

# ***The Mondain***

## ***an old French Pigeon breed***

By: Jack Charonnat, Président of the Club des Amis du Mondain

This article was compiled by Jack Charonnat, president of the French Specialty Club 'Friends of the Mondain'. He tells you about the French Mondain, its history and the state of the breed over the years. Without a doubt, this hobby breeder is a passionate enthusiast who addresses his entire article to the breeder of the Mondain, who will surely understand him..

*Right:  
Club Logo of the French Specialty Club  
'Friends of the Mondain'.*



### **The French Mondain**

**History.** De Mondain is an ancient French pigeon breed. It was kept at many farms and also by poultry fanciers. The breed was described in documents, found in 1824. A distinction was made between three types of Mondain:

**The large Mondain** that, according to Buffon, sometimes reached the weight of a small chicken. This type of Mondain was very large, very heavy and had red eye ceres. The feather colour varied, in fact they occurred in all know pigeon colours. The number of offspring was low, also they often trampled the eggs or crushed them with their heavy body during incubation.

**The middle-sized Mondain**, this was the most common type. They were held in an economically sound manner in aviaries, thereby they were not so very particular with the purity of the breed. They came both feather legged and clean legged. They were very good breeders that reared their (numerous) young well. The size of this breed was similar to a chicken of three months old.

**The Berlin Mondain**, came in 1808 from Prussia to France. The birds had broad, red eye ceres and the feather colour was a pied marking of black and white feathers on and around the shoulders. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was this type of Mondain that was taken serious and bred as an exhibition pigeon. (See photo of the First Prize winning Mondain in Parijs in 1907). Many experienced breeders have joined forces to establish the type of this Mondain, after which they have drawn up a standard in 1931 and further developed the breed. Worth mentioning is the name of Mr. Alfred Gritton; one of the pioneers of this breed and chairman of the Mondain Specialty Club. This Club, Friends of Mondain, has contributed to the recognition and development of the breed. Starting with a long pigeon with narrow breast, high on the legs and a powerful head, equipped with a robust and powerful beak, broad eye ceres and a well-developed nose wattle - the latter because of the outcrossings with the Runt and Montauban. These breeders aimed to breed the widest chest on a sleek pigeon, while standing low on the legs and performing beautifully. Today's Mondain is still highly valued and is still very well represented at our shows.

### ***History of the Specialty Club***

Initially, there was a club, the Club du Mondain Français. located 21 rue de Réaumur in Paris. This club was founded in 1971. The first bulletin of this club is in my possession and is from 1972, it appeared 4 times a year.

A few years later, as a result of differing points of view, a split took place within the Club and a new club was founded in 1977: Club des Amis du Mondain, (Club of the Friends of the Mondain) whose President was Mr. Lesure. After a few months the boards and breeders of both clubs decided to try and create a single club by joining together to form a strong and sustainable club for the benefit of all.

This reunification is in large part due to the efforts of Mrs. Seignié, and Messrs. Nicolas, Bimier and Augier. On November 19th, 1978 at the Montluçon exhibition, the CLUB des AMIS du MONDAIN was founded. The first year was a transitional year and the board was made up of members from both clubs. It can be said, unquestionably, that this union was a success, both for the breeders and for our society. Our first bulletin appeared and continued to be published three times a year.

Mr. Augier brilliantly fulfilled the leadership of our club until October 1998, the club owes much to Mr. Augier and his team. He made the CLUB des AMIS du MONDAIN the first pigeon specialty club in France with more than 360 members. Together with all the breeders they succeeded in creating an elegant pigeon whose success with the fanciers keeps growing. He has set up our beautiful international, national and regional events where many of the world's Mondain fanciers have so much pleasure in seeing each other again.

Appointed Honorary President but still a member of the board, Mr. Augier continued to work in the club. He took his "retirement as a judge" after 40 years of judgment in Limoges in 2002 where on this occasion Mr. Philippe Hudry President of the National Union of Pigeon Judges handed him the platinum insignia of the SNC.

Jack Charonnat succeeded to the Presidency in October 1998. The 1st Championship under leadership of Jack Charonnat brought together nearly 500 Mondains and later, at the 1st National Championship show for the French Cup in Montluçon, 600 birds. Since then the number has not stopped increasing to stabilize around 1500 pigeons, the record having been established in 2001 with 1583 Mondains. For the French Cup which generally takes place in November or December the number of entered Mondains is around 1000 subjects or more. Together with the regional championships taking place regularly in the four corners of France we can say that some 5000 Mondains are presented each year at the exhibitions.

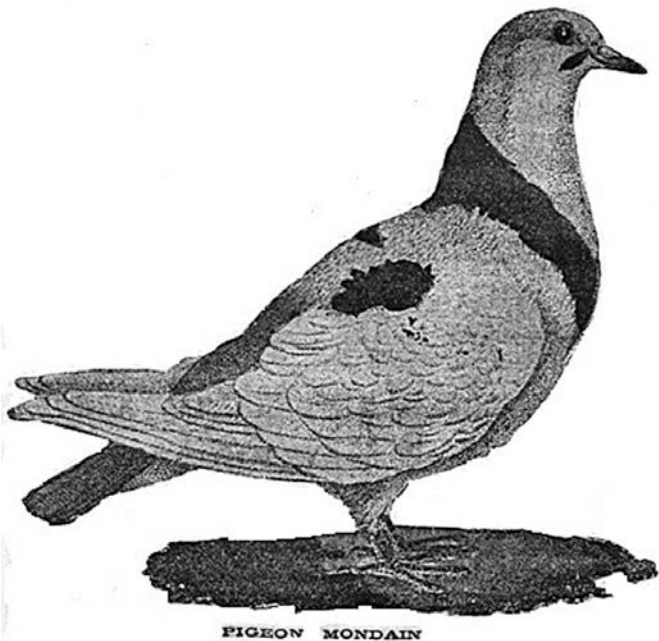
European Championships are held regularly with our Belgian, Swiss, German, Italian and Hungarian friends.

Highlight was the show of Chateaubriant, in January 2001, where it succeeded thanks to the joint efforts of Mrs. Avril and Mr. Fevrier, bringing together 1146 Mondains.

Later, such championships were held in Jepsheim (Alsace France) and then in Schopfloch (Germany) in 2002.

***Right:  
Current (European) Standard drawing by:  
Jean-Louis Frindel (France),  
Vice president of the Entente Européenne.***





*Left :*

*A French Mondain at the Exposition in Paris, 1907, winning First Prize. This illustration was published in the 'Petit Journal Agricole' of 29 March 1914.*

## Notes to the Standard

As you can see from the photograph of the First Prize winner at the Paris 1907 Show and those of our society today, the evolution of the Mondain in one century was surprising.

The exhibited Mondains towards the 1920s had two classes: the clean-legged and the feather-legged. The breeders noticed that the birds with feathered legs only caused problems (broken eggs and therefore low production.) Moreover, it gave an impression of heaviness to this pigeon

while they wanted the bird to be elegant.

Around 1930 Mr. Dupin, general secretary of the French Pigeon Club, started working on a standard for this breed and this first standard was established by F. Delandre.

We must pay tribute to all the breeders who contributed to the transformation of this long pigeon into a model of suitable length and elegance.

The Mondain is a pigeon of form, very large, round, very heavy, low on the legs, with a very wide and prominent breast. Its tail is a little raised and its overall appearance is close to the horizontal. It is a pigeon that looks proud. The minimum weight is about 900 grams for females and 1 kilogram for males, the ideal weight being 100 grams above these standards. Some birds reach 1300 to 1400 grams.

The Mondain must be short, the length from the tip of the beak to the end of the tail is close to 43 cm. for cocks and 40 cm. for hens.

The head is small compared to the volume of the body, the front rounded and relatively prominent, descending in a right angle under the beak. The neck is fairly short, large and wide at the base and fine at the head. The chest is very deep, extraordinarily broad and prominent. It is a calm and easy pigeon to raise. Its productivity varies with its weight, but it can reach 10 young or more in a year.

## The Colour Varieties

**The Barred:**

**The Blue Black barred:**

*Right: Photo © <http://mon-espace-nature.fr>*

These are the most impressive ones at the exhibitions. The body type and volume are well established in this colour. They are very broad and deep breasted, appearing very deep standing. The underline of breast and abdomen should form a half circle without breaking. The feathering in neck and breast has green and purplish reflections, the rump is white. The eyes are varying from yellow to intense red, according to the feather colour.



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*Left: Mondain blue black barred.  
Show St. Junien 23/2/2015.  
Owner: M. Reberat (France).  
96 points.  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*

The clearly defined black bars move away from the bottom and meet on the upper part of the wing. The end of the tail has a black band of 2 cm. wide. This colour variety is often mated with ash red barred or blue grizzle.

*Right: Photo © <http://mon-espace-nature.fr>*



### **The Ash Red Barred:**

These are also often seen at the shows, although they are more difficult to breed in show quality. Still in this colour we may find the most beautiful specimens. The pale blue plumage is tinged with pink, the neck and the breast are a darker red with pink reflections, the rump is white.

It is not advisable to pair two ash reds because the red colour is dominant. It is better to mate them with blue blackbars or blue grizzle. The ash red barred colour often turns out to be sex-linked.



*Left: Mondain ash red barred.  
Show Limoge 2012  
Owner: M. Claud Perrot (France).  
97 points. Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*

*Right: Mondain ash red barred.  
Show Limoge 2010  
Owner: M. Barthois (France).  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*





*Left: Mondain blue grizzle.  
Show St. Junien 27/10/2010.  
Owner: M. André Merle (France).  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*

**The Grizzle:** Their plumage is of a white tinged with blue and very pale black, in some birds the white dominates. The neck and the breast must clearly show colour, the rump is white. The eye colour is like in other colour varieties, same holds for bars, body type and volume .

**The Silver barred:** The Silver: We see only a few at the exhibitions, the characteristics are the same as for the other colour varieties, but the colour of the wing shields must be evenly silver. It is difficult to achieve this beautiful colour, it is advised to cross the Silver with Blue Grizzle.

**The Chequered:** They are few in exhibitions, but they are often very nice, with very beautiful well rounded breasts, with well marked bars. The difficulty is to obtain a uniform checkering. Their eyes are often of an intense red.

The defects relating to these varieties are: Only a single bar on the wing, tendency of developing a 3rd bar, mis-coloured wing shield.

*Right: Mondain blue chequer.  
Show Limoges 2011.  
Owner: M. Bouet (France).  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*



*Left: Mondain red chequer.  
Show Limoges 26/10/2007.  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*

*Right: Mondain red chequer.  
Show Periqueux 2010. Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*



## The Selves

**The White:** They are the most numerous of the Selves. Main characteristics: a dark eye surrounded by a thin discrete eye cere of a very delicate pale pink colour. The beak is white or a pinkish white. Mating two birds of the same colour results in a decrease in volume, so some breeders do not hesitate to cross with other Selves or even with Barreds, the wanted eye colour will be bred back quickly. The problem in Whites concerns the quality of the plumage which must be tight, as if glued to the body, while very often fluffy plumage is seen. This problem has to be solved by the breeders.

**The Red:** These are numerous in exhibitions, with often a very beautiful body type, comparable to the Ash Red barreds. The red must be intense, the colour and under-colour of the rump and feathers around the vent must not be lead colour, the red pigmentation of the feathers must be homogeneous up to their tips. The beak is pure white, but horn-colour or stained beaks are often found.

The fanciers often breed them by crossing with yellows, or with other colours such as white and black. This leads to many problems: white feathers, coloured beaks. These faults are then difficult to eliminate.



*Left : Mondain yellow. Show Limoges 2010.  
Owner: M. Barreau (France).  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*

**The Yellow:** In smaller numbers in the championship, their colour must be of an intense yellow, golden and clean, without being leaden, the beak very pure. The volume is smaller than in other colours, sometimes they lack volume, underside and roundness. One often encounters subjects with white feathers at the rump, around the vent or sometimes on the chest. When these feathers are not too numerous, the breeder must "groom" his pigeon.

This is a difficult colour to grow. Sometimes Mondain are showed with a duller and darker yellow colour.



*Right: Photo © <http://mon-espace-nature.fr>*



*Left: Mondain black.  
Show Limoges 2011.  
Owner: M. Valmari (France).  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*

**The Black:** Also in restricted numbers in exhibitions, breeders experience the same difficulties as in yellows; problems of form and volume. Their colour is of an intense black with green reflections, what we call beetle black, their beak is dark.



*Right: Photo © <http://mon-espace-nature.fr>*

Faults at the Blacks are: Leaden or dull colour and white feathers at the rump and around the vent. Some breeders pair Black with Blue checker to get a good coloured rump; they often get youngsters of very good volume but watch out for a bluish feathers around the vent which is a fault.



*Left: Mondain blue black barred.  
Show Bergerac 01/02/2013.  
Owner: M. Jean François Viole (France)  
Photo : Patrick Gonzales.*

## **In Conclusion**

The problems of today's breeders to breed a 'near perfect' Mondain are mainly the following:

- The feathering should be tight in spite of the large amount of 'down' feathering (Underfeathering).
- The tail short and well closed, carried Horizontal or with a slight upward 'tilt'.
- The head is small and well rounded, broad with prominent forehead, the forehead almost forming a 45 degree angle with the beak setting. The neck is widening rapidly to blend in with the body contours.
- Sometimes the Mondain can be observed carrying its beak pressed against its neck, which which looks very ugly.

Mondains can be kept in an aviary or in an individual cage.



*Left: Mondain white.  
Show Limoges 2012.  
97 points.  
Owner: Cyrille Barthois.  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*



*Right: Mondain blue indigo barred.  
Show Limoges 2012.  
94 points.  
Owner: M. Christian Machuron.  
Photo: Patrick Gonzales.*



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Or visit the website of the French 'Club des amis du Mondain'  
<http://clubdesamisdumondain.jimdo.com/>

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The webmaster van <http://mon-espace-nature.fr/>; Mr. Didier Macrez kindly granted us publication of this article.

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We are also indebted to Patrick Gonzalez, French Pigeon Judge, who supplied us with several beautiful photos of outstanding Mondains.

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