

BLUE WHITE MOTTLED VARIETY

IN ANCONA AND ANCONA BANTAMS

By: Bernhard Hanskamp, the Netherlands.



The Blues in the past

End of the sixties of the last century the blue white mottled Ancona was developed from the blue Andalusian. The creation gave a lot of troubles, mainly because of the slate blue legs. It was not easy to breed them with yellow legs (with the wanted black mottles.) It was Jan Douwsma from Assen (NL), breeder since 1920, who brought us the first blue Ancona. He was also the man who created the Ancona bantam in 1930.

The origin of the blue Ancona bantam is not very clear. Again the name of Jan Douwsma pops up. Later another breeder, Brinks, had very good blue bantams.

It is striking how soon these blue Ancona disappeared when there were no more true fanciers of this variety.

The nowadays Blues

Gerrit Stuy from Doorn re-created the Blue Ancona, this time with the aid of Blue Leghorn. Hanskamp further developed the variety and is keeping and maintaining it now.

From smaller Large Fowl birds, Gerrit Stuy also succeeded in re-creating the blue Ancona bantam. Today he is exhibiting them in a fair good quality.

Blue Genes

Blue is a dilution of Black, as we say: an intermediary factor, in the sense that one dose changes the Black mottled bird to blue. This 'blue' looks kind of grey. The second dose dilutes the Blue to a splash White. This offspring turns out to have various shades of Blue. Even cuckoo (barred) may appear, or Blacks with unwanted white splashes on feather parts that should be



black. Thus with breeding Blue there are risks attached concerning the original Ancona colour. (The deep black with the pure white V-shaped mottles.)



How to define Blue?

Why do we call this greyish colour Blue? And which tone of Blue do we want? No wonder Judge Ferringa often used to say: IS this a Blue?

The description in the Poultry Standards is totally the same as with the Black mottled. The wanted colour is greyish blue, without mentioning any sheen. This can cause problems when we compare the 'black' offspring with the 'normal' Black mottled Ancona!



Problems

We can see several problems in the Blue birds, e.g. a brownish sheen, mostly at the cocks, but also at the hens. And of course the black spots in the blue coloured feather parts, something that is frequently seen. But these 'faults' are not mentioned as such in the Standard. We wonder.... Is it – from a genetical point of view – possible to have a crisp, V-shaped white



pearl at a blue feather? Especially in the flights and main tail feathers? The ideal leg colour seems to give no problems.



Doubts at the Ancona club members

The results in the early eighties made the Club members doubt. The Blue Ancona was really a daring exploit of fancy, but the results were not sparkling. The intention of breeding a more contrast full coloured bird carries the danger of getting a bird with more and larger pearls. If such a bird was black, you would say it had too much white.



A danger for the original black white mottled variety

The 'normally' black looking birds, coming from the Blue crosses and that carry the dilution factor, can be a danger for the original Black mottled Ancona. As the Blues have more and larger mottles, we will loose the crisp white V-shaped tipping in the Blacks.

No wonder at the Club Day on August 30th the Club members were rather doubtful concerning breeding the Blue white mottled Ancona. We shall see what future brings, also concerning the Blue Ancona!

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