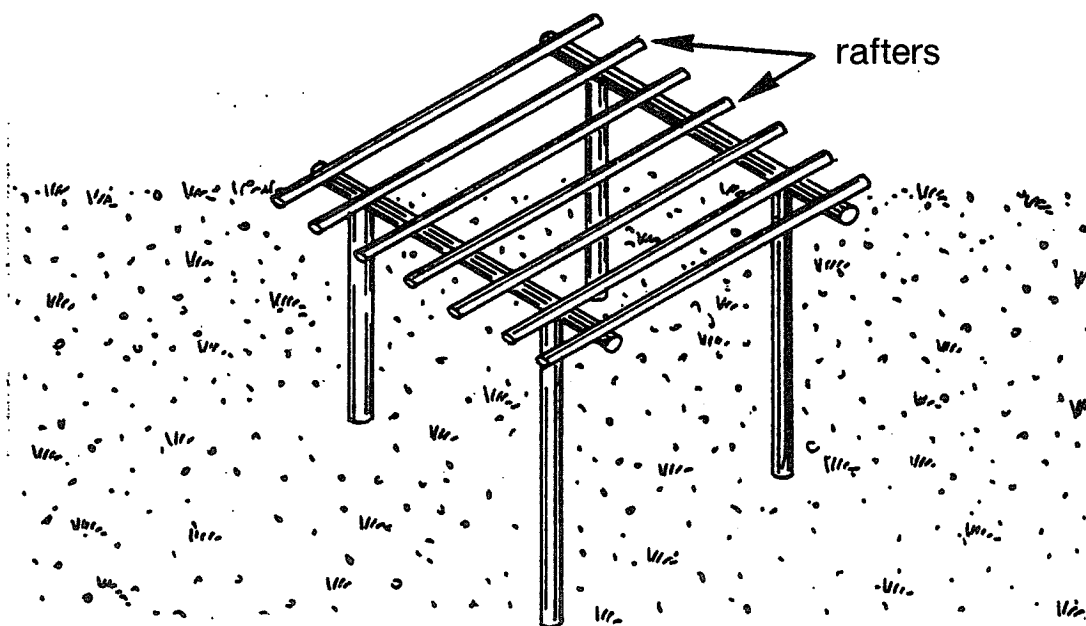
note: tie or wire the gate closed
when the ducks are inside

How to build a duck house

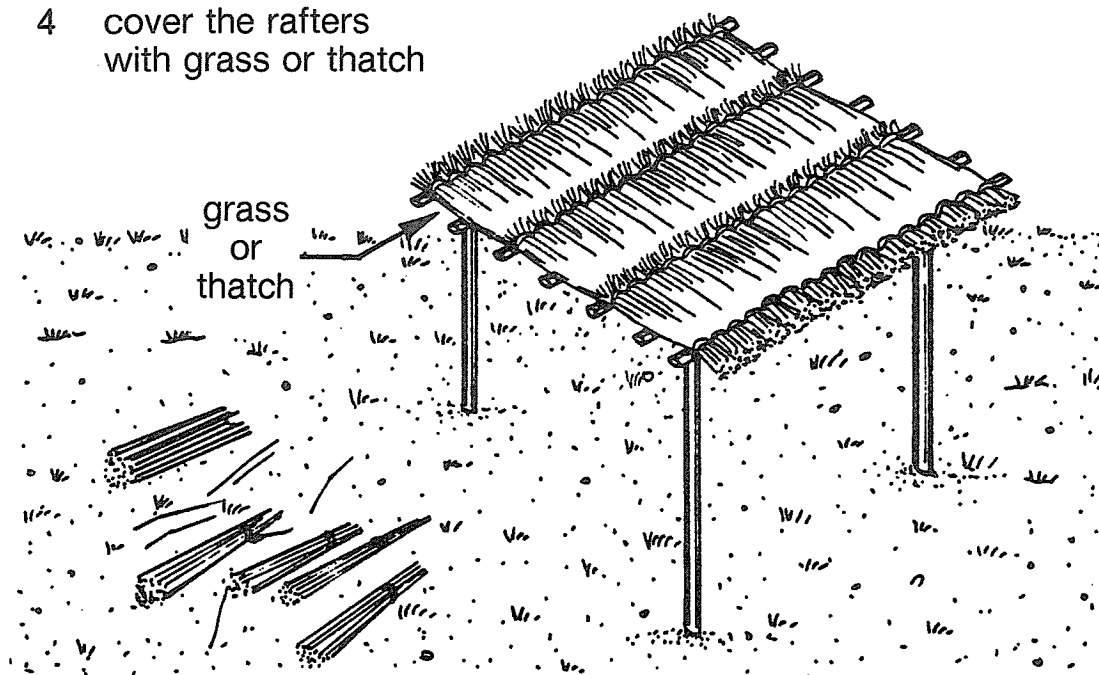
- 1 you can build a duck house in much the same way and using the same materials that you use to build a duck pen
- 2 drive 4 posts into the ground to form a square and attach the 2 roof beams



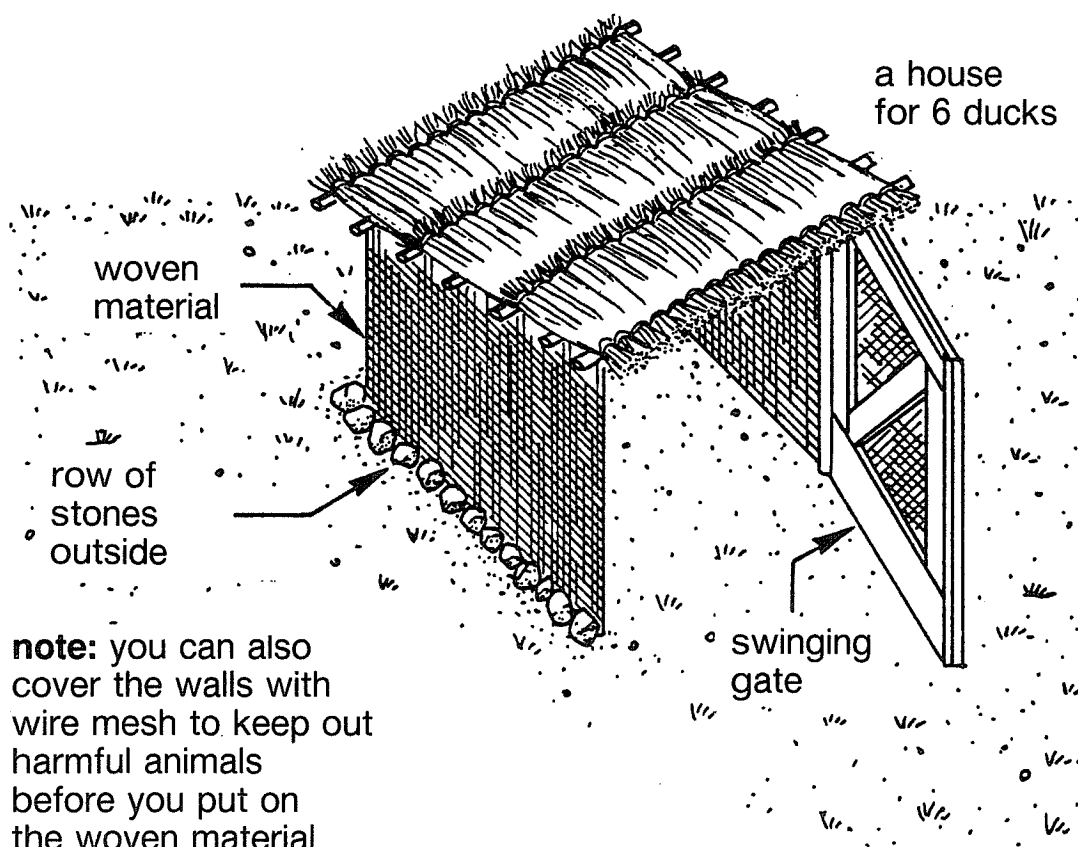
- 3 tie or wire lightweight poles for the rafters of the roof between the roof beams



- 4 cover the rafters
with grass or thatch

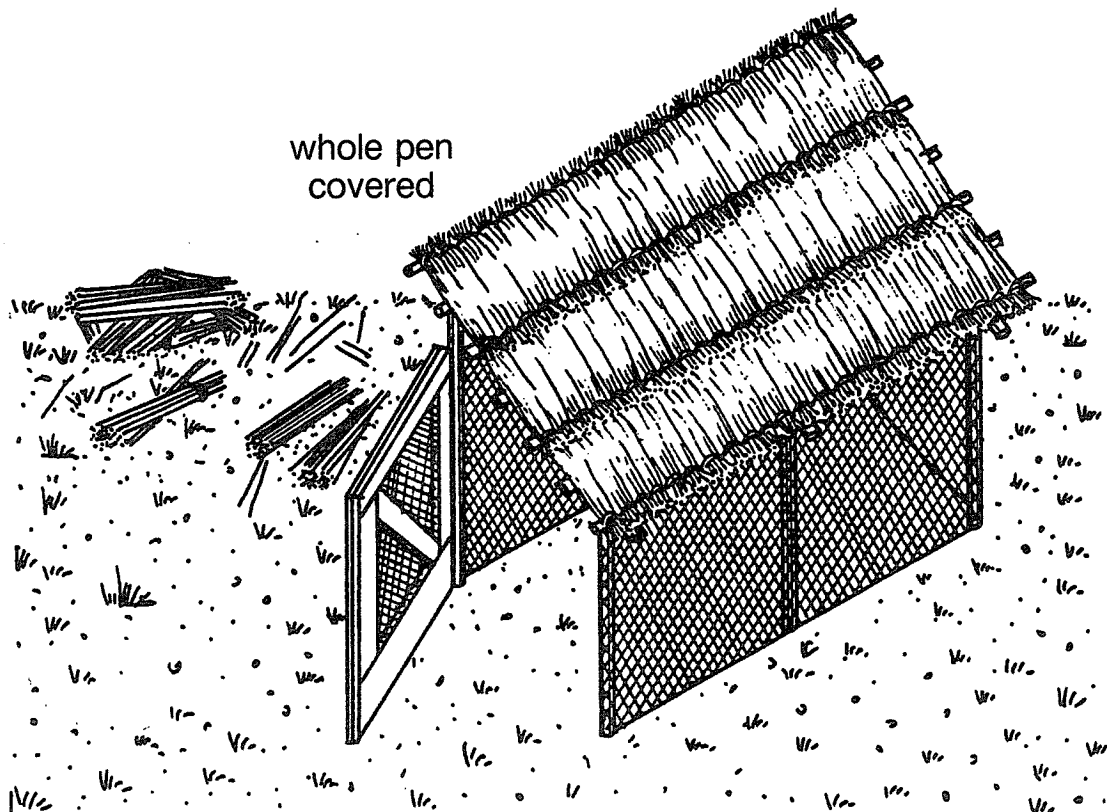
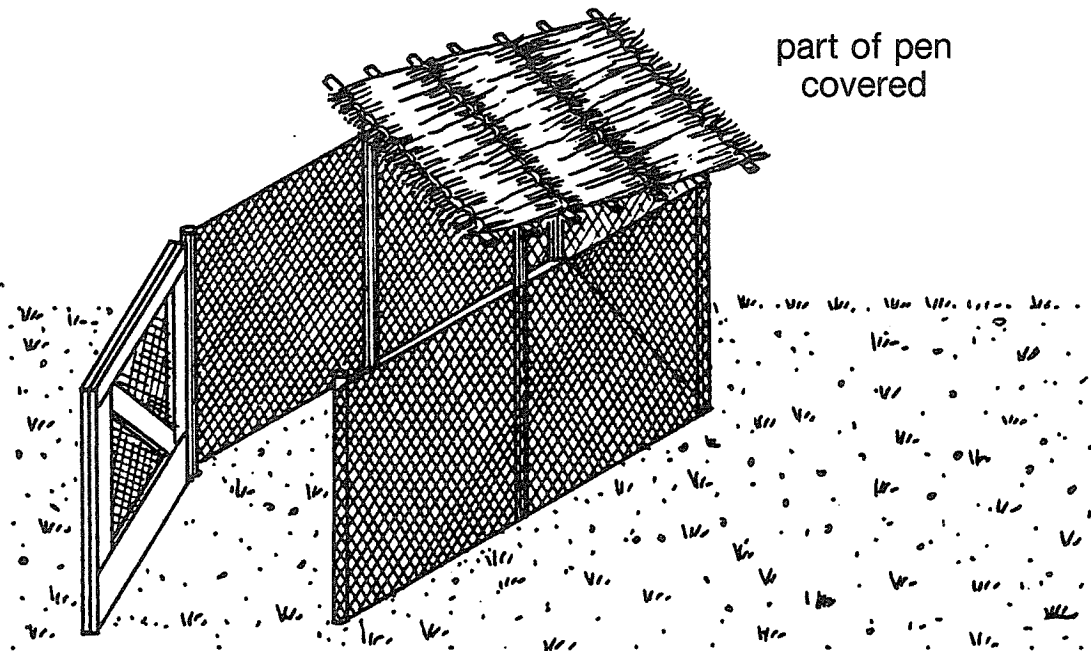


- 5 cover the side and back walls
with woven material;
put a row of stones outside
around the 3 covered sides;
for the front of the house,
you can build a swinging gate
like the one on pages 32 to 35

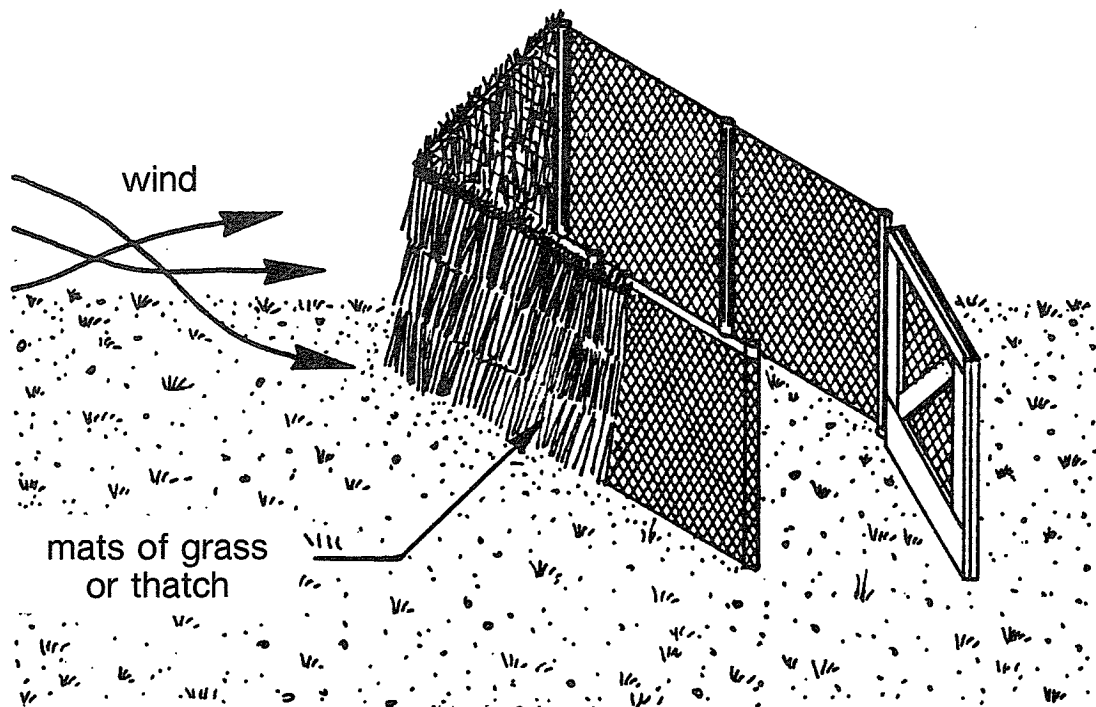


How to improve a duck pen

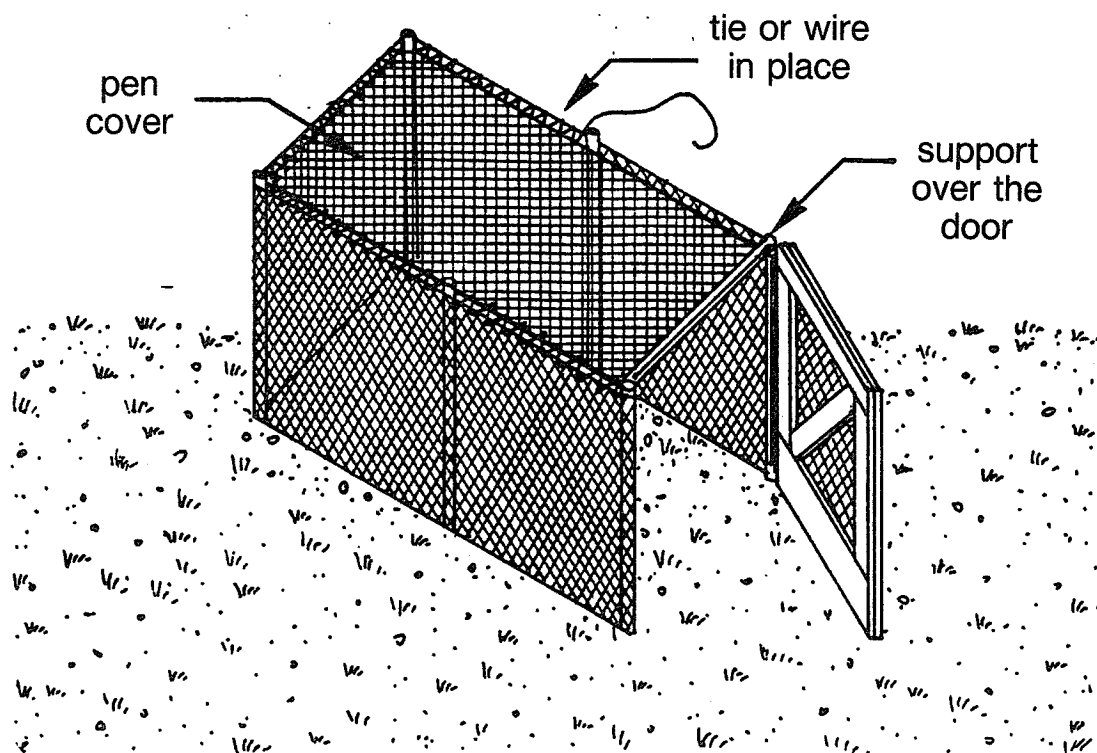
- 1 here are a number of simple things that you can do to a duck pen to make it better
- 2 a roof of grass or thatch will keep your ducks dry in wet weather



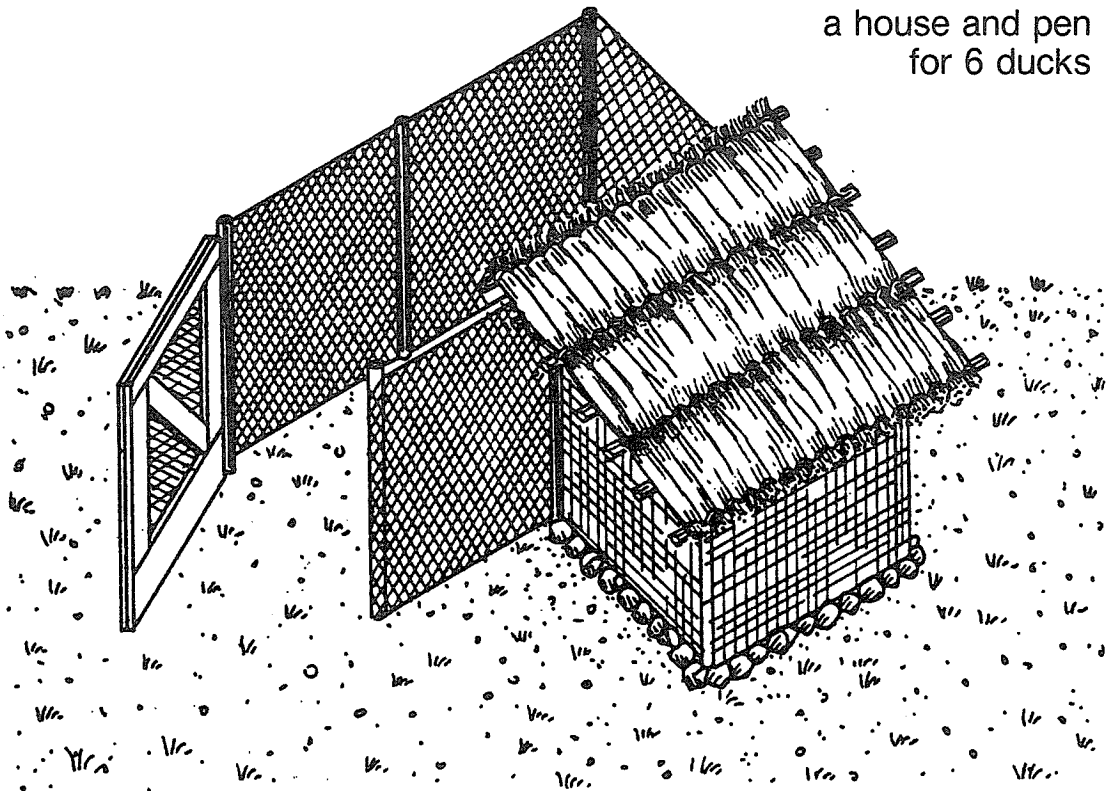
- 3 woven mats of grass or thatch
tied to the fence
will protect your ducks from wind



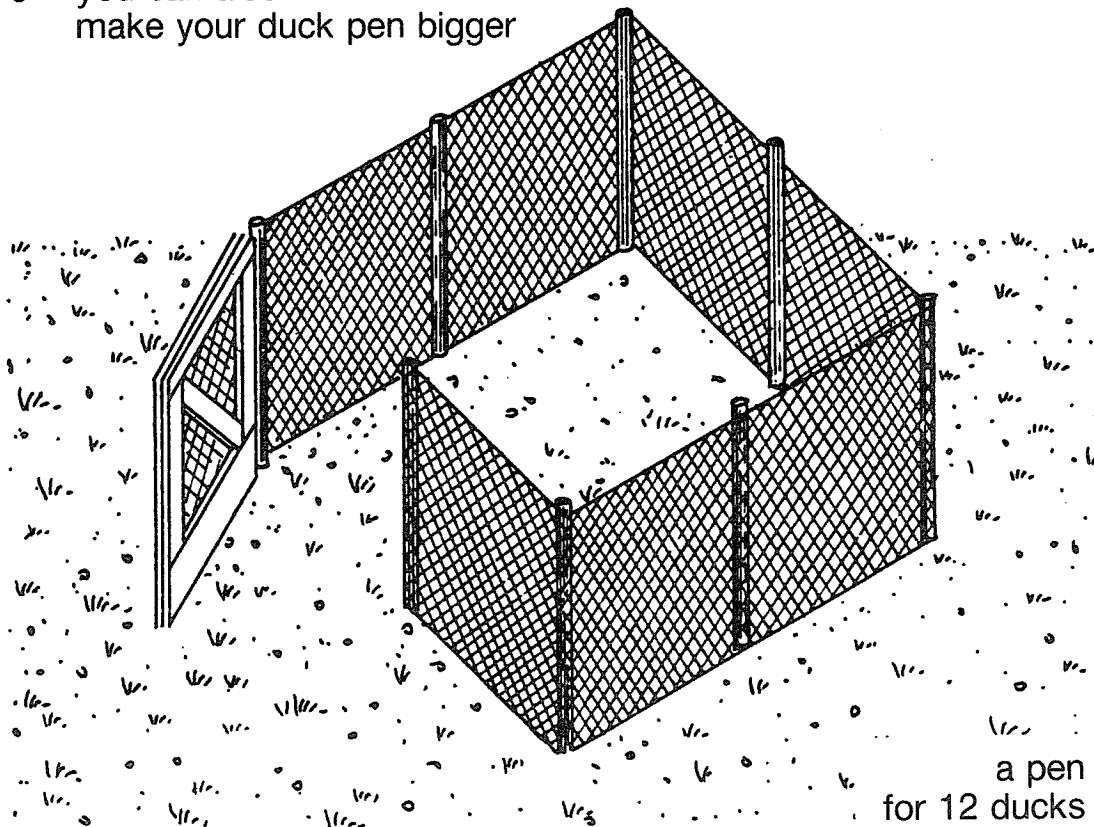
- 4 a pen cover
of the same material as the fence
will protect your ducks
from harmful birds and animals



- 5 you can build a duck house
next to one corner of a pen
so that the ducks
can sleep inside at night

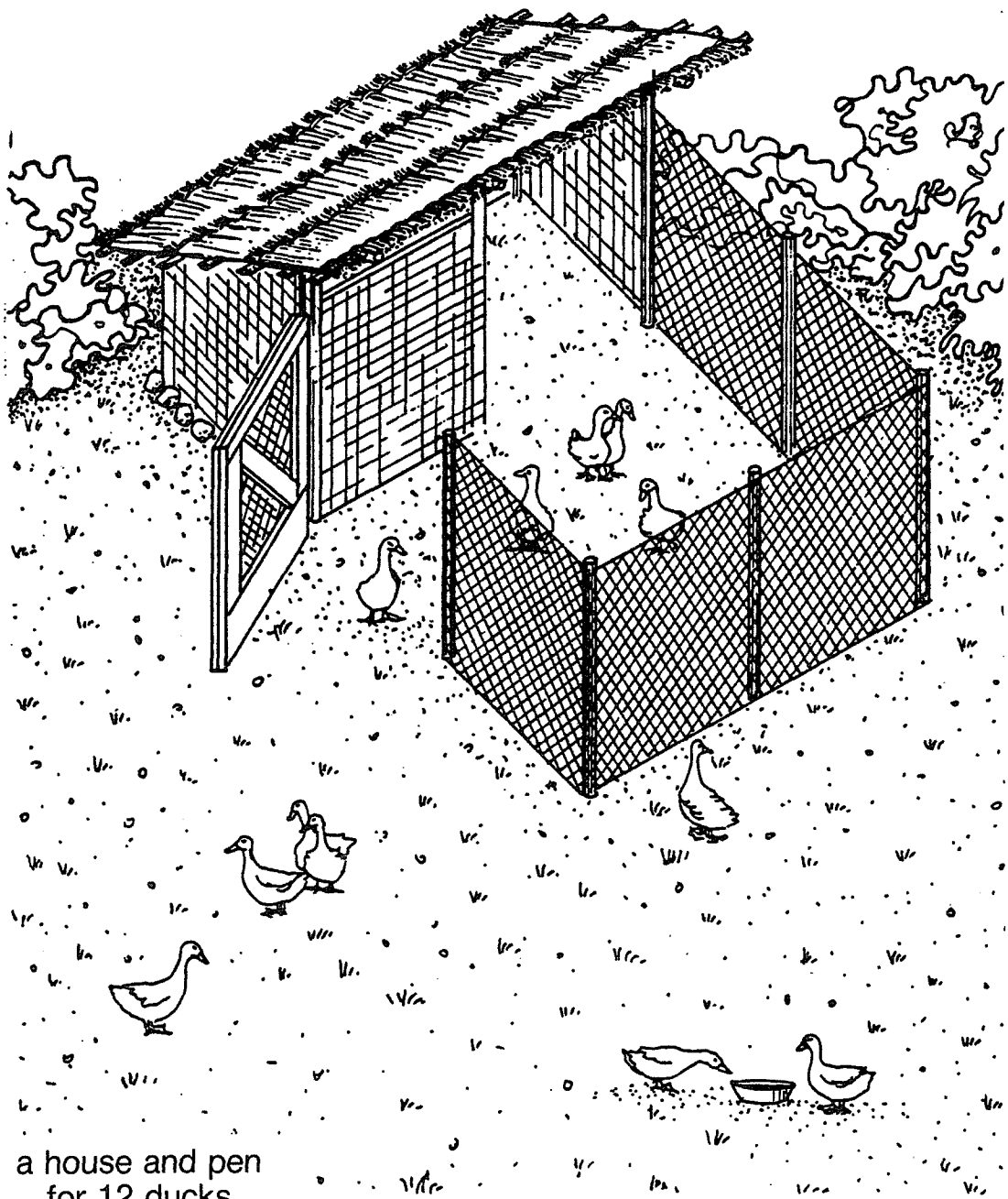


- 6 you can also
make your duck pen bigger



- 7 however, if your bigger pen has a duck house attached and you have more than 6 ducks you will need a bigger house too

note: remember, for each 6 ducks you will need 2 square metres of pen and 1 square metre of house; so, with 12 ducks you will need 4 square metres of pen and 2 square metres of house

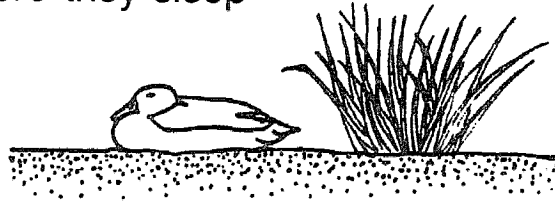


a house and pen
for 12 ducks

The floor of a duck shelter

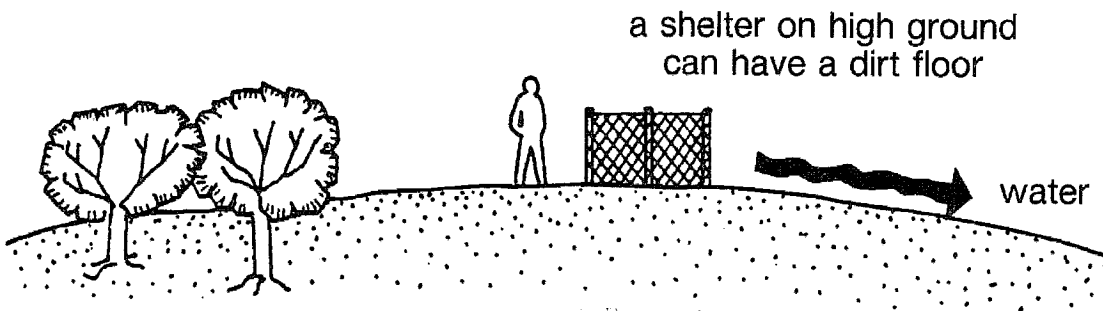
85. You have already learned that ducks sleep on the ground and if the ground where they sleep is cold or wet or dirty they may get sick.

ducks sleep
on the ground

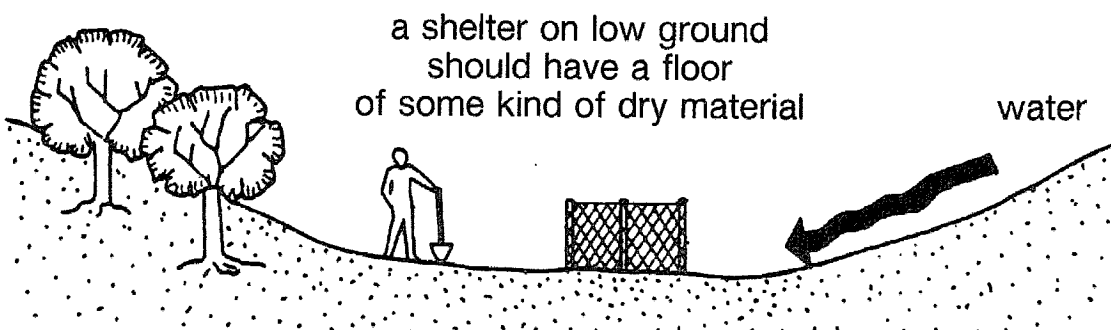


86. So, you must be very careful to keep the floor of the shelter as dry and as clean as you can to keep the ducks healthy and well.

87. If you have a shelter which is on high enough ground for the water to run away, you can have a dirt floor.

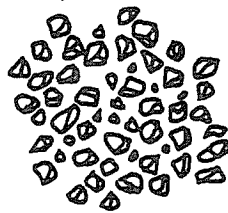


88. However, if the shelter is built in a low, wet place you will need to keep it dry by covering the floor with some kind of dry material.



89. To cover the floor
you can use sand or fine gravel,
pine needles, wood chips or leaves
and give your ducks a bed of straw
or cut grass to sleep on as well.

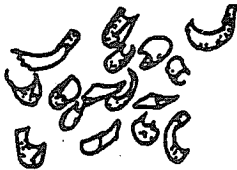
sand or fine gravel



pine needles



wood chips



leaves

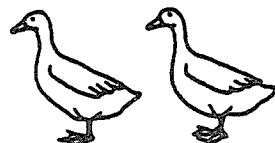
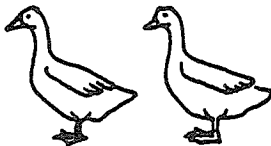
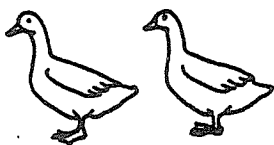


straw



90. Change the floor material
when it becomes wet or dirty
and especially if it becomes mouldy.
Mould will make your ducks sick.

91. With a flock of 6 ducks,
change the floor covering
at least once a month
or sooner if it becomes
wet, dirty or mouldy.



=

change
floor covering
once a month

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

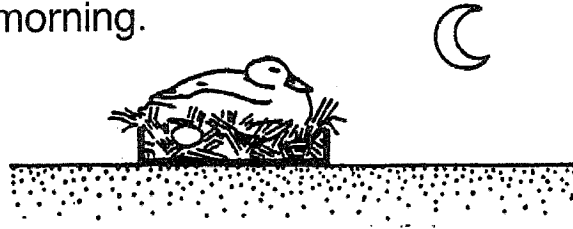
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

pick
a day
each
month

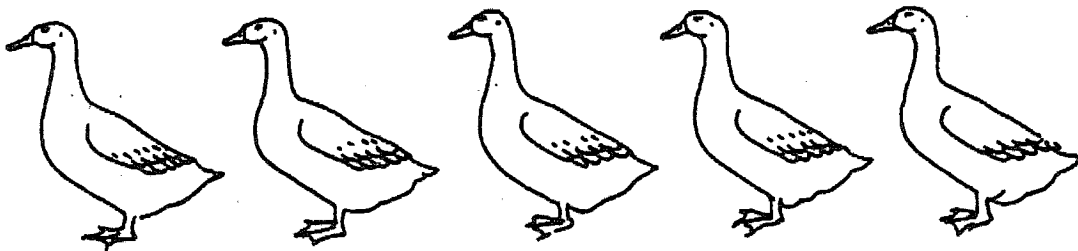
Building nests

92. You have already learned that ducks mostly lay their eggs either at night or very early in the morning.

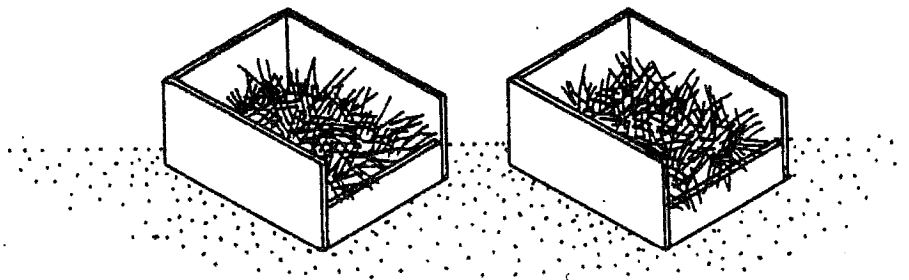
ducks lay eggs
at night



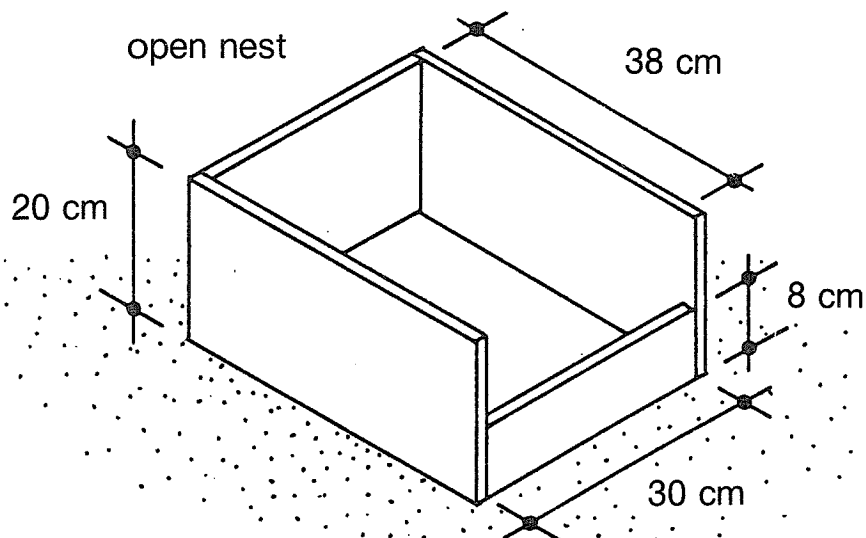
93. If you keep your ducks inside at night and give them nests to use, there will be fewer broken eggs and you can collect them more easily.
94. As soon as you have finished building a pen or a house you are ready to build the nests.
95. You will need 1 nest for every 3 female ducks. So, when you first begin with a flock of 6 ducks (5 females and 1 male duck), you will need 2 nests.



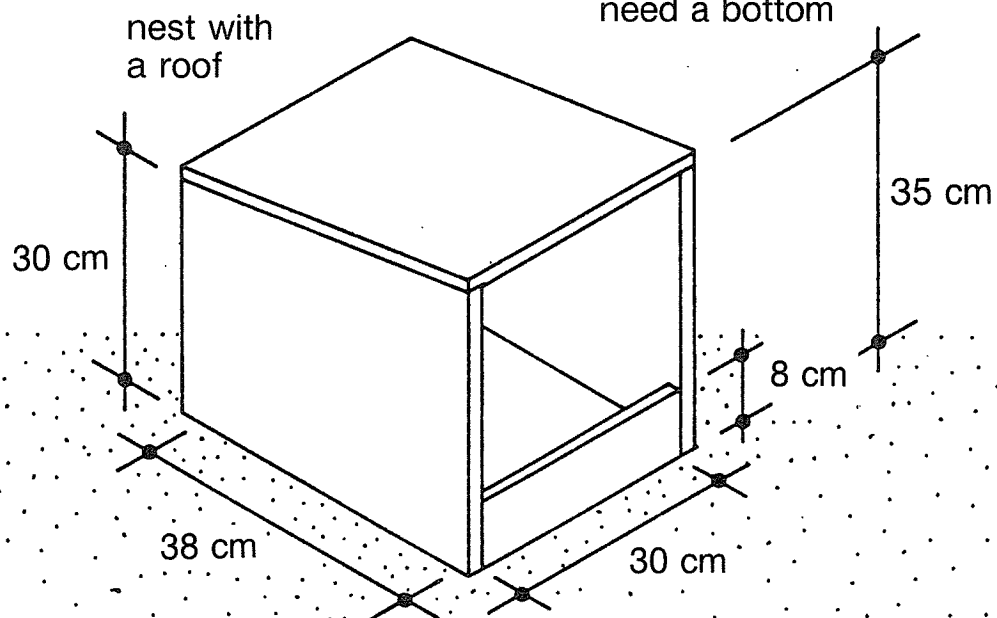
with 5 female ducks
you need 2 nests



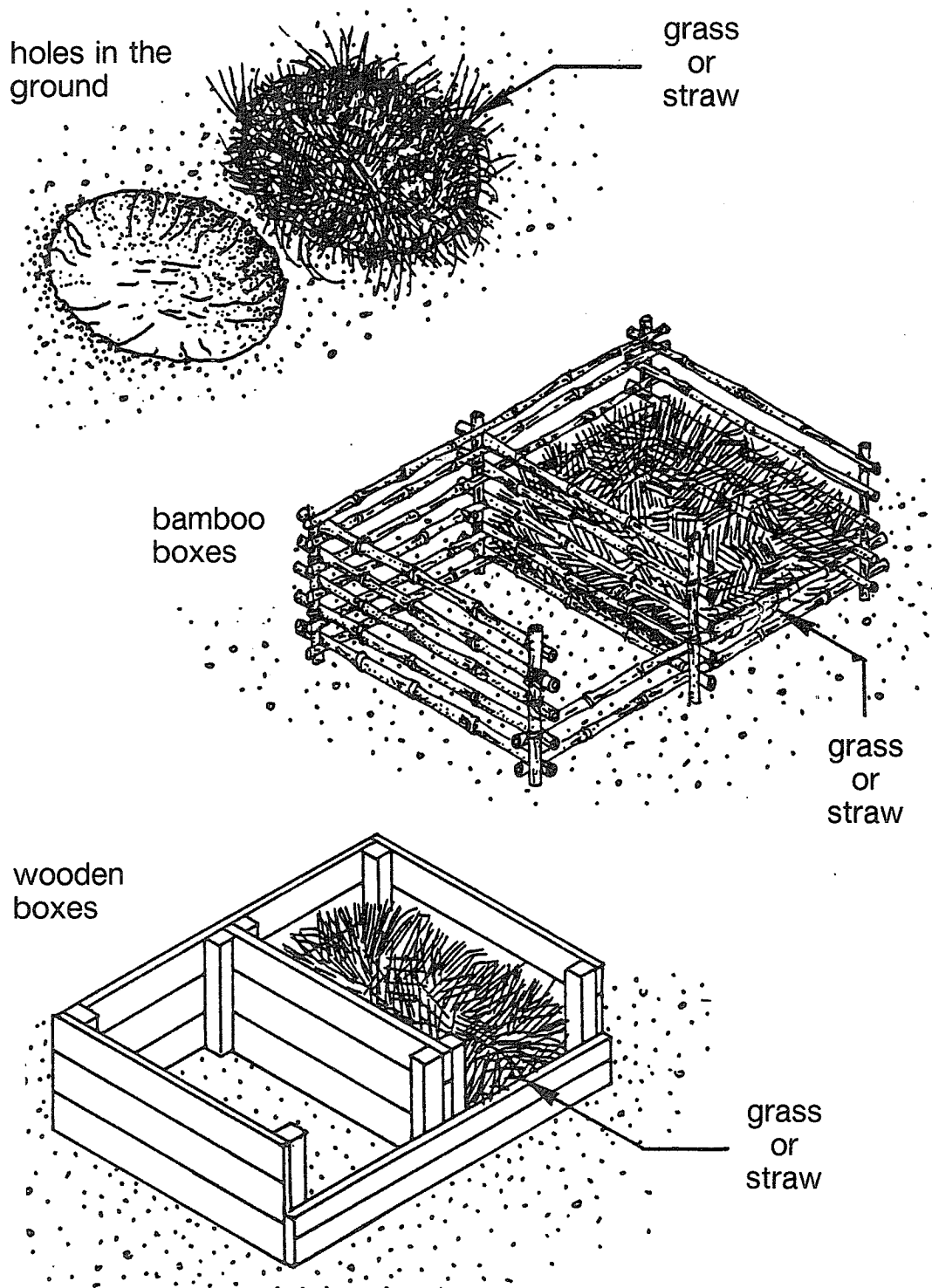
96. Ducks like small nests with just enough room to get in, turn around and sit down. So, give your female ducks a cosy nest of just the right size.
97. A good duck nest is about 30 centimetres wide, 38 centimetres deep and, if it has a roof, from 30 to 35 centimetres high.



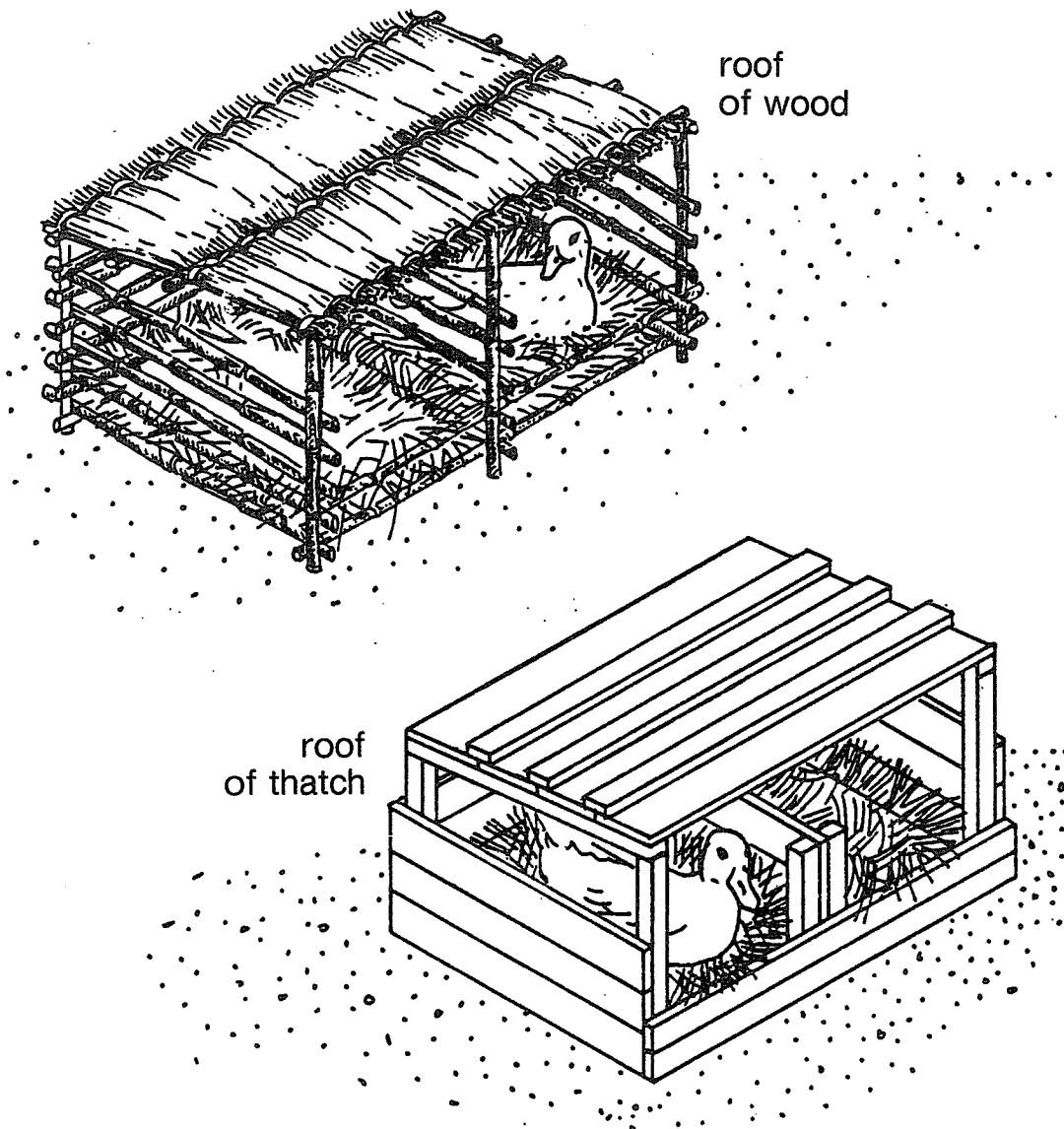
note: nests rest on the ground and do not need a bottom



98. Ducks live and sleep on the ground and they prefer to lay their eggs on the ground as well. So, put the nests on the ground.
99. A nest can be a hole in the ground or a box of bamboo or of wood which is lined with clean material such as cut grass or dry straw.



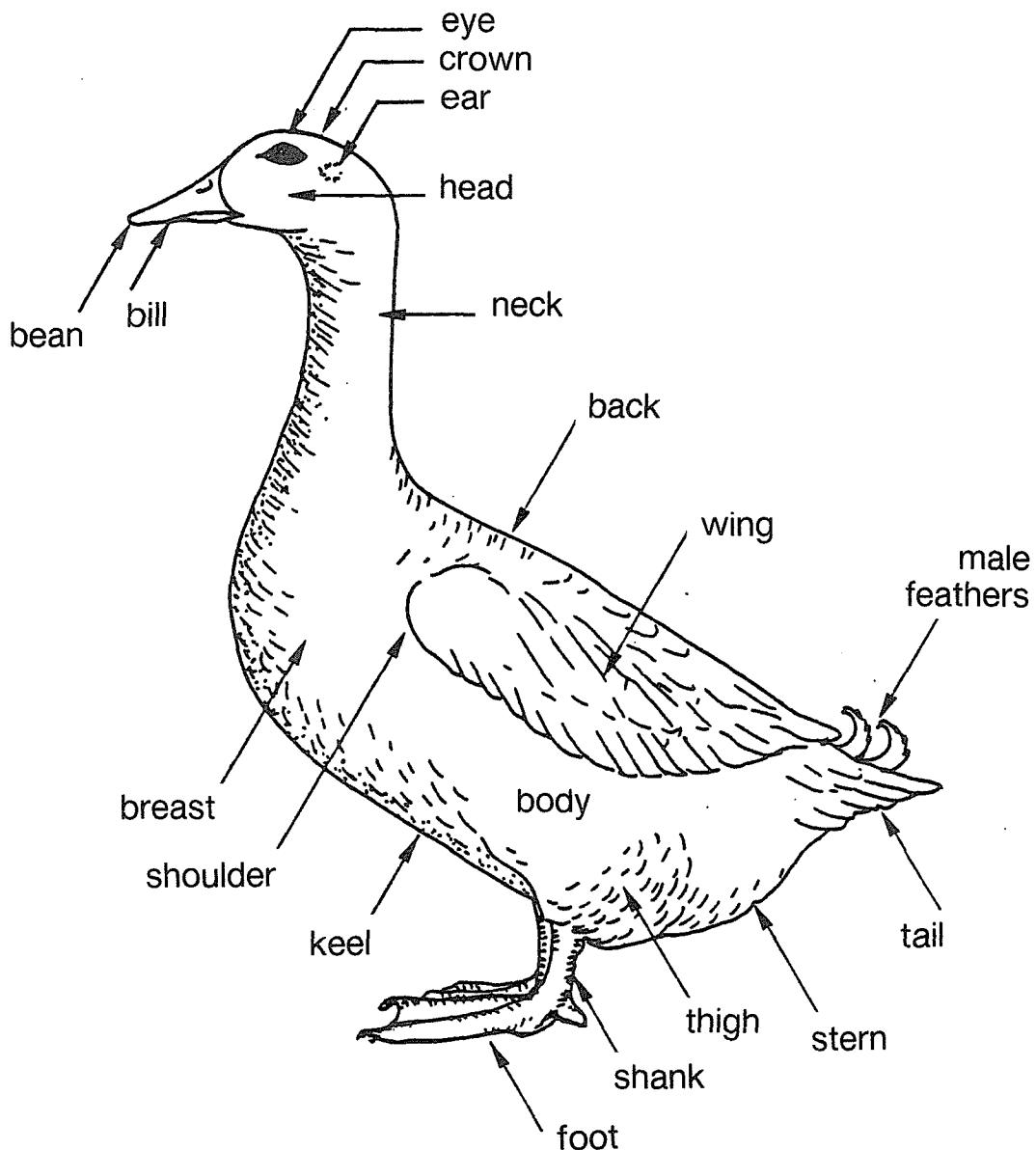
100. Ducks prefer dark, quiet places to lay their eggs. So, it is best to cover the nest with a roof of thatch or wood to make it dark and quiet.



101. As soon as you have finished building the nests, put them in the shelter. That way your ducks can become used to their nests as soon as you bring them home.
102. Be sure to change the grass or the straw in each nest as soon as it gets dirty.

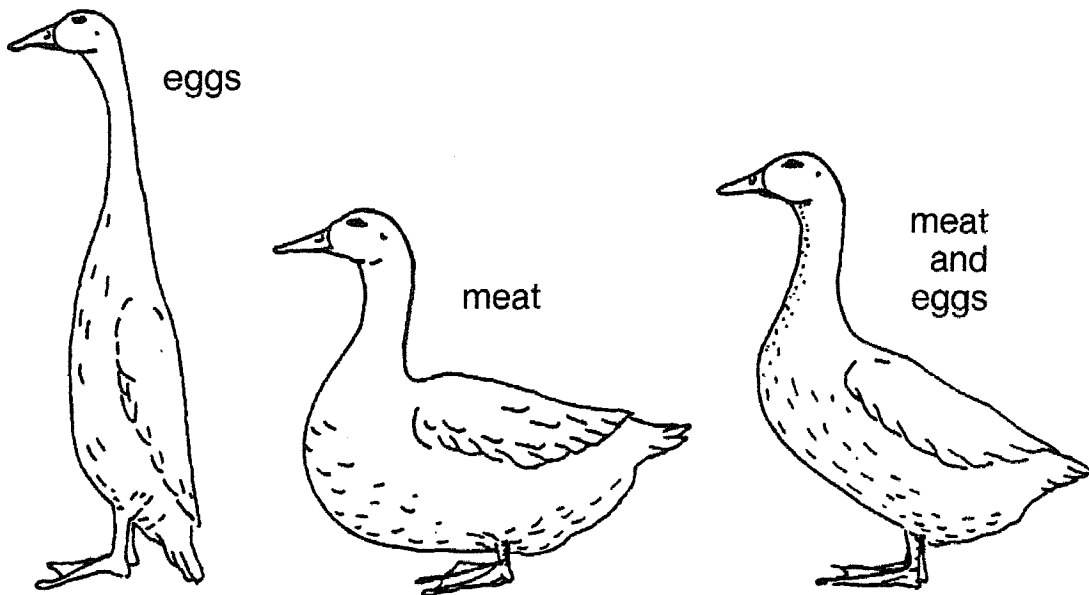
THE DUCKS

103. Now it is time to get your fully grown or young ducks to start your flock.
104. Let us begin by learning the parts of a duck. This will help you when you choose yours.
105. Below is a drawing of a duck. Look at it carefully and learn the name of each part.

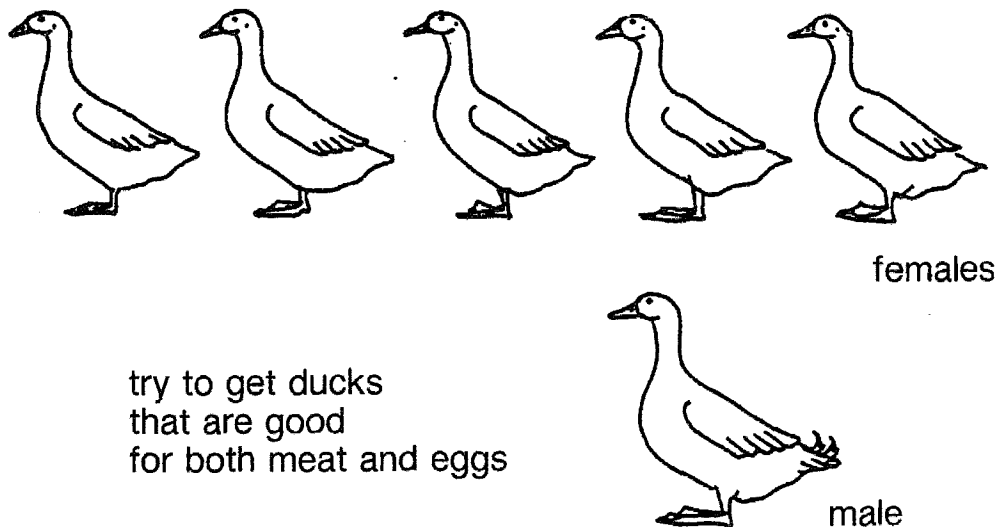


Choosing ducks for your flock

106. Some kinds of ducks are best for eggs, some kinds are best for meat and some are good for both. The drawings below show you these 3 kinds of ducks.

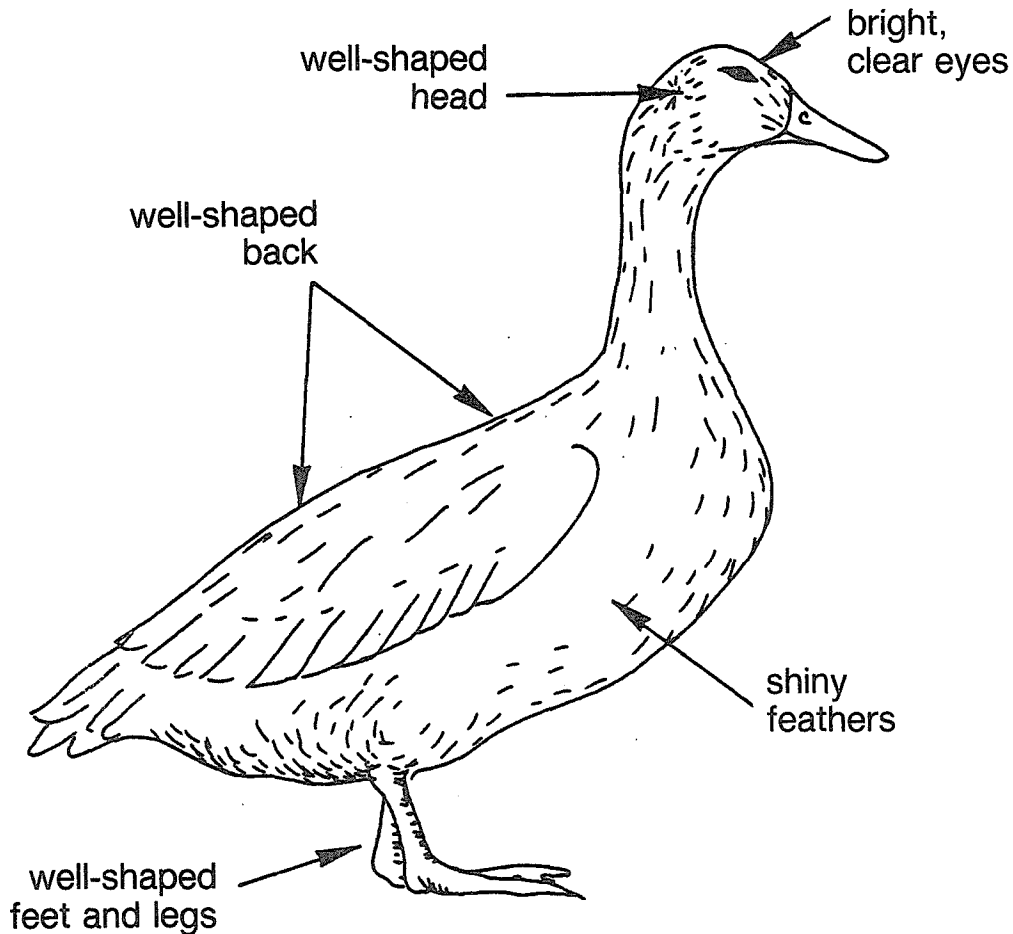


107. When you are choosing ducks to start your first flock, try to get the kind of ducks that are good for both eggs and meat.



How to choose good ducks

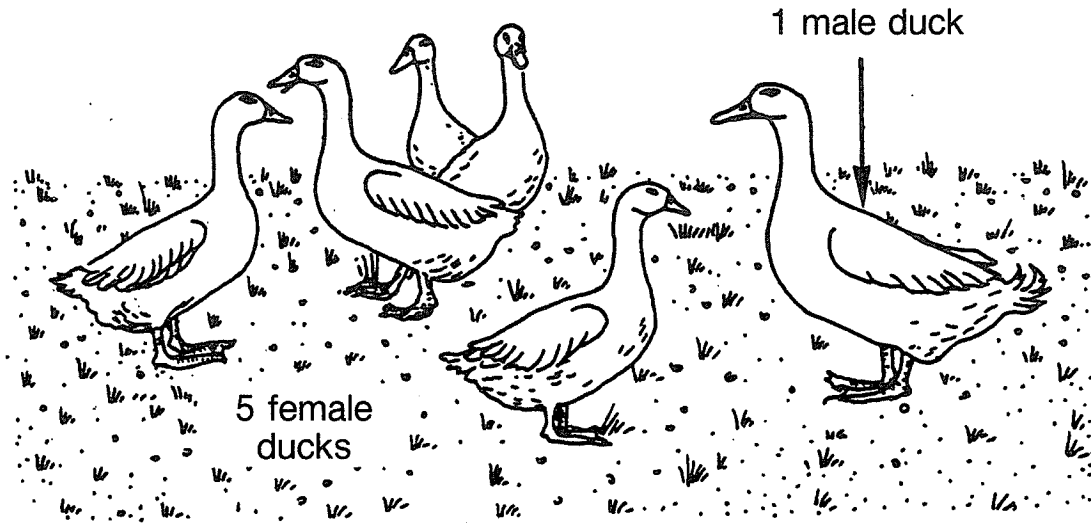
108. It is best to choose your ducks from a place where you can see them before you buy them. If you watch them carefully you will be able to see the difference between healthy, strong ducks and sick, weak ducks.
109. If a duck looks well, has well-shaped legs, feet, wings, back and head, and if it moves about well, it is probably a good duck to buy.



a duck that looks well
and stands and moves about well,
is a good duck to buy

How to tell the difference between female and male ducks

110. When you first begin with a flock of 6 ducks you must have 1 male duck to be able to grow your own baby ducks.



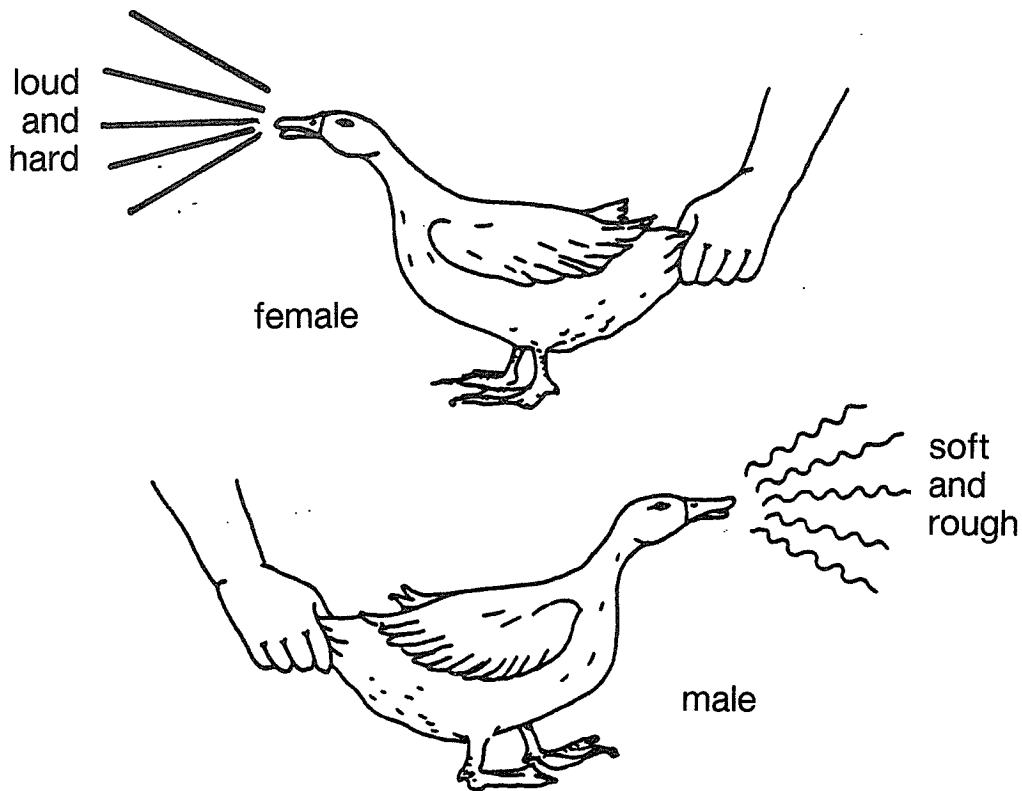
111. So, it is very important to be able to tell the difference between female and male ducks. You can tell the difference

- by listening to the quack made by the duck
- by looking at the feathers near the tail of the duck.

Listening to the quack

112. If you are going to begin with ducks of 8 weeks or older, you can tell female from male ducks by listening to them quack.
113. When ducks have reached this age, the quack made by a female is very different from the quack made by a male.

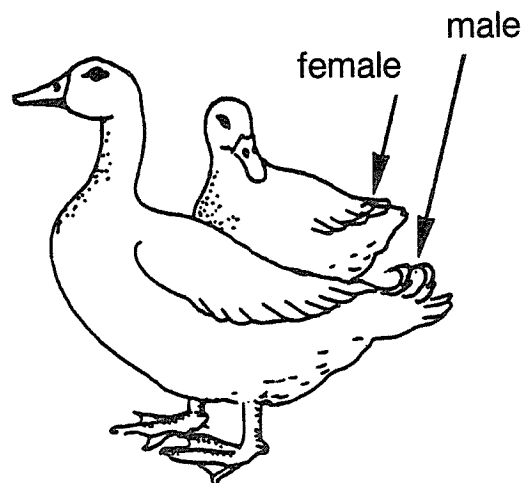
114. Gently hold the duck by the tail until it begins to quack.
A female duck
will make a hard, loud quack.
A male duck
will make a soft, rough quack.



Looking at the feathers

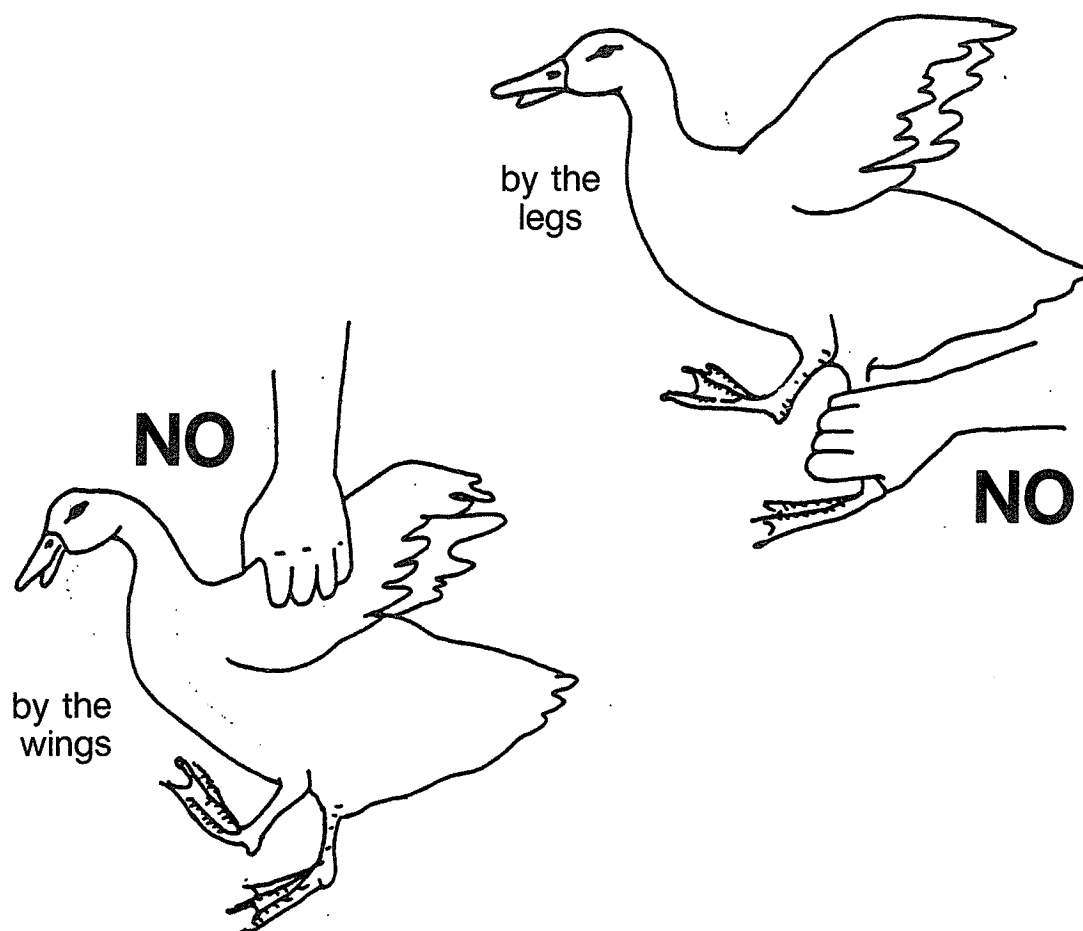
115. If you are going to begin with ducks of 4 months or older, you can tell female from male ducks by the feathers on their tails.

116. When ducks have reached this age, male ducks have curled feathers on their backs near the tail and female ducks have none.

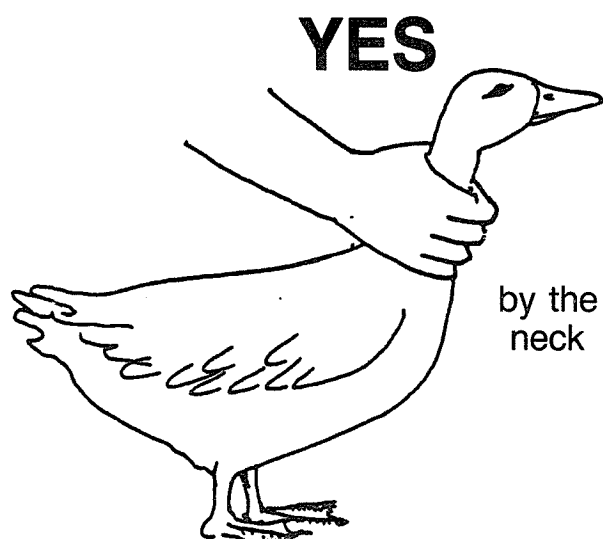


How to handle your ducks

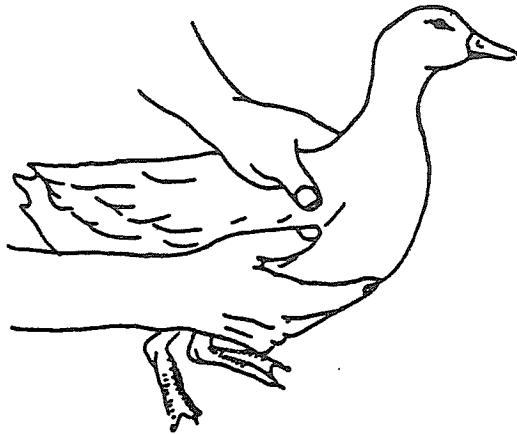
117. The legs or wings of a duck can easily be hurt or even broken. So, **never** grab a duck by the legs or the wings.



118. To catch a duck, grasp it firmly but gently at the base of the neck.



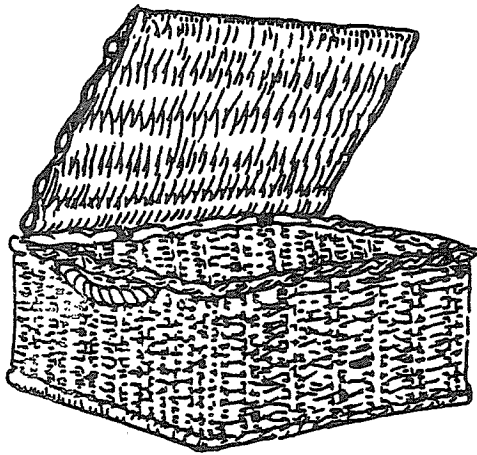
119. You can also catch a duck by holding its wings against its sides with one hand on each side of its body and a thumb over each wing.



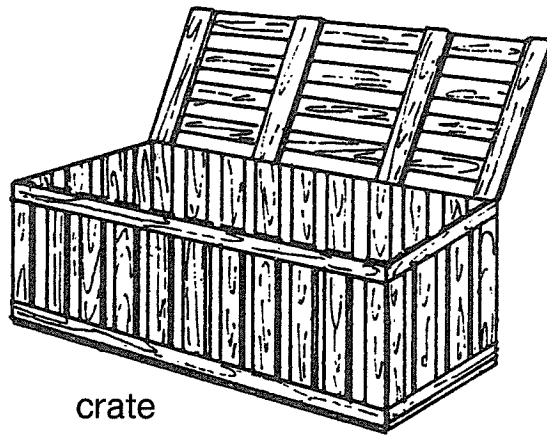
120. After you have caught a duck, slide one hand under its body and hold its legs firmly.
121. Then you can rest the body of the duck on the lower part of your arm and carry it easily.



122. If you have to move a duck from place to place, you can carry it in a basket or a crate with a cover.

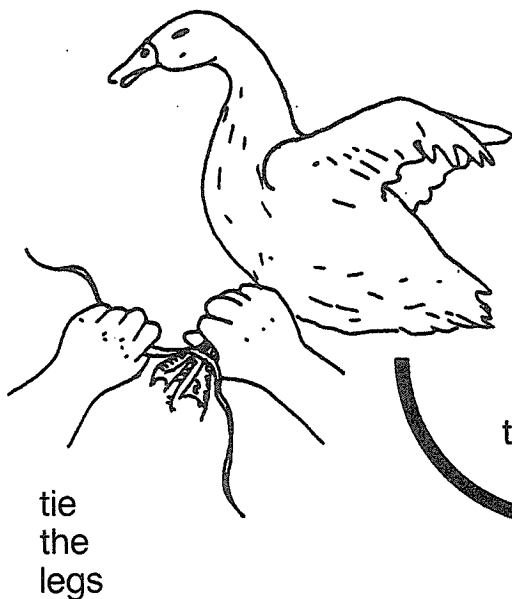


basket



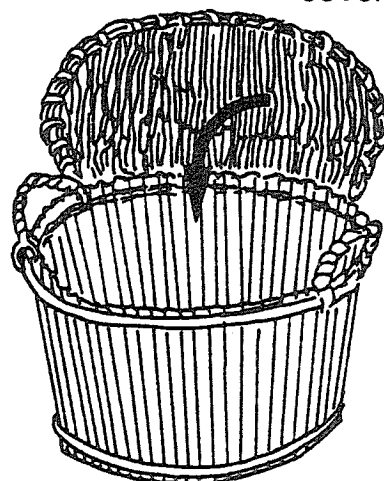
crate

123. First, tie the legs of the duck together. Then, put it gently inside and put on the cover to keep the duck from getting out.



tie
the
legs

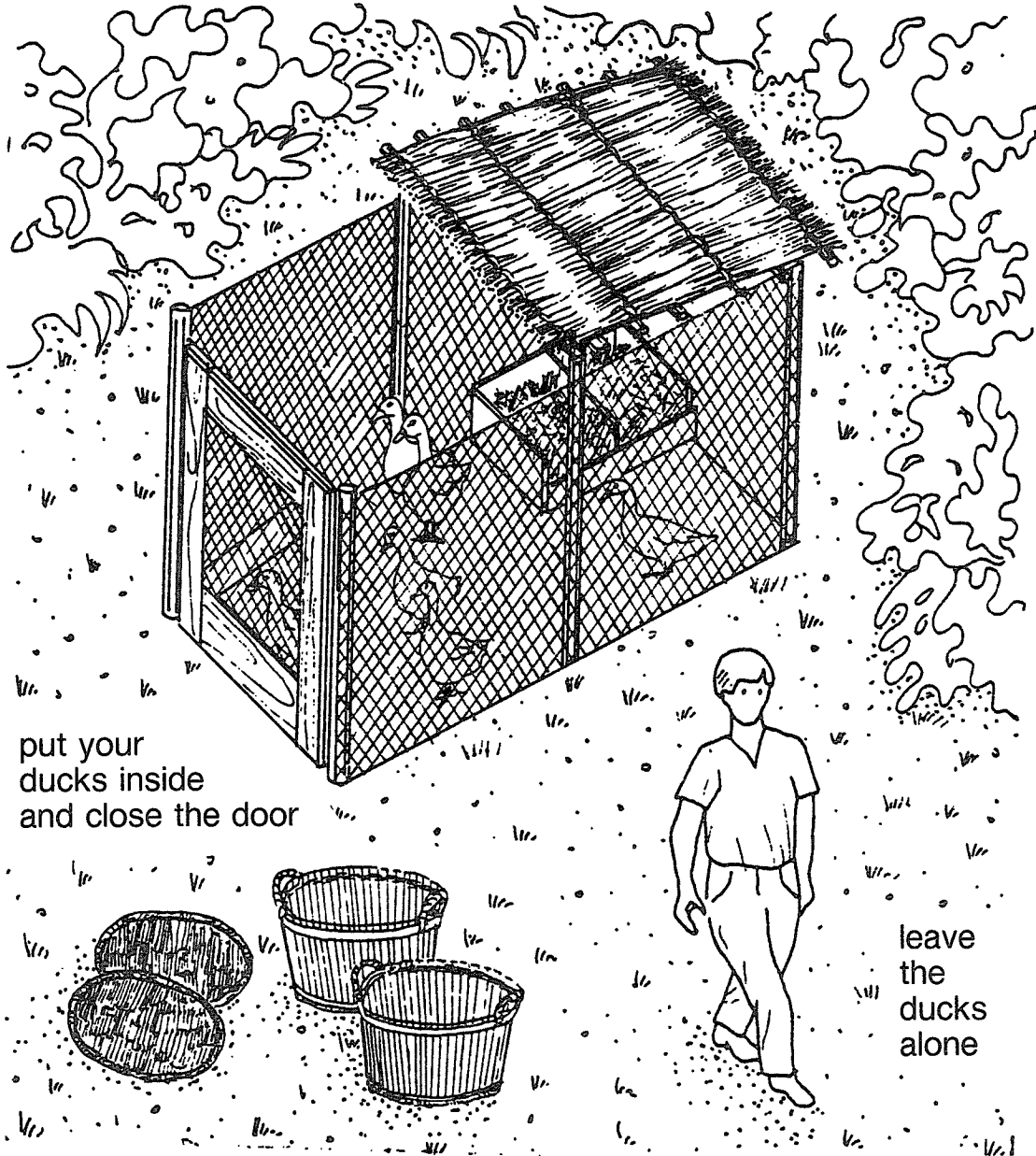
put in
the duck



close
cover

After you get your ducks

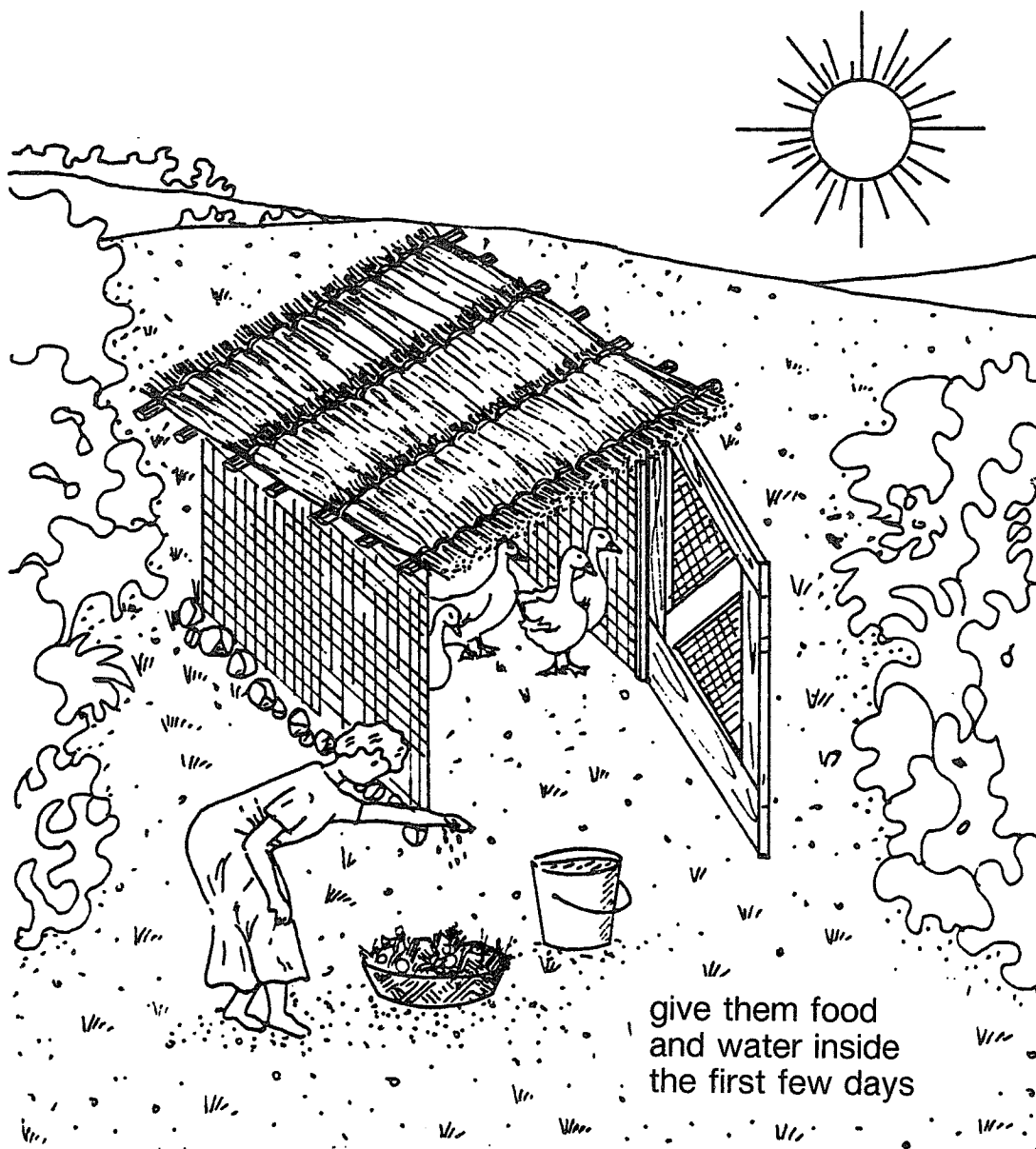
124. When you bring your ducks home,
put them in their shelter,
close the door and go away.
That way they can settle down,
become calm and get used to their new home.



put your
ducks inside
and close the door

leave
the
ducks
alone

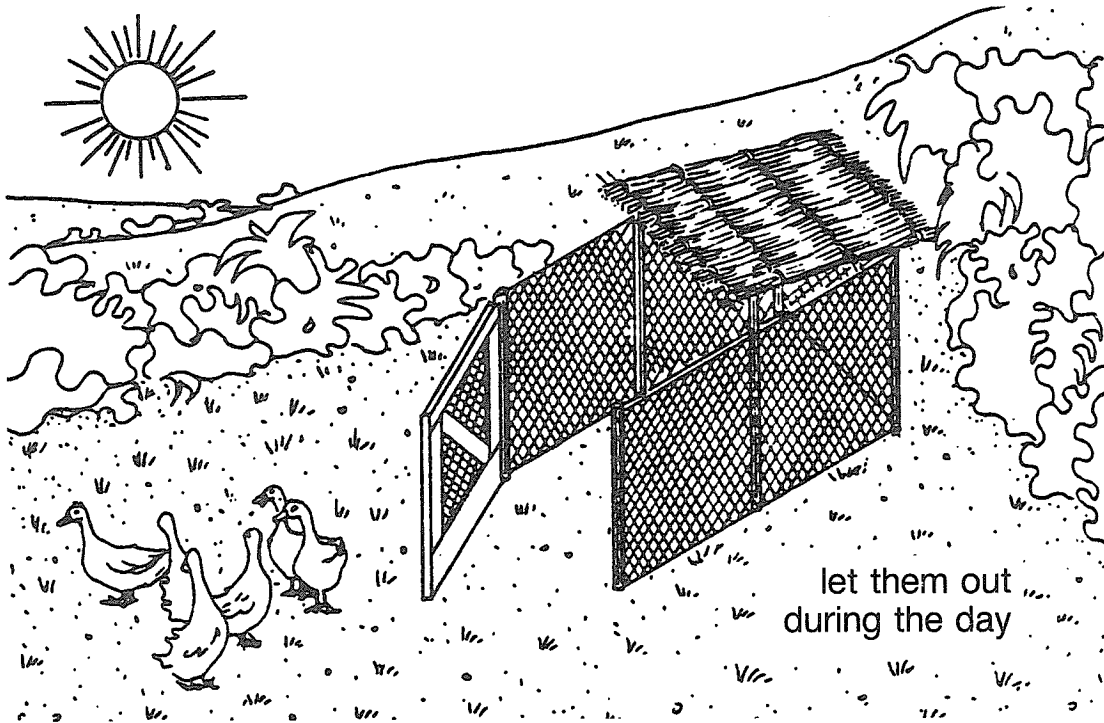
125. Later the same day,
just before the sun goes down,
give them some food to eat
and some water to drink.
However, give them the food and water
inside the shelter.



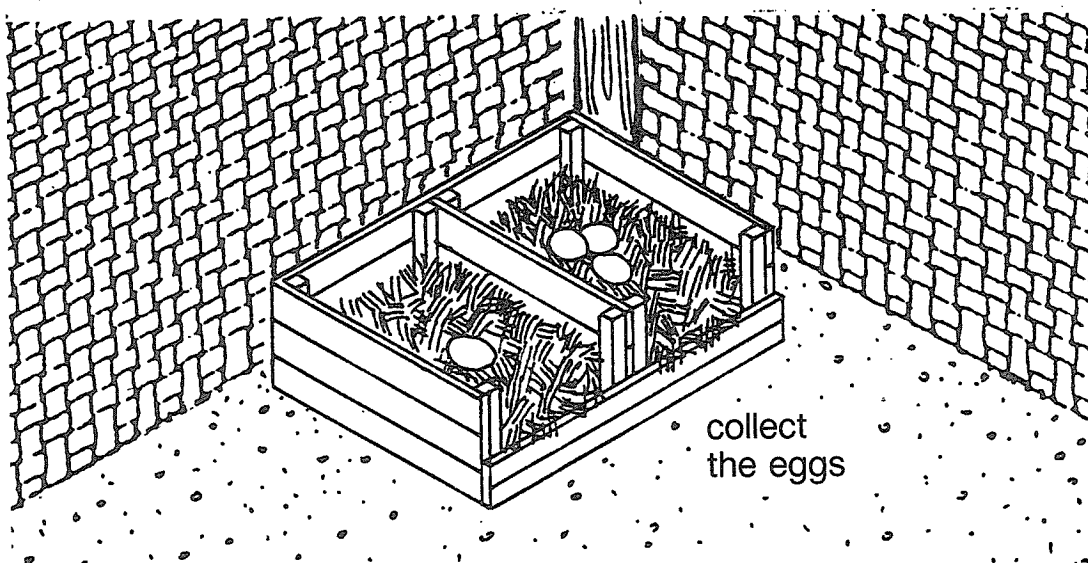
give them food
and water inside
the first few days

126. You can give them food that is left from your last meal. You can also give them some chopped green plants.
127. If you see that your ducks eat all the food that you give them, give them a little more.
128. Keep your ducks in their shelter for the first 2 or 3 days. However, be sure to give them some left-over food and chopped greens each night just before dark and make sure that they have water.

129. When you see that your ducks are calm and used to their new home, you can let them out for the day.

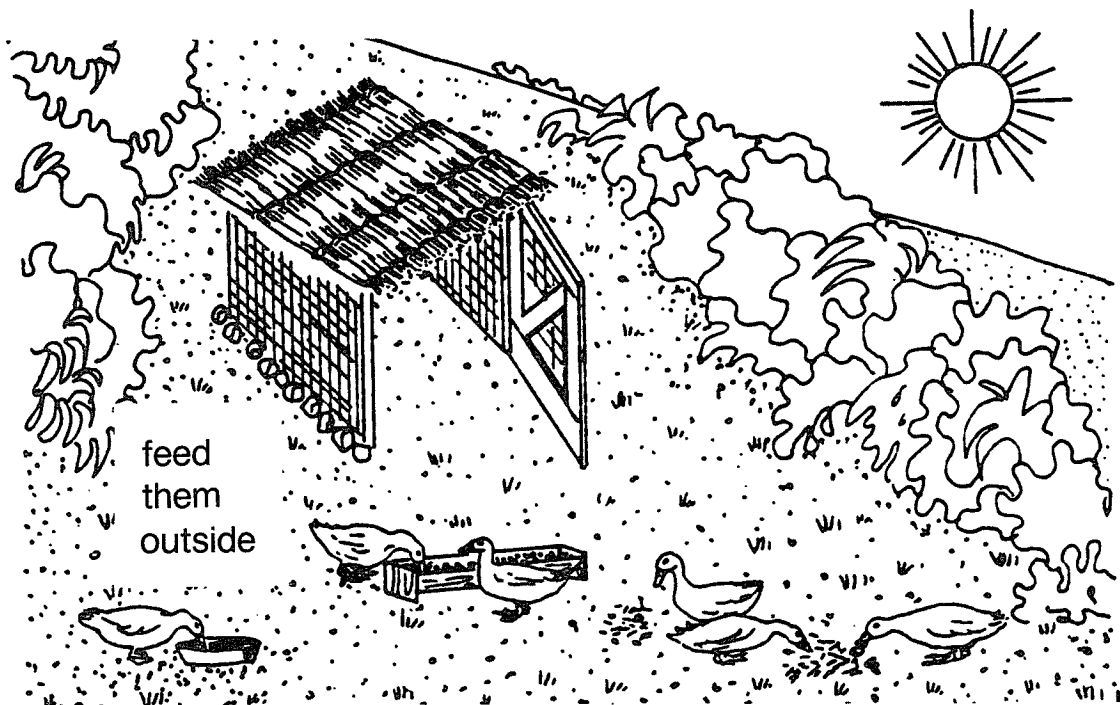


130. Let your ducks out a few hours after the sun is up. That way they will lay their eggs inside so that you can collect them easily.



131. During the day your ducks will wander about looking for insects and worms and grass and roots and other things that they like to eat.

132. Then, each night just before dark give them the left-over food from your table that day.
133. However, this time give them food **in front of the shelter, not inside.** That way it will stay clean inside.
134. By giving your ducks food in front of their shelter each night, they will become used to coming back to eat at that time.



135. When your ducks have eaten, you can close them safely inside until the next morning.
136. During the first few weeks, check on your ducks from time to time during the day to see where they are.
137. However, soon they will learn to go out in the morning and come back by themselves at night. **You will have to do very little for your ducks.**

GROWING YOUR OWN BABY DUCKS

138. Earlier in this booklet,
you were told
that you can raise
as many as 24 ducks
that live by themselves
and find their own food,
with very little help from you.
139. So, if you would like
to have more ducks,
the easiest way to get them
is to raise your own baby ducks.

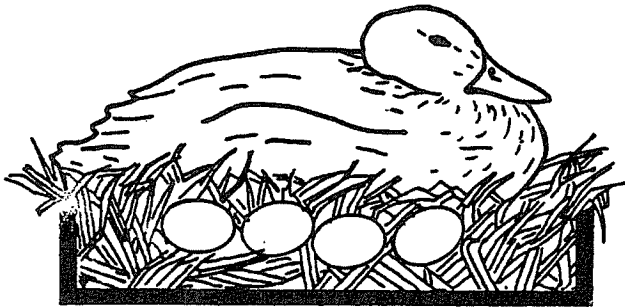
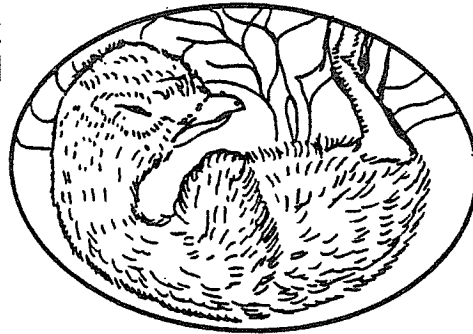


140. By raising your own baby ducks,
you can add to your small flock
little by little
until it is the size you want.
141. However, you **must** have fertile eggs.
If your small flock has a male duck,
the eggs you get will be fertile
and you can begin to raise baby ducks.

Hatching your own eggs

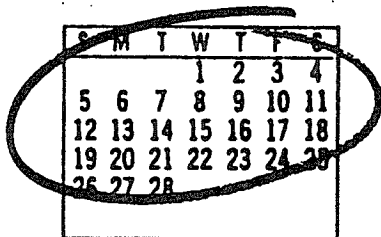
142. A baby duck grows inside the shell of a fertile egg when it is kept warm. Eggs are kept warm when a female duck sits on them. **This is called setting.**

baby duck
inside the shell



setting
female duck

143. After 28 days the baby duck is ready to come out of its shell. **This is called hatching.**

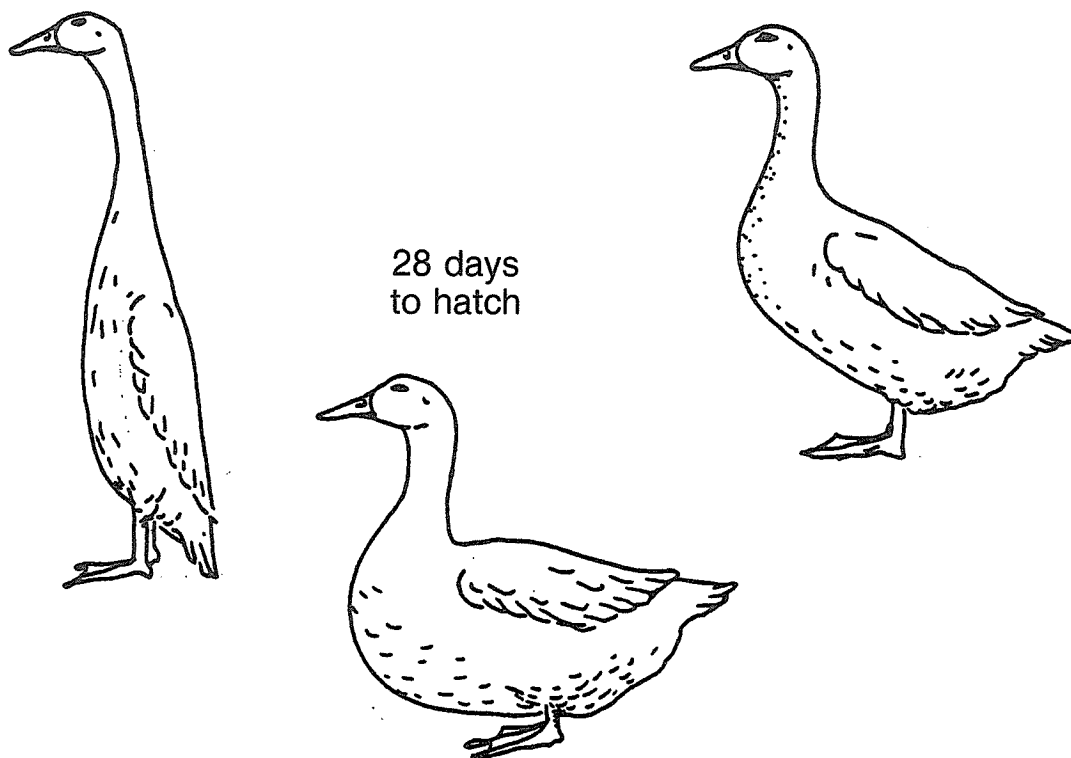


hatching takes
about 28 days



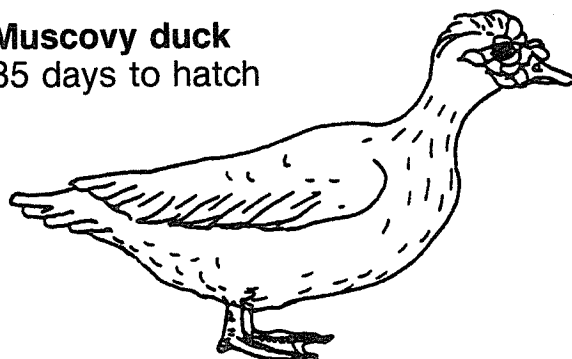
Note:

The eggs of most kinds of ducks that you are likely to find where you live take 28 days to hatch.



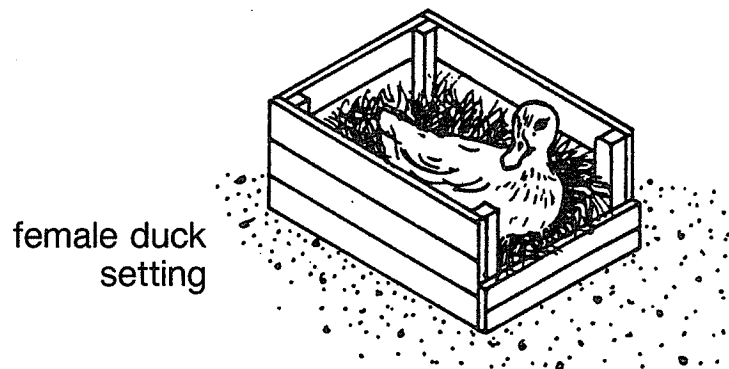
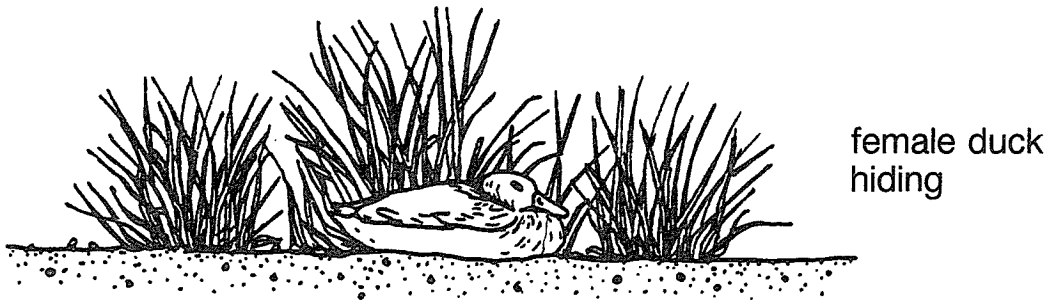
However, there is one exception. The eggs of a **Muscovy** duck take 35 days to hatch. You will learn more about the Muscovy in the next booklet in this series.

Muscovy duck
35 days to hatch

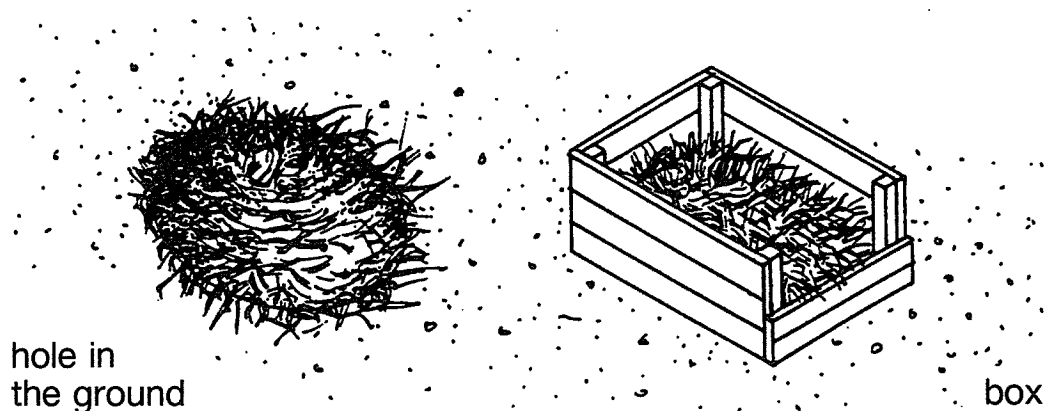


Setting the female duck

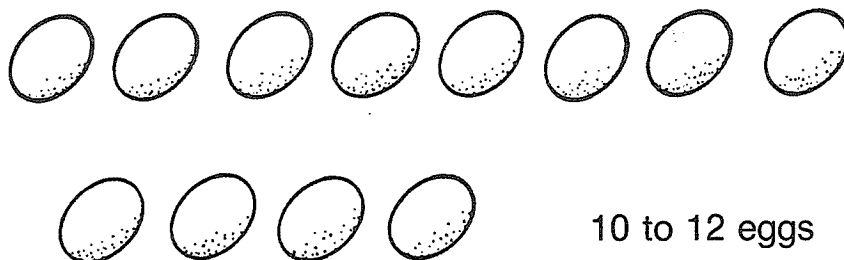
144. When a female duck tries to hide or sits on a nest more and more, she is probably ready to set.



145. Make her a setting nest in a quiet dark place well sheltered from rain, sun and wind.
146. You have already been told, that the nest can be a simple hole in the ground or a box lined with clean, dry grass or straw.

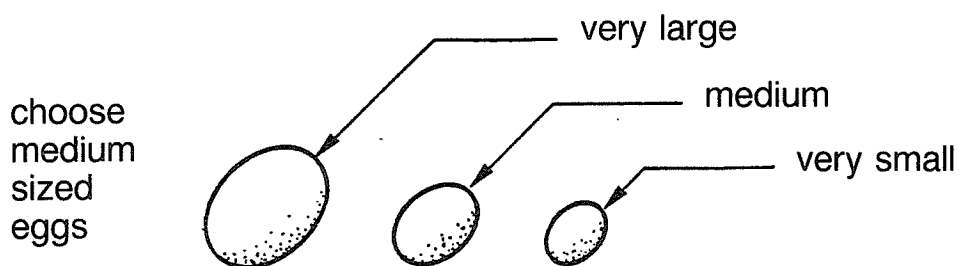


147. A female duck
can cover 10 to 12 eggs.
So, try to collect
this many eggs from your flock.



148. However, when you collect the eggs
handle them very carefully.
If you shake eggs too much
they may not hatch.

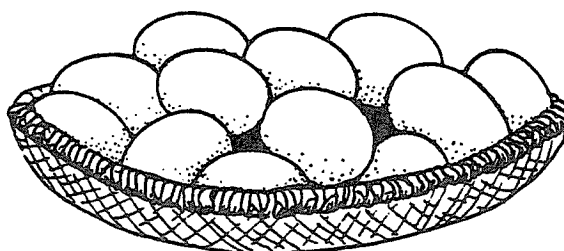
149. Eggs which are very small
or very large may not hatch.
So, choose medium sized eggs.



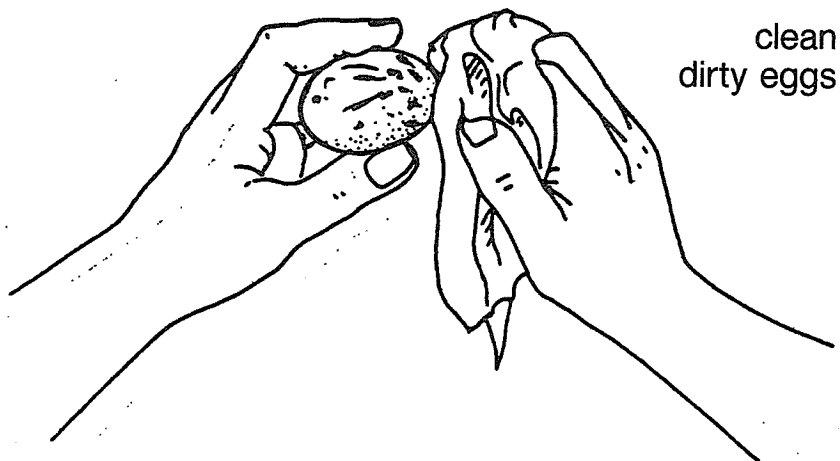
150. Eggs to be used for setting
should be no more than 10 days old.
Eggs which are older may not hatch.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

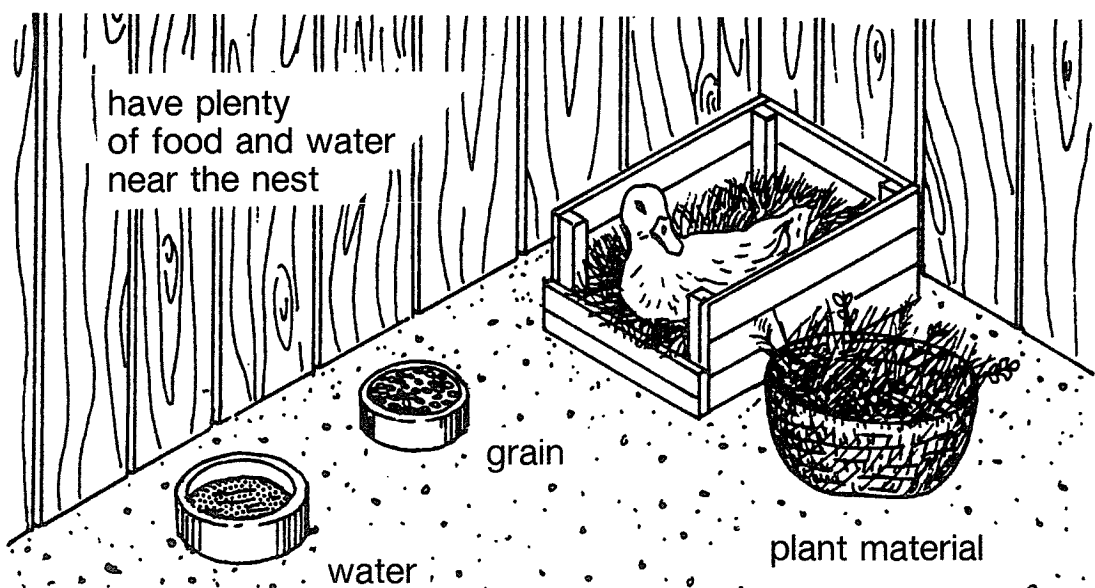
no more
than 10 days



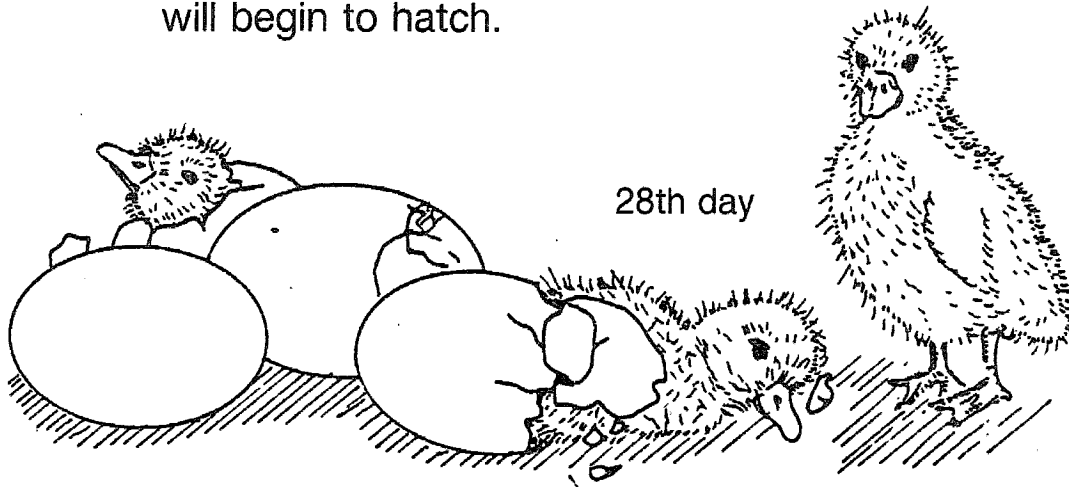
151. The eggs should be clean.
If they are dirty, clean them
with a soft, damp cloth.



152. When you have the right number of eggs,
put them in a nest in a quiet place
and the female will begin to set.
153. When one of your female ducks
is setting on a nest,
make sure that she has enough
food and water nearby.
154. If she has to go too far
to find food and water
the eggs may get cold and not hatch.

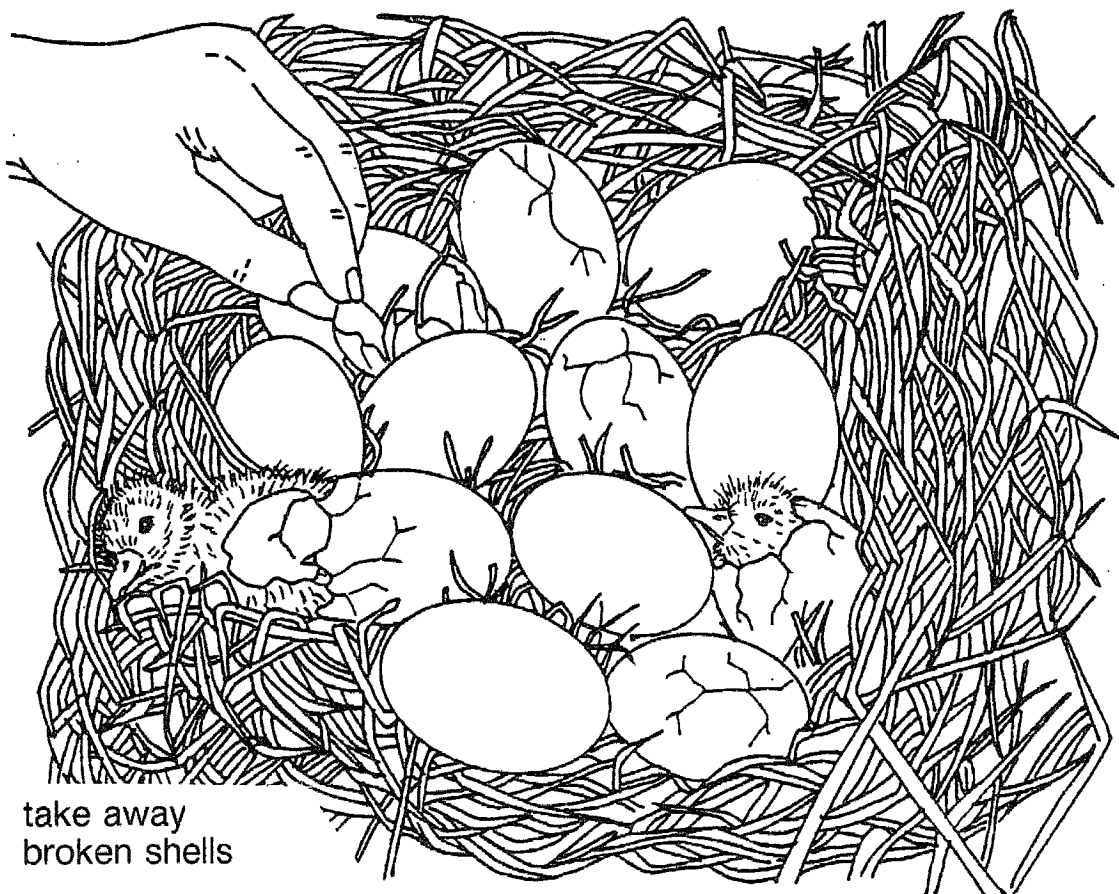


155. On or a little before
the 28th day
your baby ducks
will begin to hatch.



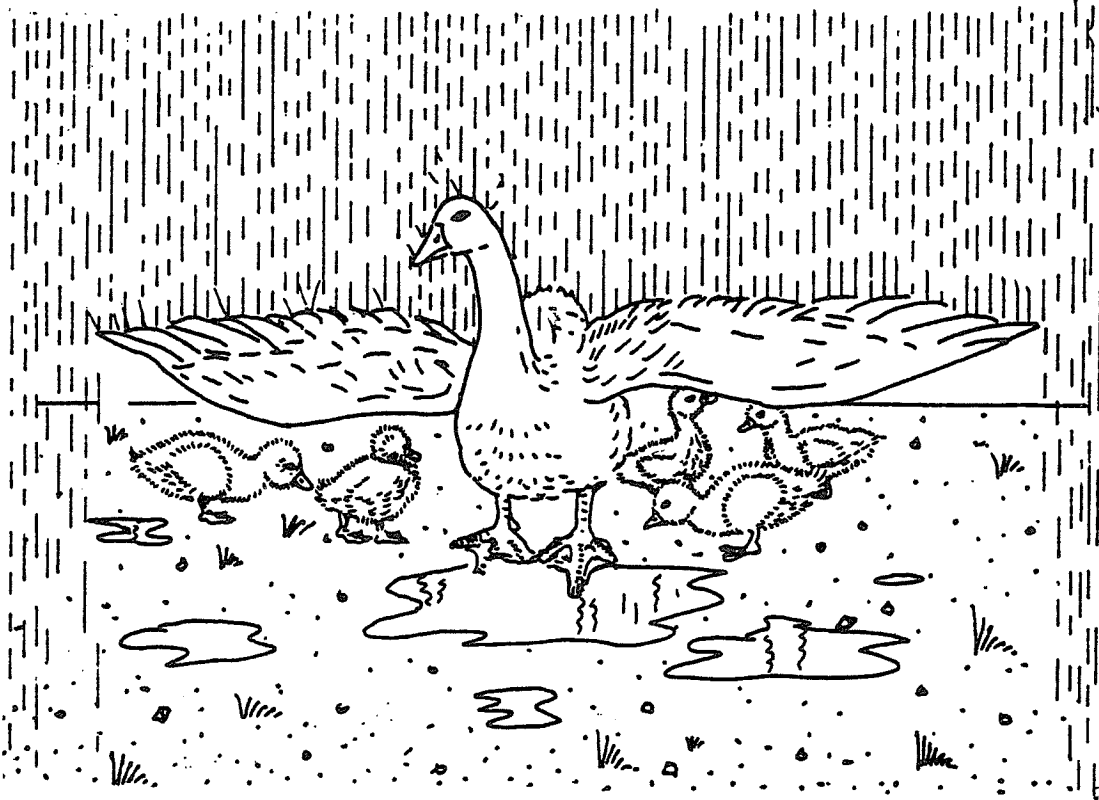
156. They will begin breaking out
of their shells little by little.
It may take as long as 2 days
until all the baby ducks are hatched.

157. As the baby ducks hatch,
take away the pieces of broken shell
from the nest.



The baby ducks

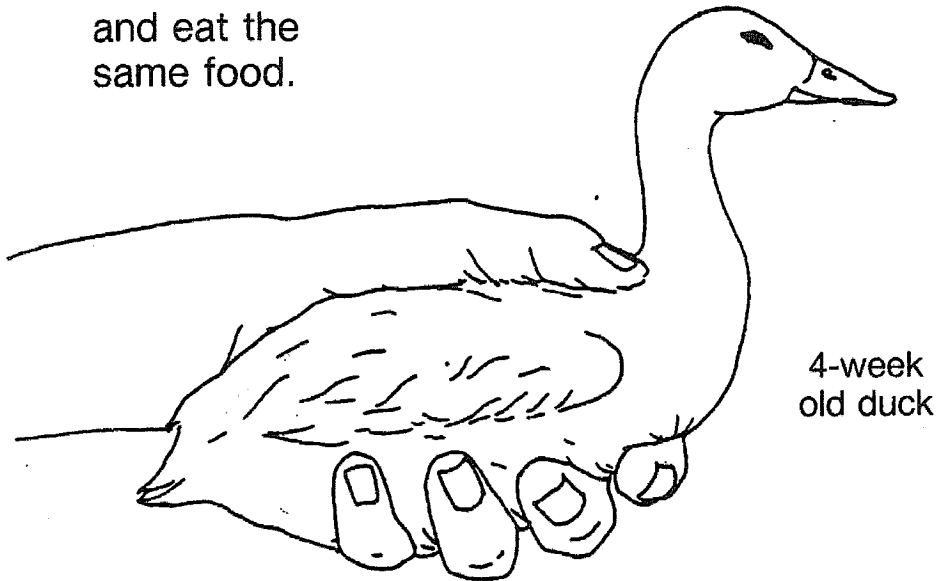
158. After all the baby ducks have hatched,
a good rule to follow is...
bother them as little as possible.
The female duck
will take good care of her babies.



159. However, your baby ducks
will need **some** special care
for the first 4 weeks.
You should be sure to
- see that they are warm
 - give them shelter in bad weather
 - keep them apart
from the rest of the flock
 - feed them well
160. For the first 4 weeks
give the baby ducks
all of the left-over food
that you usually give
to the rest of the flock.

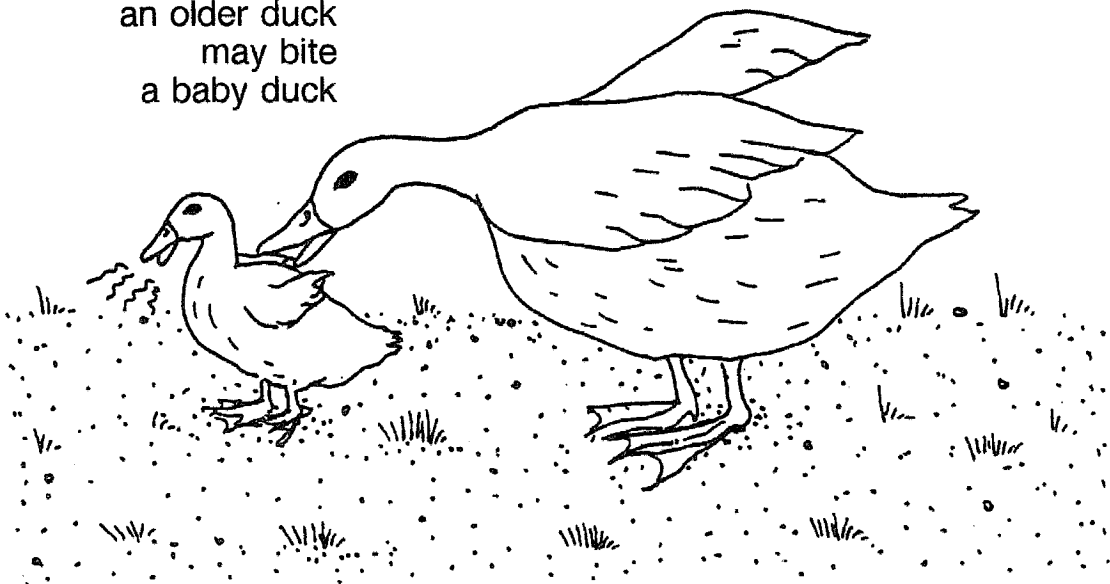
Putting your new baby ducks with the flock

161. When your baby ducks are 4 weeks old they can begin to live with the rest of the flock and eat the same food.

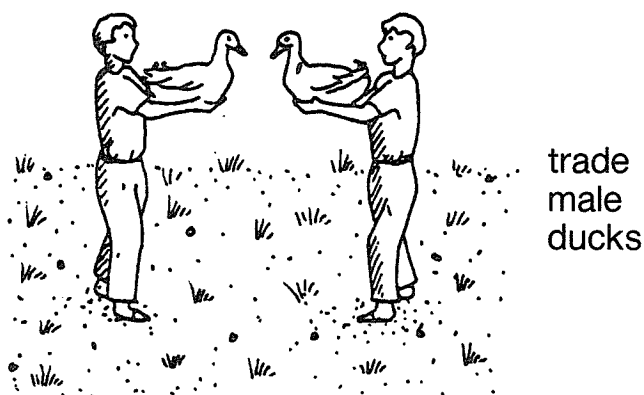


162. If you see that the baby ducks are bitten by the older ducks and that they are not able to get enough food to eat, give them their food away from the rest of the flock.

an older duck
may bite
a baby duck



163. At first you can leave all of your younger male ducks with the flock.
164. As the young males grow older, it is best to eat or to sell them. This is because the young male ducks may be from the same family as your female ducks.
165. However, as your flock grows larger you will need more male ducks. So, try to buy them at the market or from another duck farmer. You may even be able to trade one or two of your young males for new ones.

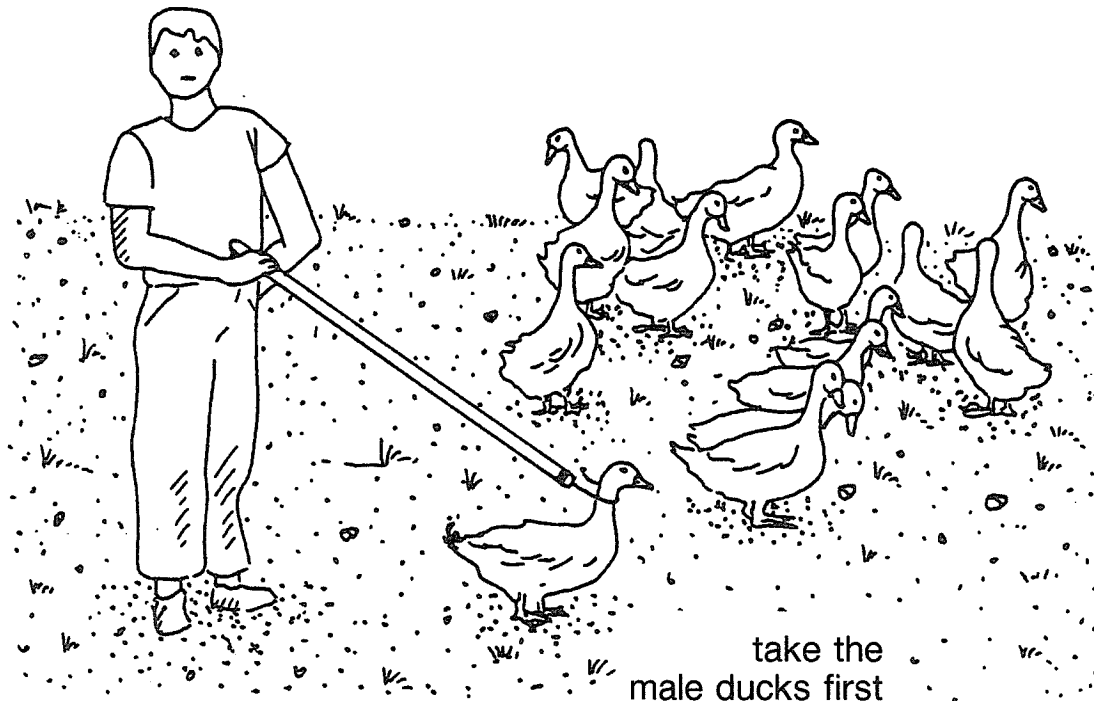


166. Remember, with a larger flock you must be sure to have the right number of male ducks.

FLOCK SIZE	FEMALES	MALES
6	5	1
8 to 12	6 to 10	2
14 to 18	11 to 15	3
20 to 24	16 to 20	4

When to use or sell the meat

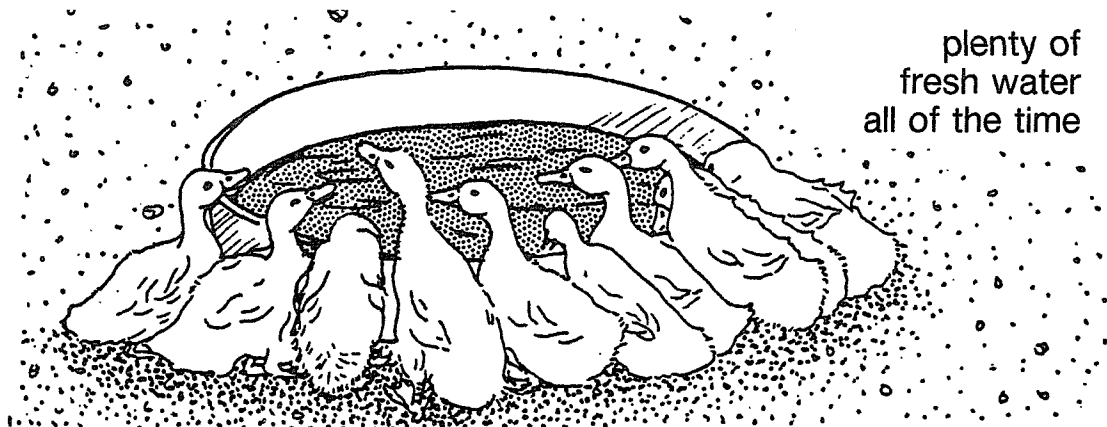
167. As your ducks grow older you can take them to eat or to sell as soon as you have enough young ducks to keep your flock the size you want. However, take the male ducks first.



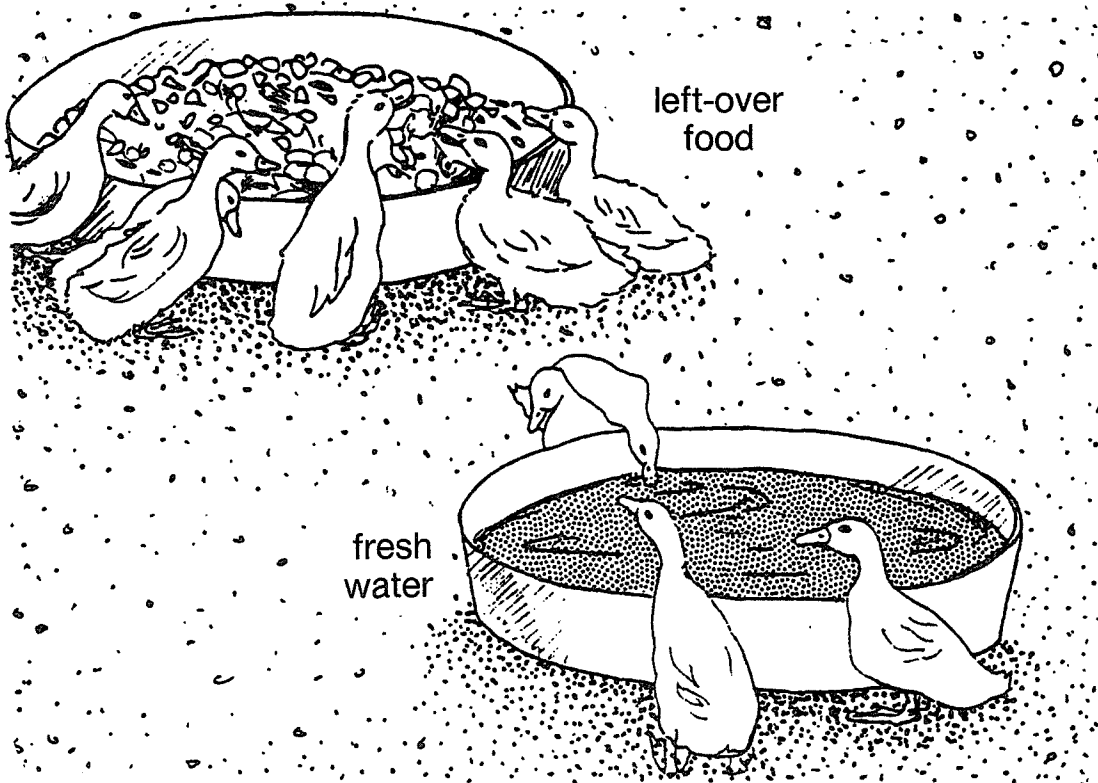
168. Ducks are old enough to eat or to sell at 10 weeks. When your ducks reach 2 years of age, replace them with young ducks.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR DUCKS

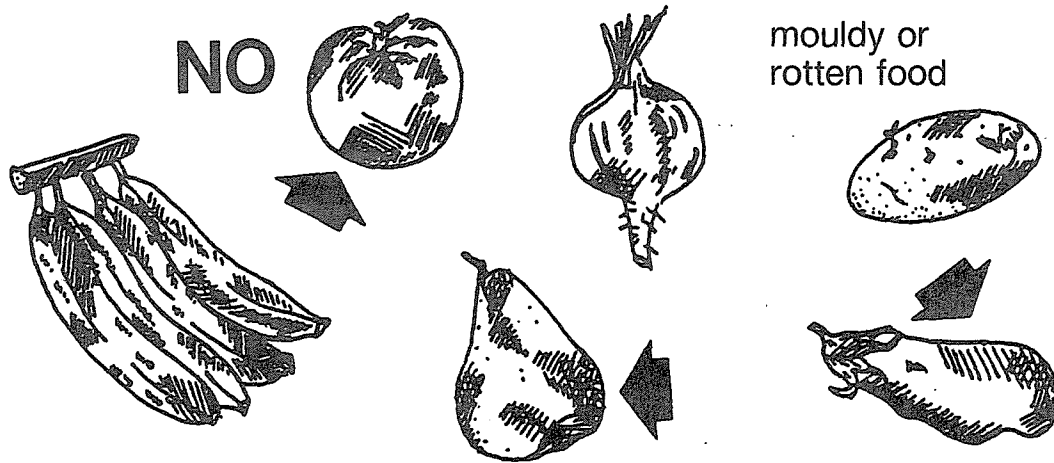
169. Remember, your ducks must have plenty of fresh water to drink especially when they are eating. In addition, make sure that your ducks have fresh water to drink when they are eating in the fields.



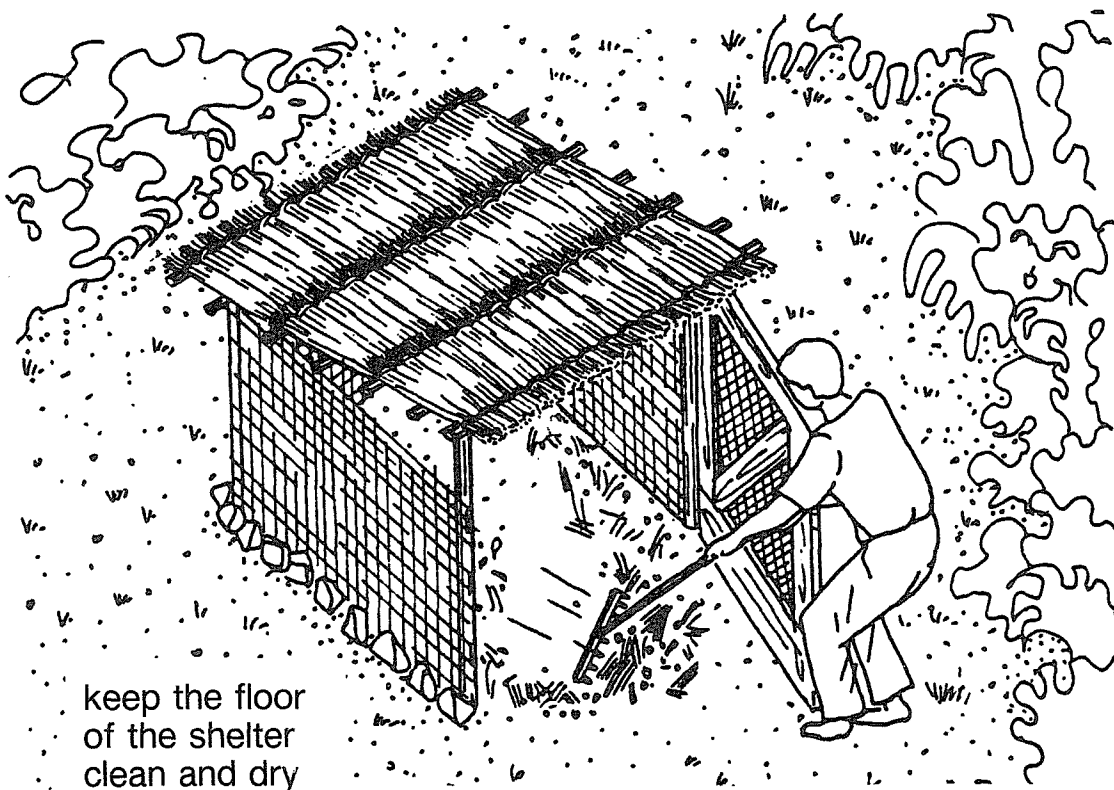
170. Every night when your ducks come back home to sleep give them the food that is left from your table that day and make sure they have fresh water.



171. Never give your ducks food that is mouldy or rotten or they may become sick.



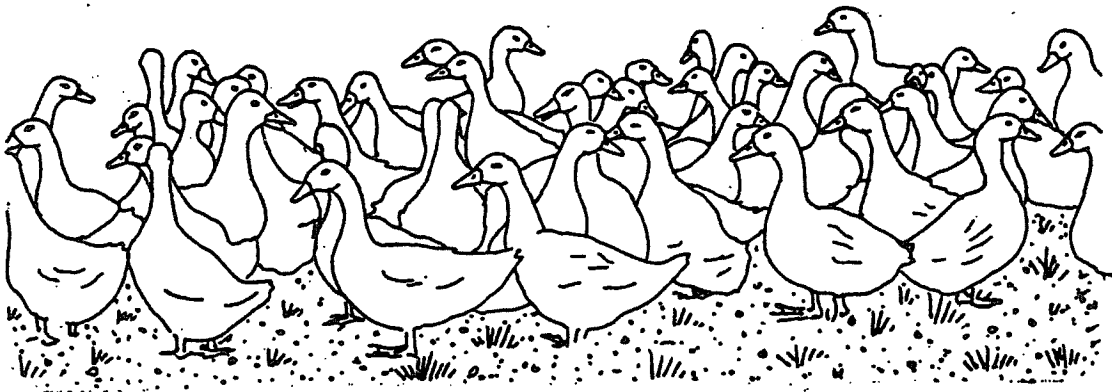
172. Keep the floor of their shelter as clean and as dry as you can. Change the floor material if it becomes wet, dirty or mouldy.



173. If you do all of these things, your ducks will be healthy and well and you will see how very little you must do to raise a flock of ducks.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENT

174. In this booklet you have learned how to raise and care for a flock of 6 to 24 ducks that live by themselves and find most of their own food with very little help from you.
175. You can also raise more ducks. You can raise as many as 60 ducks in much the same way as you raise a smaller flock.



176. You will have to learn a little more about ducks and work a little harder. However, with 60 ducks you will get many more eggs and much more meat to eat and to sell at the market.
177. Perhaps you can raise more ducks with another farming family near you. Perhaps you can raise more ducks with other families in your village.
178. The next booklet in this series, Booklet No. 40, **Raising ducks 2: further improvement**, will tell you how.



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