

British Poultry Standards

Complete specifications and judging points of all standardized breeds and varieties of poultry as compiled by the specialist Breed Clubs and recognised by the Poultry Club of Great Britain

Sixth Edition

Edited by

Victoria Roberts

BVSc MRCVS

Honorary Veterinary Surgeon to the Poultry Club of Great Britain
Council Member, Poultry Club of Great Britain



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Introduction

Who is this book for? Some may think it is only to inform poultry judges of the finer points of each breed, and of course this is a valuable function, but there is a wealth of information for the student of history, the conservationist, the exhibiting fancier and those who just want to keep hens or waterfowl as a hobby.

Breeders of commercial poultry rarely acknowledge their debt to the pure breeds, but they are only too willing to use a particular aspect, such as resistance to a certain disease, to increase the profitability of their commercial birds. This is only possible due to the dedication of fanciers in keeping bloodlines pure over many generations. Since all chickens are man-made, their ancestor being the Red Jungle Fowl (a galliforme), it is possible, of course, to influence their type, characteristics and colour easily, which is why the commercial world made such enormous strides so quickly in being able to produce cheap and plentiful high-protein food on demand from the 1950s onward. Such was the quantity of research done that the feeding of poultry then became a science and commercially produced, scientifically formulated rations made life much easier. Before the innovation of the hybrid – usually graced with a number rather than a name – commercial flocks consisted of Rhode Island Reds, white Leghorns, white Wyandottes and light Sussex for eggs, plus Indian Game crossed with white Sussex for meat. There are still some small flocks of these pure breeds being run commercially, ensuring that utility aspects are maintained, because in today's cost-conscious society there are not many who can afford to keep the purely decorative birds. Not all useful attributes consist of egg or meat production, however. The larger, maternal breeds such as the Cochins and Brahmas are valuable as broodies, geese as watchdogs and ducks as slug eaters. The foragers such as Leghorns and other light breeds keep insect numbers under control, remove weeds and, of course, provide rich nitrogenous fertiliser.

The popularity of poultry continues to increase, and even the newest and smallest farm parks and tourist attractions have a few fowl for added interest. When these are pure breeds, suitably labelled, it fuels the enthusiasm for others to take up the hobby. Not only is feeding made easier, there are many firms supplying suitable housing and equipment designed for the best welfare of the birds, and advances in veterinary research ensure that healthy stock is normal. Legislation concerning poultry tends to change with epidemics or scares and may apply both to commercial and backyard flocks. Records of poultry keeping go back centuries, but it is only since Victorian times that Standards have been written down for specific breeds. Survival of the fittest was definitely the main criterion in the past and breeds like the Old English Game fowl would have been bred true to type for hundreds of years. Five-toed fowls were mentioned in AD 50 and those with crests appeared in paintings and writings from the fourteenth century onwards. After cock-fighting was outlawed in England in 1849 the idea of exhibitions took root as a way of continuing the competition, but in a modified form.

The first Standards were produced in 1865 for just a handful of breeds to try to maintain uniformity; it was not until the turn of the century and the importation of breeds from the continent and America that a volume of any size appeared. The Poultry

Club has always been the guardian of the Standards, but the Standards themselves are delineated by the specialist Breed Clubs. None of the Standards have changed radically over the years, but slow changes have been introduced when necessary, following approval by the Council. It should not be easy to alter the Standards, because it is a human failing to tend towards the biggest or most exaggerated feature at the expense of the true type of a bird in order to win. This 'fashion' can sometimes be instigated by judges and followed slavishly by those wanting to win at all costs. It would behove some judges to re-read the Standards occasionally.

It is more difficult and takes a longer time to become a judge now, quite rightly. An aspiring judge may take only one judging test per year (written and practical examinations) and it then takes 7 years to complete the various sections. Even then, a judge is expected to have kept and bred, as that is the true source of experience, as many breeds as possible if he or she wishes to attain the highest level of Panel A. The Breed Club shows are good training grounds, as there are always those around whose level of experience is higher and much can be learnt.

All breeds of chickens are classified as either Hard Feather or Soft Feather; these classifications are further subdivided into Heavy, Light and True Bantam breeds. A True Bantam does not have a large counterpart; what most people call bantams are technically miniatures of the large fowl, being replicas one quarter the size of the large one. There is a further classification of Rare which covers any breed not sustaining sufficient numbers to warrant having its own Breed Club. This covers both the genuinely rare breeds and certain recent imports and is administered by the Rare Poultry Society which has done much to keep several breeds in existence, as well as holding the Standards for breeds sometimes seen in this country but not included in full in this edition. Domestic waterfowl have several clubs, the main ones being the British Waterfowl Association and the Domestic Waterfowl Club and waterfowl are also classified as Heavy and Light breeds.

The major changes in this sixth edition of the British Poultry Standards include the updating of some colour photographs and the addition of silhouettes showing the perfect shape for the breed. A particularly useful feature is the section of colour plates describing and illustrating the feather markings and colours, as some colour varieties are the same in different breeds and some are not. Both a perfect feather and a commonly found faulty one are included, which is a great help in deciding on the quality of a particular bird's colour and markings, remembering that the adult female's back body feathers are always round-ended and the male's are pointed.

A poultry keeper may, in all innocence and merely passing on acquired information, call a breed by the wrong name, or assume that just because a bird looks similar to a breed that it is pure bred. The only certain way to overcome this perennial problem is for a system of permanent identification to be used on pedigree bloodlines – other domestic breeds from cattle to pigeons have used tags, tattoos or rings with great success for many years. In order to try to encourage both the identification of bloodlines and the keeping of pedigree records, the Poultry Club has a Ringing Scheme, with rung birds getting special prizes at certain shows. Certain strains of birds are, of course, recognisable whether rung or not, and experienced judges will be aware of this.

To safeguard publication interests, the Poultry Club has agreed not to accept or authorise publication of any alterations to existing Standards for a period of 2 years from the issue of this edition.

Whatever the interests of the reader, it is hoped that sufficient information will be obtainable from this sixth edition of the British Poultry Standards to encourage the keeping of pure breeds and the development of a rewarding and enjoyable hobby.

V.R.

Standard feather markings

(Plates 1–4)

Plate 1

1 Hackle feather conforming to standard as applying to brown Leghorn and other males of black-red colouring. Note the absence of shaftiness, black fringing and tipping. Actual colour of outer border varies in different breeds between dark orange and pale lemon. In such breeds saddle hackle should conform closely to neck hackle.

1A Faulty hackle in same breeds. There is considerable shaftiness, the striping runs through and the feather is tipped with black. Striping is also indefinite and fouled with red.

2 Hackle feather conforming to standard from partridge Wyandotte male. There is no shaftiness and the striping is very solid and distinct. In partridge Wyandottes lemon-coloured hackles are a desirable exhibition point.

2A Faulty neck hackle in the same breed. Note that the black striping runs through to tip and is irregular in shape. There is also a distinct black outer fringing to the gold border.

3 Standard hackle feather from male of gold-laced Wyandotte and similar breeds with rich bay ground colour. Note intensity of centre stripe, absence of shaftiness and freedom from blemish in outer border. Note also soundness of colour in underfluff.

3A Faulty hackle feather from similar breeds, showing indistinct striping, with foul colour, shaftiness and black running through to tip. Underfluff is a mixture of red and dark grey.

4 Standard hackle feather from male of light Sussex and similar breeds of ermine markings, such as light Brahma, columbian Wyandotte and ermine Faverolles. The demand is for solid black centre with clear white border extending to underfluff. Green sheen is an important feature.

4A Faulty hackle from similar breeds, showing black fringing to border, black tipping and shaftiness in quill. Underfluff also lacks distinction.

5 Perfect tri-coloured hackle feather from a speckled Sussex male. The black striping is solid, with green sheen, and the border is the desired rich mahogany colour, finishing with clean white tip. Note clarity of undercolour.

5A Faulty speckled Sussex hackle feather showing almost complete lack of black striping, varying ground colour in border, and indistinct white tipping.

6 Neck hackle conforming to standard Andalusian male. The so-called Andalusian blue is a diffusion of black and white, and in male hackles a dark border or lacing surrounds the slate-blue feather. Undercolour is sound and even.

6A Faulty hackle from same breed. The colour generally is blotchy and lacing is indefinite.

7 Standard neck hackle of a Rhode Island Red male. No attempt has been made to show the ultra-dark red usually seen in show specimens, but the colour seen here conforms with standard and should be agreeable for exhibition. Note purity of undercolour – a very important point in this breed.

7A Faulty hackle feather from the same breed, showing uneven ground colour, black tipping and smutty undercolour, which is a very severe defect in a Rhode Island Red.

8 Hackle from Ancona male, conforming closely to standard. Note clear V-shaped white tipping, complete absence of shaftiness, rich green sheen and solidity of dark underfluff, a particularly strong point in the breed.

8A Faulty hackle feather from same breed, showing indistinct tipping of greyish-white and faulty undercolour not dark to skin.

9 Hackle feather conforming to standard from buff Orpington male, very similar, except for exact shade, to feathers from other buff breeds, such as Cochins and Rocks. Note even colour throughout, absence of shaftiness and sound colour in underfluff, with quill buff to skin.

9a Faulty hackle feather from similar breed, showing severe shaftiness, uneven ground colour with darker fringe, and impure undercolour.

Plate 1

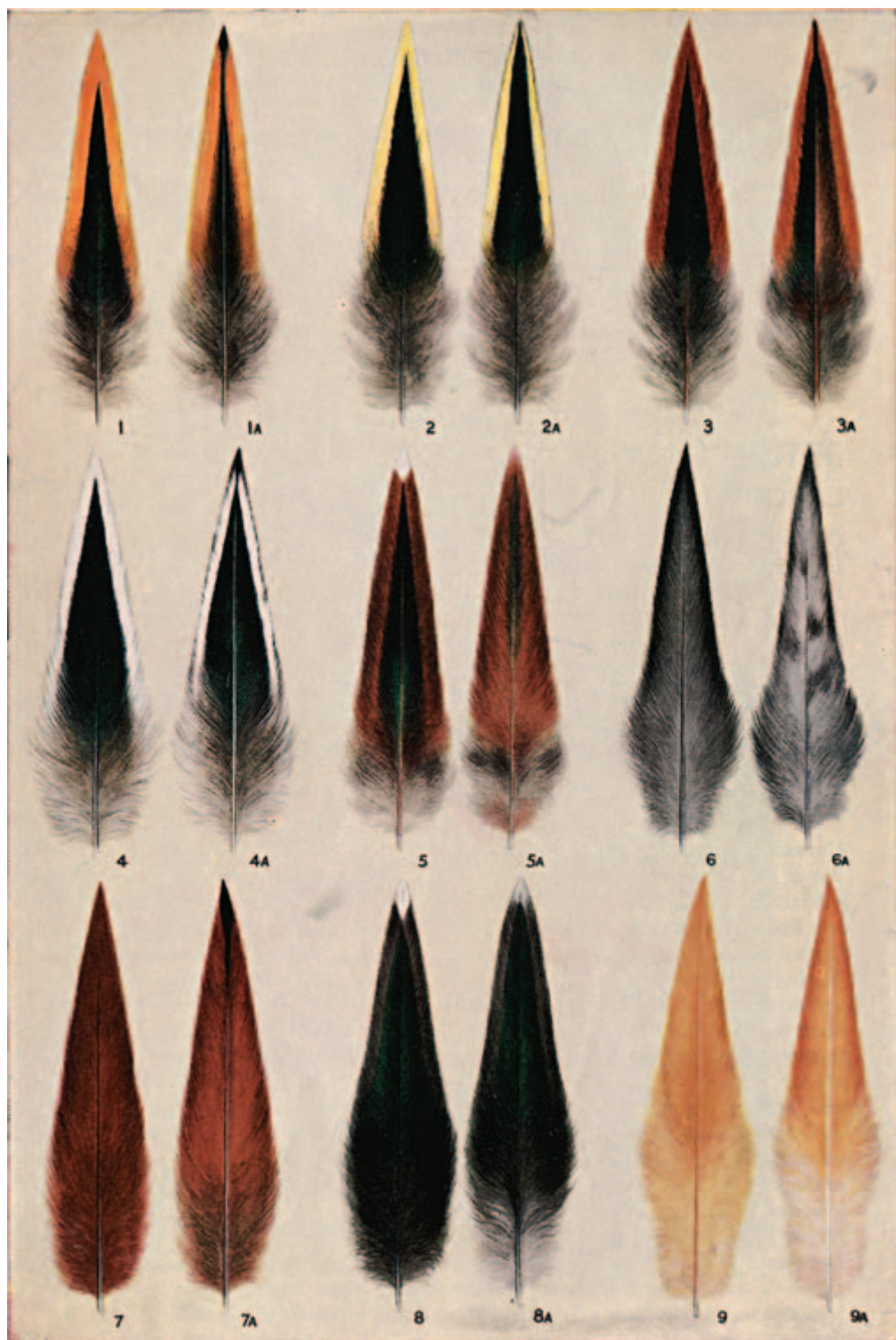


Plate 2

1 Standard hackle from barred Plymouth Rock male and similar breeds. Note the points of excellence – barring practically straight across feather, sound contrast in black and blue-white, barring and ground colour in equal widths, and barring carried down underfluff to skin. Tip of feather must be black.

1A Faulty saddle or neck hackle from similar variety. There is lack of contrast in barring, with dull grey ground colour and V-shaped bars.

2 Hackle as standard description from silver Campine, in which males are inclined to hen feathering. Note that the black bar is three times the width of ground colour and tip of feather is silver.

2A In this faulty hackle (also from silver Campine male) ground colour is too wide and barring narrow. Feather is without silver tip.

3 Standard hackle from Marans male. In this and some similar breeds evenness of banding is not essential, but it is expected to show reasonable contrast. It should, however, carry through to underfluff.

3A From the same group of breeds this feather is far too open in banding and lacks uniformity of marking. It is also light in undercolour.

4 Standard markings of female body feather in Plymouth Rocks and similar barred breeds where barring and ground colour are required to be of equal width. Note that barring runs from end to end of feather and that tip is black.

4A Faulty feather from same group. Note absence of barring to underfluff and V-shaped markings; also blurred and indistinct ground colour.

5 Sound body feather from silver Campine female showing standard silver tip and barring three times as wide as ground colour, as in the male. Gold Campine feathers are similar but for difference in ground colour.

5A Faulty female feather, again from silver Campine. Here again, as in 2A, barring is too narrow in relation to silver ground colour and tip of feather is black.

6 Body feather from Marans female, conforming to standard requirements. Note that the markings are less definite than in Rocks and Campines, and the black is lacking in sheen, while ground colour is smoky white.

6A Faulty Marans female feather. Lacks definition and contrast in banding, which is indefinite in shape, the blotchy ground colour making an indistinct pattern.

7 Excellent body feather from partridge Wyandotte female, showing correct ground colour and fine concentric markings. Note complete absence of fringing, shaftiness and similar faults. Fineness of pencilling is a standard requirement.

7A From the same breed this faulty female feather shows rusty red ground colour and indistinct pencilling, with faulty underfluff.

8 Body feather of standard quality from Indian or Cornish Game female. The illustration shows clearly two distinct lacings with a third inner marking. Lacing should have green sheen on a rich bay or mahogany ground.

8A Faulty feather from same breed. Missing are evenness of lacing and central marking. The outer lacing runs off into a spangle tip.

9 Standard feather from laced Barnevelder female. In this breed ground colour should be rich with two even and distinct concentric lacings. Quill of feather should be mahogany colour to skin.

9A Faulty Barnevelder female feather, showing spangle tip to outer lacing and irregular inner markings on ground colour that is too pale.

Plate 2

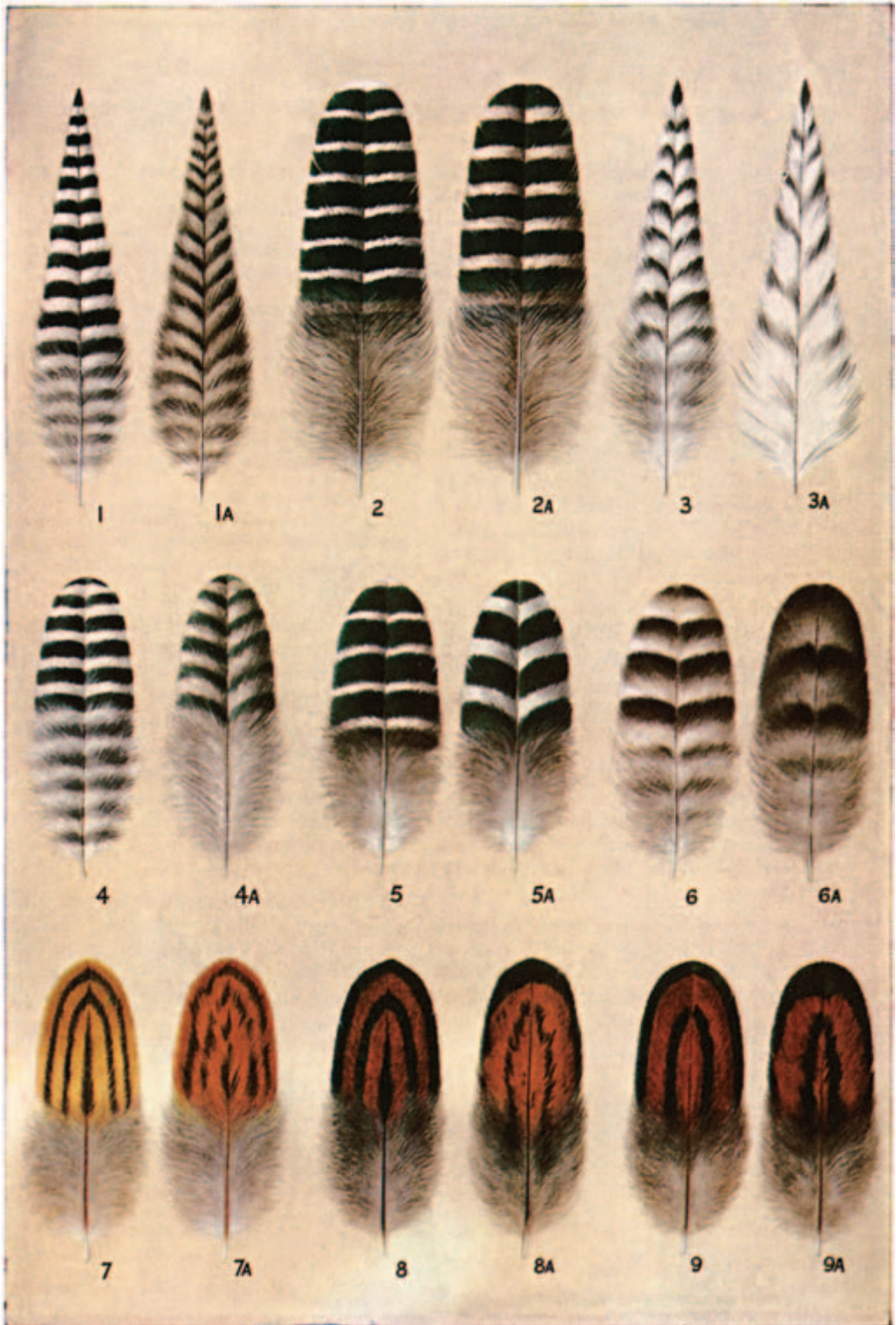


Plate 3

1 Standard markings on silver laced Wyandotte female feather, showing very even lacing on clear silver ground colour and rich colour in underfluff. In this breed clarity of lacing is of greater importance than fineness of width.

1A Faulty female feather from same breed. In this there is a fringing of silver outside the black lacing, which is irregular in width and runs narrow at sides. Undercolour is also defective.

2 Excellent feather from gold laced Wyandotte. In this ground colour is a clear rich golden-bay and there is a complete absence of pale shaft. Undercolour is sound and lacing just about the widest advisable.

2A This shows a very faulty feather from same breed. It portrays mossy ground colour with blotchy markings and uneven width of lacing at sides of feather. Undercolour is not rich enough.

3 Standard markings on Andalusian female feather showing well-defined lacing on clear slate-blue ground and good depth of colour in underfluff. The dark shaft is desirable and is not classed as a fault.

3A Faulty feather from female of same breed. In this the ground colour is blurred and indistinct, and the lacing is not crisp, while undercolour lacks depth.

4 This shows a feather from an Ancona female, almost perfect in standard requirements. The white tipping is clear and V-shaped and undercolour is dark to skin.

4A Faulty feather from female of same breed. Here the tip of feather is greyish-white and lacks the necessary V-shape, while undercolour is not rich enough.

5 An almost perfectly marked feather from a speckled Sussex female – though the white tip might be criticized by some breeders as rather too large. The black dividing bar shows good green sheen and the ground colour is rich and even.

5A As a contrast this faulty feather shows a blotchy white tip and lack of colour in underfluff. The ground colour is also uneven.

6 An excellent example of ‘moonring’ on the feather of a silver spangled Hamburg female. Note the round spangle and the clear silver ground with sound undercover.

6A In this feather from the same breed the spangling at tip is not moon-shaped and there is too much underfluff and insufficient silver ground colour to body of feather.

7 A good example of the desired colour in Rhode Island Red female plumage. Note the great depth of rich colour and the sound dark undercolour.

7A Faulty colour in a feather from the same breed. Here the middle of feather is paler and inclined to shaftiness, and colour generally is uneven.

8 Standard plumage in females of Australorp and similar breeds of soft feather with rich green sheen. Note the brilliance of colour and general soundness of underfluff.

8A This shows a common fault in similar breeds, a sooty or dead black colour without sheen and lacking lustre. This sootiness is, however, usually accompanied by dark undercolour.

9 Standard colour and feather in the buff Rock female and similar breeds which perhaps vary in exact shade and in quantity and softness of underfluff. Note the clear even buff and lack of shaftiness or lacing, also the sound rich undercolour.

9A This feather from a similar buff breed shows very bad faults – mealiness and bad undercolour with a certain amount of pale colour in shaft.

Plate 3



Plate 4

1 This shows a typical standard bred feather from a Derbyshire Redcap female. Note the rich ground colour and the crescentic black markings, which are really midway between spangling and lacing.

1A In this faulty feather from a female of the same breed the ground colour is uneven and lacks richness, while the black tip is too small and indefinite and too closely resembles moon-shaped spangling.

2 This is a standard example of the webless type of plumage associated with Silkies in which the feather vane has no strength and the barbs no cohesion. This plumage is common in all colours.

2A Faulty feather from the same breed. In this the middle of feather is too solid and lacks silkiness, while the fluff has insufficient length.

3 A delicately pencilled body feather from a silver grey Dorking female. Note the silvery colour and absence of ruddy or yellow tinge in ground colour. This type of feather is also usual in duckwing females of various breeds.

3A Faulty colour in female feather from same breed. Here there is a distinctly incorrect ground colour and pronounced shaftiness.

4 A good example of standard bred colour and markings in body feather of brown Leghorn female, where the ground colour is a soft brown shade and the markings finely pencilled. This type of feather is common to many varieties of partridge or grouse colouring.

4A This shows a body feather from the same breed, in which ground colour is ruddy and shaftiness is pronounced – both severe exhibition faults.

5 A well-chosen example of the irregularity in markings of an exchequer Leghorn female. In this breed the black and white should be well distributed but not regularly placed, and underfluff should be parti-coloured black and white.

5A This faulty feather from the same breed shows a too regular disposition of markings, the body of the feather being almost entirely black and the white markings almost resembling lacing.

6 This is a standard feather from the breast of a silver Dorking, and with slight variations of shade from pale to rich salmon applies to a number of varieties with black-red or duckwing colouring. Colour should be even with as little pale shaft as possible.

6A A faulty sample of breast feather from the same group. Here the ground colour is washy and disfigured by pale markings known as mealiness.

7 Standard markings in North Holland Blue female. Note the defined but somewhat irregular banding on a distinctly bluish ground. No banding or other requirements in underfluff are called for in the standard.

7A This shows a faulty female feather in the same breed, which is not closely standardized for markings. The ground colour is smoke-grey instead of blue, and is blotchy, with uneven markings.

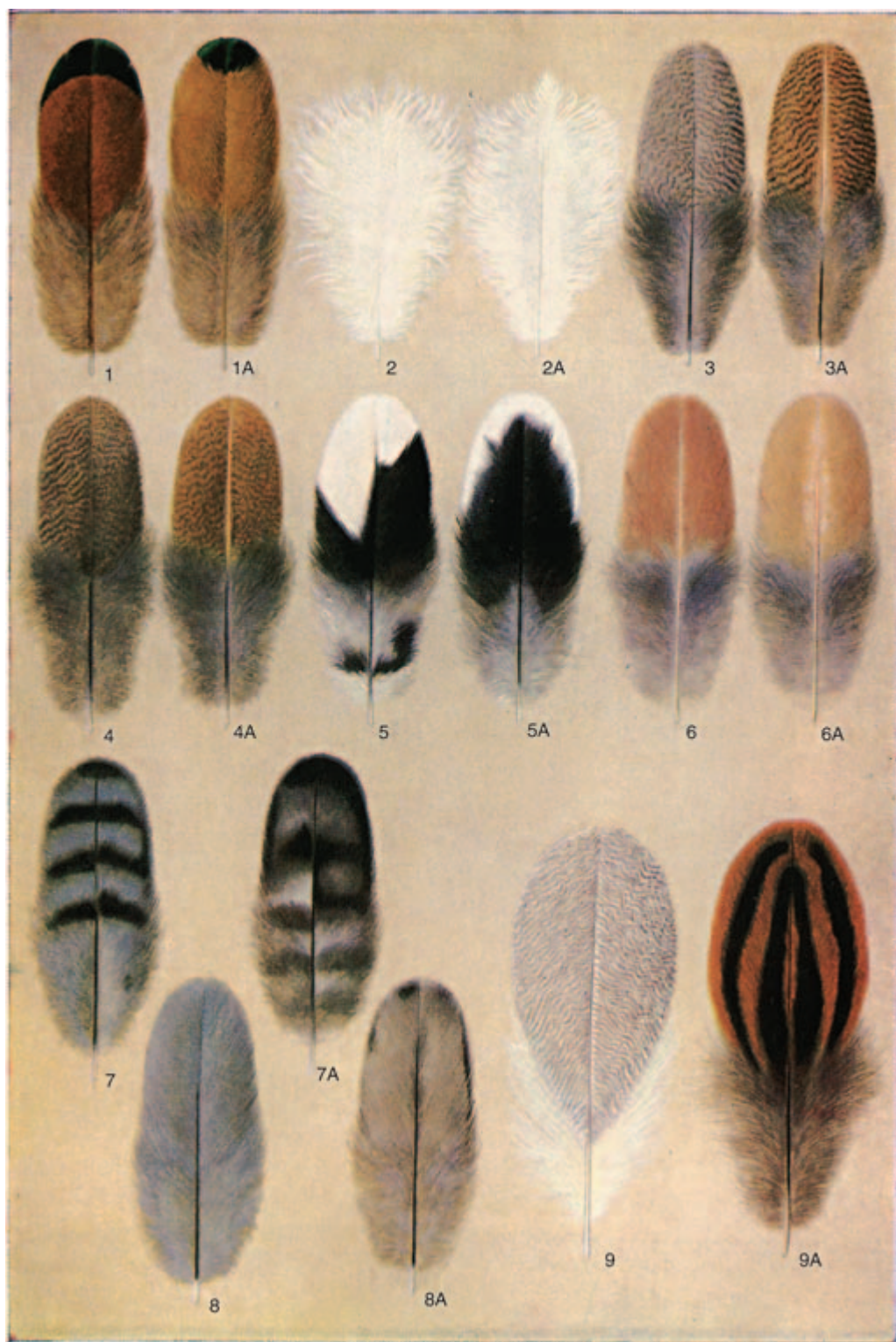
8 A good example of clear colour in an unlaced or self-blue female feather, where no lacing is permissible, such as in blue Leghorns, blue Wyandottes, etc. Note even pale blue shade and absence of any form of markings. This is an example of the true-breeding blue colour found in Belgian bantams.

8A This faulty female feather is a dull dirty grey instead of clear blue, and has blotchy markings as well as a suggestion of irregular lacing.

9 A good sample of exquisitely patterned thigh fluff in Rouen drakes. The ground colour is a clear silver and the markings a delicate but clear black or dark brown. These markings are sometimes known as chain mail.

9A Another good Rouen feather – this time from the duck. Ground colour is very rich and markings intensely black, though seldom so regular and even as in domestic fowl.

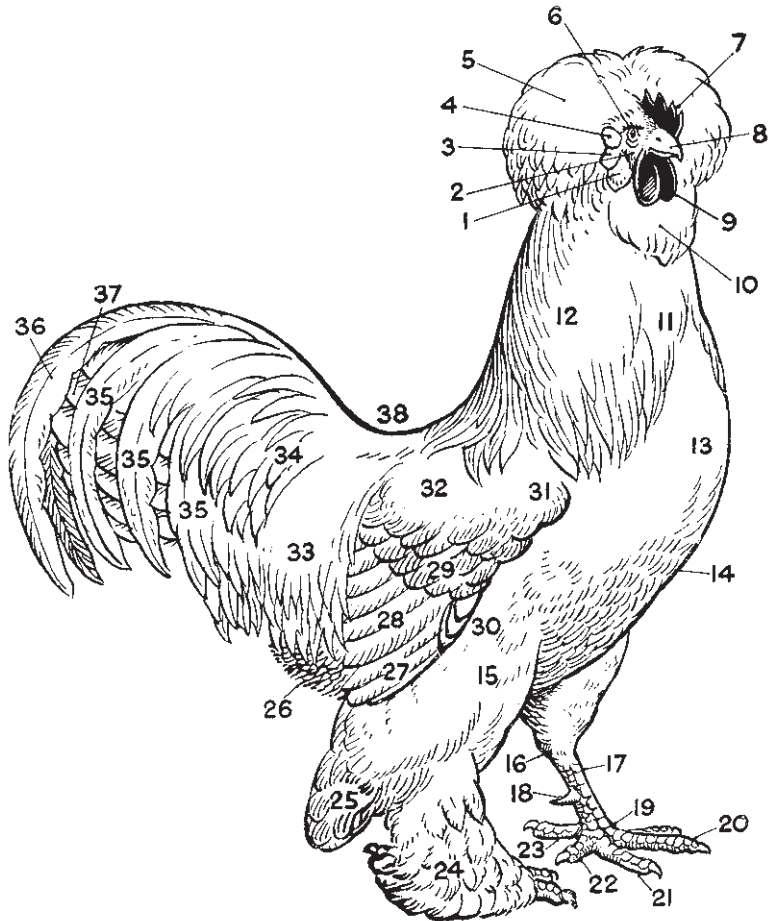
Plate 4



Chief points of the fowl

(Figures 1–6)

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the chief points of the various breeds of fowl.



- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 Muffling | 14 Keel | 27 Primary flights |
| 2 Face | 15 Thigh | 28 Wing bay |
| 3 Ear-lobe | 16 Hock joint | 29 Wing bar |
| 4 Ear | 17 Shank | 30 Wing covert |
| 5 Crest | 18 Spur | 31 Shoulder |
| 6 Eye | 19 Foot | 32 Wing bow |
| 7 Comb | 20 Middle toe | 33 Saddle hackle |
| 8 Beak | 21 Third toe | 34 Tail coverts |
| 9 Wattles | 22 Fourth toe | 35 Side hangers |
| 10 Beard | 23 Fifth toe | 36 Tail sickle |
| 11 Neck | 24 Footings | 37 Main tail |
| 12 Neck hackle | 25 Vulture hock | 38 Back |
| 13 Breast | 26 Abdomen | |

Figure 1

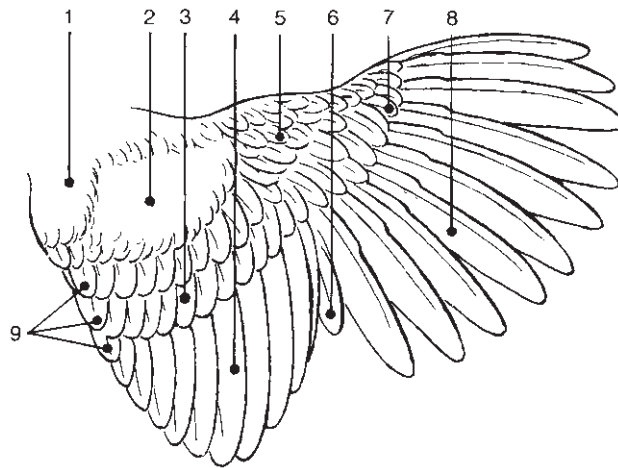
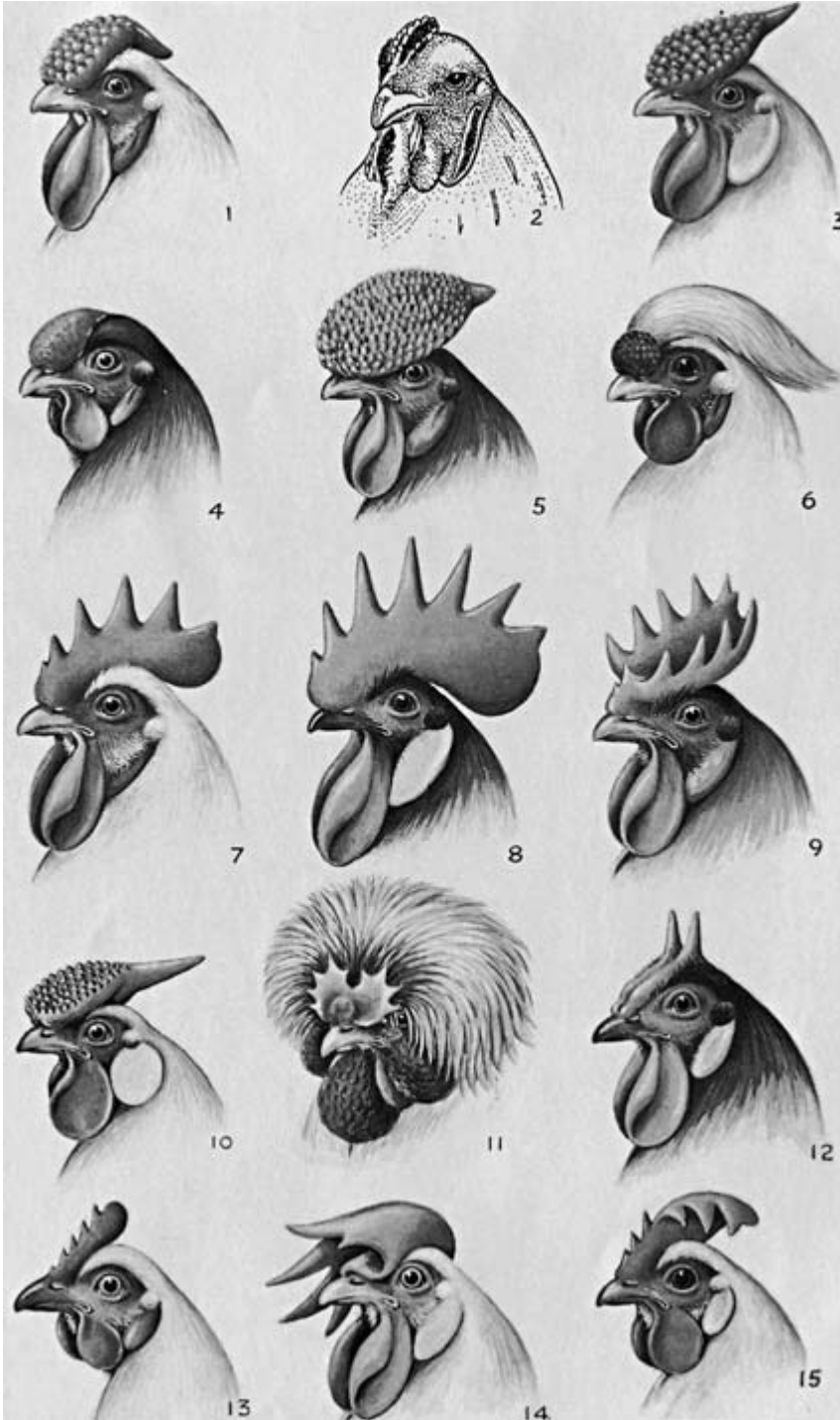


Figure 2

- 1 Shoulder butt or scapulars
- 2 Wing bow coverts
- 3 Wing bar or speculum (lower wing coverts)
- 4 Secondaries
- 5 Wing bow coverts
- 6 Axial feather (not waterfowl)
- 7 Flight coverts
- 8 Primaries
- 9 Tertiaries (mainly waterfowl)

Figure 3 Types of comb



1 Rose, leader following line of neck 2 Triple or pea 3 Rose, short leader 4 Walnut 5 Cap 6 Mulberry 7 Medium single 8 Large single 9 Cup 10 Rose with long leader 11 Leaf 12 Horn 13 Small single 14 Folded single 15 Semi-erect single

Figure 4 Leg types



1 Clean legged, flat side (Leghorns) 2 Clean legged round shanks (Game) 3 Heavy feather legged, and feathered toes, i.e. foot feather 4 Feather legged, no feathers middle toe (Croad Langshan) 5 Short round shanks (Indian Game) 6 Five toed (Dorking) 7 Slightly feathered shanks (Modern Langshan) 8 Feather legged and vulture hocked 9 Thin round shanks (Modern Game) 10 Mottled shanks (Ancona) 11 Mottled and five toed (Houdan) 12 Feather legged and five toed (Faverolles)

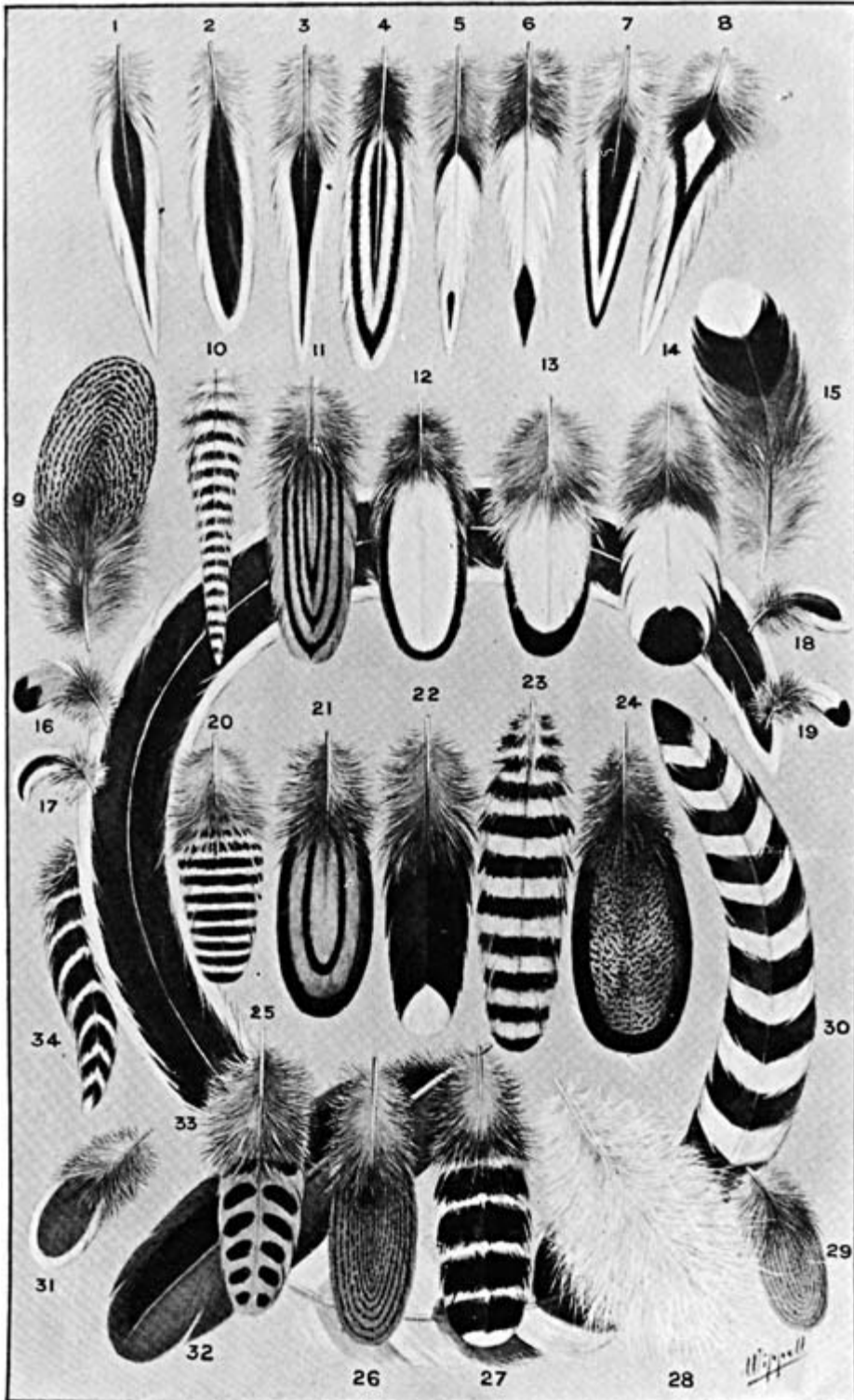
Figure 5 Types of tail



Figure 6

- 1 Neck hackle, male (striped)
- 2 Neck hackle, female (laced)
- 3 Saddle hackle, male (striped)
- 4 Pencilled hackle (female)
- 5 Ticked hackle
- 6 Tipped neck hackle, male, as in spangled Hamburg
- 7 Striped hackle, male. Shows outer fringing of colour – a fault
- 8 Striped saddle hackle, male, showing open centre (desired only in pullet-breeder)
- 9 Pencilled feather, cushion, female, as in silver grey Dorking and brown Leghorns
- 10 Barred neck hackle (male)
- 11 Triple pencilled back (female)
- 12 Laced
- 13 Faulty laced (i.e. horseshoed)
- 14 Spangled (moon-shaped)
- 15 Speckled. Irregular-shaped white tick shows three colours on feather
- 16 Shoulder feather in spangled varieties
- 17 Poland laced crest (pullet)
- 18 Poland crest, female
- 19 Crescent marked
- 20 Barred or finely pencilled as in Hamburg. Bars and spaces same width
- 21 Double laced
- 22 Tipped, showing 'V'-shaped tip, as in Ancona
- 23 Barred as in barred Rock, shows barring in undercolour. To finish with black bar
- 24 Laced and ticked, as in dark Dorking
- 25 Elongated spangle, as in Buttercup
- 26 Finely pencilled, as in dark Brahma female
- 27 Barred, as in Campine. Finishes with white end. Light bars a quarter to a third of the width of dark bars
- 28 'Silkie' (no webbing)
- 29 Fine in pencilling, as in black marks of black-red, and duckwing Game
- 30 Barred Rock sickle
- 31 Buff laced
- 32 Wing marking on flight feather
- 33 Laced sickle
- 34 Saddle hackle mackerel marked (Campine cockerel)

Figure 6 Feather markings



Complete classification of pure breed poultry

British Poultry Standards

CHICKENS

Hard Feather

Indian Game
Modern Game
Carlisle Old English Game
Oxford Old English Game
Old English Game Bantam

Soft Feather: Heavy

Australorp
Barnevelder
Brahma
Cochin
Croad Langshan
Dorking
Faverolles
Frizzle
Marans
New Hampshire Red
Orpington
Plymouth Rock
Rhode Island Red
Sussex
Wyandotte

Soft Feather: Light

Ancona
Araucana
Rumpless Araucana
Hamburgh
Leghorn
Minorca
Poland
Redcap
Scots Dumpy
Scots Grey
Silkie
Welsummer

Asian Hard Feather

Asil
Ko Shamo
Kulang
Malay
Nankin Shamo
Satsumadori
Shamo
Taiwan
Thai Game
Tuzo
Yakido
Yamato-Gunkei

True Bantam

Belgian
Dutch
Japanese
Pekin
Rosecomb
Sebright

Rare True Bantam

Booted
Nankin
Ohiki

**Rare Soft Feather:
Heavy**

Autosexing breeds:
 Rhodebar, Wybar
Crèvecoeur
Dominique
German Langshan
Houdan
Ixworth
Jersey Giant
La Flèche
Modern Langshan
Norfolk Grey
North Holland Blue
Orloff
Transylvanian Naked
 Neck

**Rare Soft Feather:
Light**

Andalusian
Appenzeller
Autosexing breeds:
 Legbar,
 Cream Legbar, Welbar
Brakel
Campine
Fayoumi
Friesian
Kraienköppe
Lakenvelder
Marsh Daisy
Old English Pheasant
 Fowl
Sicilian Buttercup
Spanish
Sulmtaler
Sultan
Sumatra
Thüringian
Vorwerk
Yokohama

TURKEYS

Heavy

Bronze
Bourbon Red
Narragansett
Nebraskan

Light

Blue
Buff
Norfolk Black
Slate
Pied
White

DUCKS

Heavy

Aylesbury
Blue Swedish
Cayuga
Muscovy
Pekin
Rouen
Rouen Clair
Saxony
Silver Appleyard

Light

Abacot Ranger
Bali
Campbell
Crested
Hook Bill
Indian Runner
Magpie
Buff Orpington
Welsh Harlequin

Bantam

Black East Indian
Call
Crested
Silver Appleyard
 Miniature
Silver Bantam