

SEXUAL (?) DISPLAY IN THE DOMESTIC TURKEY

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The following curious behaviour of a Turkey Cock was recently observed at Waikerie, and related to me by two thoroughly reliable witnesses of the occurrence.

A gobbler with a number of hen birds were feeding slowly down the rows of trees in an orchard, which was strewn with fallen shaddock—a large and heavy citrus fruit.

Suddenly the hens rushed together to one side, and with noisy agitation stood in a clump watching the gobbler with every appearance of interest and excitement. The gobbler was then seen to be advancing in a very awkward and comical saltatory fashion, with his legs held stiffly together and clasping some object between them. After a dozen hops or so, the object became dislodged and disclosed itself as a shaddock.

The hens at once gathered round the male bird admiringly, and after a short rest he proceeded to replace the shaddock between his "knees" by thrusting his head under the fruit and rolling it on to his feet and thence up his legs. When securely gripped, he suddenly resumed saltation, and the hens again rushed together in an emotional huddle.

The whole pantomime of male buffooning and female hysterics was repeated several times, and watched at such close quarters that there can be no doubt as to the substantial accuracy of the account.