



## ***The Wild Chickens of Fitzgerald, Georgia***

*Something to crow about...*

Back in the 1960's, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources stocked Burmese chickens as an additional game bird to be hunted like pheasant or quail.

These tiny, colorful birds resemble fighting game chickens, sporting brilliant orange and yellow ruffs and gleaming black tail feathers.

Flocks of chicks were released several miles from Fitzgerald at the Ocmulgee River. Populations of the bird never took hold and for some reason, they left the river site and made their way to downtown Fitzgerald, where they have propagated and prospered ever since!



Exotic and beautiful, Burmese chickens are also more athletic than your average chicken. According to one poultry resource, if caught in a fight, Burmese chickens will move around and think out their moves, while other breeds move straight into the fray.

Fitzgerald residents have a love/hate relationship with these wild birds. Some folks buy seed and feed them regularly; others chase them out of their yards and gardens with a broom and a few choice words.

Whether loved or hated, Burmese chickens are a familiar part of the Fitzgerald scene. They wake you up in the morning, create minor traffic problems, and, some claim, even keep the bugs away.

**An annual festival celebrates these unique residents**

**The Wild Chicken Festival**

**held in Historic Downtown Fitzgerald**

**3rd Weekend in March**

**For information contact the**

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