
OLD ENGLISH GAME

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ORIGIN: British
CLASSIFICATION: Light breed: Hard feather
EGG COLOUR: Tinted (Sitters)

MASSES:
LARGE FOWL

Male 1.8 to 2.5 kg
 Female 1.4 to 1.8 kg

BANTAMS:

Cock 850g max
 Cockerel 765g max
 Hen 765g max
 Pullet 680g max

When the Romans invaded Britain, Julius Caesar wrote in his commentaries that the Britons kept fowls for pleasure and diversion but not for table purposes. Many well-known authorities have considered that cock-fighting was the diversion. In 1849 an Act of the British Parliament was passed making cock-fighting illegal in that country, and with poultry exhibitions then taking root, many breeders began to exhibit Game fowls. Over thirty colours of Old English Game have been known. The Old English Game Club split in about 1930 as there was already a divergence of birds being shown with larger breasted, horizontally backed, exhibition type birds tending to win. Breeders of these formed the Carlisle Club, developing only some of the original colours. Breeders of the original type, wherein the back is at 45° to the ground, maintained the well-balanced, close heeled, athletic fighting fowl, and formed the Oxford Club, retaining over thirty colours. The judge of Oxfords does so with the bird facing away from him to assess the correct balance. It is usually agreed that a good game fowl cannot be a bad colour.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

THE MALE

Carriage: Proud, defiant, sprightly, active on his feet, ready for an emergency, alert, agile, quick in his movements.

Body: **Back** short, flat, broad at the shoulders and tapering to the tail.
Breast broad, full, prominent, with large pectoral muscles and breast bone not deep or pointed.
Wings large, long and powerful with large strong quills, amply protecting the thighs. The wings should curve around the body and

then upwards towards the tail, the wing tips should come close to meeting at the back under the base of the tail.

Belly small and tight.

Tail large, carried upwards and spread, main feathers and quills large and strong.

Thighs strong, short, round and muscular, following the line of the body, or slightly curved.

Head:

Skull medium length, small and tapering.

Beak big, the upper mandible shutting tightly and closely over the lower one, curved or hawk-like, pointed and strong at the base.

Eyes large, bright, fiery and fearless, and alike in colour.

Comb single, small upright, of fine texture.

Face and throat skin flexible and loose.

Earlobes and wattles fine and small to match the comb.

Note: It was customary to dub Old English Game males. In hens dubbing was not allowed, although trimming of lobes was permitted.

Neck:

Large-boned, round, of fair length, and very strong at the junction with the body, furnished with long and wiry feathers covering the shoulders.

Legs:

Legs strong, clean boned, sinewy, close scaled, not fat and gummy like other fowls, not stiffly upright or too wide apart, and having a good bend or angle at the hock. Spurs are hard and fine with a slight upward curve and set low on the leg. Toes four, thin, long, straight and tapering, terminating in long, strong curved nails, the fourth or hind toe of good length and strength, extending backwards in almost a straight line and prominently touching the ground

Plumage:

Hard, sounding, resilient, smooth, glossy and sufficient without much fluff, but flowing.

Handling:

Clever, well balanced, hard, yet light fleshed, "corky", mellow and warm, with plenty of muscle, and strong contraction of the wings and thighs to the body, not hanging loose or lump.

THE FEMALE

With the exception of the tail, which is inclined to be fan-shape and carried well up (high), the general characteristics are similar to those of the cock, allowing for the natural sexual differences.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Thin thighs or neck. Flat sided. Deep keel. Pointed, crooked or indented breastbone. Thick instep or toes. Duck feet. Straight or stork legs. Flat or square shanks. Soft flesh. Broken, soft or rotten plumage. Bad carriage or action. Any indication of weakness of condition. Any colour foreign to breed. Odd eyes. Split wing. Enamel white in lobe, blush acceptable. Feather in toe or shank. Round in back. Faking in any form. Under/overweight or oversized. Cock without spurs or with dud spurs. Downward spur or spurs.

COLOUR

The following colours are recognised by the South African Show Poultry Organisation:

THE BLACK-BREASTED DARK RED

(This is the darkest form of the so called Brown/Orange Red group of colours).

Cock: Breast, thighs, belly, tail and closed secondaries black, usually with a purple sheen. Hackle, saddle and shoulder dark red, the red varying in intensity from a bright-wine red to the darkest red possible, sometimes clear but often heavily streaked with black, (crow-winged: no distinct wing bays).

Hen: Although these birds are often bred from black or nearly black hens, the standard hen is black with dark red in hackle and/or throat and breast.

In both sexes:

Fluff (ie, the down at the roots of the feathers next to the skin): Black.

Face: Gypsy face (Dark plum or purple).

Eyes: Black or dark brown.

Beak, legs and nails: Black, dark slate or olive green.

Note: The chicks of the Dark Red are black with white under parts dark shanks with toes partially yellow.

THE BLACK-BREASTED BLACK RED

Cock: Hackle shoulder and saddle clear rich dark red (the colour of the shoulder of the Black-Breasted Red). The breast and remainder of the plumage black. (Crow-winged with no distinct wing bays).

Hen: Body brown mixed with umber brown. Hackle striped red. Breast reddish-brown. Tail and primary wing feathers black.

In both sexes:

Fluff (ie, the down at the roots of the feathers next to the skin): Black.

Face: Gypsy face (Dark plum or purple)

Eyes: Black or dark brown.

Beak, legs and nails: Willow, olive green, dark slate or black.

Note: The chicks of the true Black-Breasted Black Red are very dark partridge, that is, with black dorsal striping.

THE BLACK-BREASTED RED

(Partridge-bred Black Red)

Cock: Breast, thighs, belly and tail black. Wing bars steel blue. Secondaries, (when closed) forming a tan or bay triangle. Hackle and saddle feathers rich orange-red. Shoulders deep crimson-scarlet.

Hen: Hackle golden, lightly striped with black. Breast light brown. Belly ashgrey. Back, shoulders and wings a good even partridge brown peppered with finer markings, or pencilled and laced.. Primaries and tail dark.

In Both Sexed

Fluff: The dark legged birds should have grey fluff, the white and yellow legged, white fluff.

Face: Scarlet red.

Eyes: Red, orange or daw.

Break, legs and nails: White or yellow in birds with orange or daw eyes. Slate, old lead or olive green in birds with red eyes.

Note: The chicks are the true partridge chicks with black or dark brown dorsal striping.

SHADY, STREAKY OR BLACK-BREASTED LIGHT RED (LIGHT RED)
(Wheaten-Bred Light Red)

Cock: Hackle and saddle a few shades lighter than the Black Breasted Red (rich orange-red). Breast black, or streaked with brown. Thighs and belly sometimes striped or laced, tail black. Wing bars steel blue. Secondaries: when closed, forming a light bay or tan triangle.

Hen: Wheaten, a pale cream colour (like wheat) with clear red hackle. Tail and primaries: nearly black. The Red Wheaten or Clay (the colour of red wheat) being light brick red in body and wings. Hackle dark red. Tail: dark.

In both sexes:

Fluff: White, smokey permissible.

Face: Scarlet red.

Eyes: Red or orange.

Beak, legs and nails: White or yellow.

BROWN-BREASTED BROWN RED (BROWN RED)

Cock: Breast, thighs, belly and closed wing mahogany brown. Hackle and saddle almost the same. Shoulder crimson. Primaries and tail black or dark bronze-brown

Hen: Dark mottled brown with light shafts to the feathers.

In both sexes:

Fluff (ie, the down at the roots of the feathers next to the skin); Black.

Face: Gypsy face (deep crimson or purple).

Eyes: Black or dark brown.

Beak, legs and nails: Willow, old lead, dark slate or black.

BLACK OR STREAKY-BREASTED ORANGE RED (ORANGE RED)

- Cock:** Breast black, streaked, laced or pheasant, marked with brown or copper colour. Hackle and saddle brassy or coppery orange. Shoulders: crimson. The rest of the wing black with no bay or triangle. Tail black.
- Hen:** Black or nearly black body, with orange to lemon hackle, striped with black, or dark mottled brown and gold striped hackle.
- In both sexes:**
- Fluff:** Black or nearly black
- Face:** Gypsy face (Dark plum or mulberry).
- Eyes:** Dark brown or black.
- Beak, legs and nails:** Old lead, olive or black.

GINGER-BREASTED GINGER RED (GINGER)

- Cock:** Hackle and saddle red golden. Shoulders crimson-red. Breast and thighs deep yellow ochre, either clear or slightly pencilled or spotted. Tail and flight feathers bronze.
- Hen:** Golden yellow throughout, pencilled or laced, particularly on back and wings, with bronze. Tail pencilled bronze or dark.
- In both sexes:**
- Fluff:** Dark.
- Face:** Crimson or Gypsy (purple) face.
- Eyes:** Dark brown or black.
- Beak, legs and nails:** Willow, old lead or dark slate in birds with dark brown or black eyes. White or yellow in birds with red eyes.

BLACK-BREASTED SILVER DUCKWING

- Cock:** Resembles the Black Breasted Red in his black markings and blue wing bars. Breast black. Hackle, saddle and shoulders a clear silvery-white free from stripes or ticks. Secondaries when closed forming a silver wing triangle.
- Hen:** Hackle silvery white, lightly striped with black. Body and wings even silvery-grey, pencilled with black, free from rust. Breast pale salmon. Primaries and tail nearly black.
- In both sexes:**
- Fluff:** Light grey.
- Face:** Red.
- Eyes:** Red, orange or pearl.
- Beak, legs and nails:** Slate, yellow or willow in birds with red eyes. Yellow or white in birds with orange or pearl eyes.

BLACK-BREASTED YELLOW DUCKWING (GOLDEN DUCKWING)

Cock: Resembles the Silver Duckwing in his black markings and blue wing bars. Breast black. Hackle and saddle a rich straw yellow, free from stripes or ticks. Secondaries, when closed, forming a golden wing triangle. Shoulders deep golden. Rest of the plumage black.

Hen: Deeper rich salmon colour in breast. Body slightly browner tinge than the Silver hen and free from any rust.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Light grey.

Face: Red.

Eyes: Red, orange or brown.

Beak, legs and nails: Slate, yellow or willow in birds with red or brown eyes. Yellow or white in birds with orange or pearl eyes.

BLACK-BREASTED BIRCHEN DUCKWING

Cock: Resembles the Golden and Silver duckwing in his black markings and wing triangles. Hackle deep, rich straw, may be lightly striped. Shoulders maroon.

Hen: A shade darker than the Yellow duckwing female. Hackle more heavily striped with black, and often foxy (brownish red) on the shoulders.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Light grey to grey.

Face: Red but slightly darker than the Golden Duckwing.

Eyes: Red, brown or orange.

Beak, legs and nails: Dark slate, yellow or willow in birds with red or brown eyes. Yellow or white in birds with orange or pearl eyes.

DUN-BREASTED BLUE DUN (SELF BLUE)

Cock: Breast, belly, thighs and closed secondaries the colour of new slate. Sometimes the breast marked with the same colour but two shades darker. Hackle, saddle and shoulders, and sometimes the tail coverts and the primaries two shades darker (like a slate colour after being wetted).

Hen: Blue or slate, colour, with dark hackle like the male, often marked or laced all over with the darker shade of blue.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Slate or blue.

Face: Gypsy face (Mulberry or plum).

Eyes: Dark brown or black.
Beak, legs and nails: Old lead, black, willow or slate.

DUN OR STREAKY-BREASTED RED DUN (RED DUNS)

Cock: Breast slate or streaked with copper red. Hackle and saddle orange or dark red striped with slate or dark striped. Shoulders crimson. Wing bars and closed secondaries slate, sometimes slightly marked with brown but with no triangle. Tail slate or dark blue.

Hen: Body slate all over, or, laced in a darker shade. Golden or red striped hackle. Sometimes marked or laced with gold on the breast.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Dark slate.
Face: Crimson or gypsy face (mulberry).
Eyes: Dark brown or black.
Beak, legs and nails: Dark slate, black, olive green, old lead or willow



Cock: The colour pattern to follow that of the Black Breasted Red with the black being or triangle. replaced by blue. Wing bar steel blue. Secondaries when closed showing a distinct bay

Hen: Hackle golden, lightly striped with blue or dun. Breast brick colour. Body even blue partridge, with blue primaries.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Dark slate.
Face: Red
Eyes: Red.
Beak, legs and nails: Dark slate, olive green, yellow, willow or white.

BLUE LIGHT RED

Cock: The colour to follow that of the Shady, Streaked or Black Breasted Light Red with the black being replaced by blue, also with a bay or triangle.

Hen: Colour of the standard Wheaten or Clay with blue tail and primaries. Commonly known as Blue Tailed Wheatens.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Dark slate.
Face: Red.
Eyes: Red or orange.

Beak, legs and nails: White or yellow.

BLUE DUCKWING

Cock: The colour to follow that of the Yellow, Silver or Birchen Duckwing with the black being replaced by blue. A clear wing bar with a distinct creamy or white triangle being essential.

Hen: Standard Duckwing colour with silver hackle, striped with blue and with blue in the flights and tail. Brick coloured breast.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Grey.

Face: Red.

Eyes: Red or orange.

Beak, legs and nails: White or yellow in birds with red or orange eyes. Slate in birds with red eyes.

YELLOW, SILVER OR HONEYDUNS

Cock: These varieties are marked similarly to the Red Dun but with different top colours. Breast, thighs, belly, wings and tail dun. In the Honey Dun the hackle, saddle, shoulders and back are the colour of a new honeycomb. In the Yellow dun the honeycomb is replaced by a rich straw yellow and in the Silver dun it is replaced by a clear silvery white.

All three these Duns have no wing bay or triangle.

Hen: Hens are blue or dun bodied with hackles (and breast markings) to match their mates.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Blue or dun.

Face: Scarlet red or gypsy face (mulberry).

Eyes: Dark brown or black.

Beak, legs and nails: Slate, black, old lead or willow.

BLACK OR STREAKY-BREASTED DARK GREY

Cock: Like the Black Breasted Black Red in his black marking, except hackle, saddle and shoulders a dark silver-grey, often striped with black. Crow winged. No yellow or brown in hackle allowed.

Hen: Nearly black, with grey striped hackle. Body very dark grey. Other Greys may have laced, streaked or mottle grey breasts. Hackle, saddle and shoulders more or less striped with black. The hens grey to match. No yellow or brown in hackle allowed.

In both sexes:

Fluff: From light grey to dark grey to black.
Face: Gypsy face (Purple or mulberry).
Eyes: Dark brown or black.
Beak, legs and nails: Black if black breasted or, dark slate if streaky breasted.

CLEAR MEALY-BREASTED MEALY GREY

Cock: Nearly Creamy White breasted with hackle, saddle and wings the same lightly striped. Plumage and most of the tail grey.
Hen: Light creamy grey.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Light grey.
Face: Red or purple (gypsy face).
Eyes: Dark brown.
Beak, legs and nails: Dark grey
Note: Greys differ from duckwings in having the secondaries, when closed, black with no wing triangle.

PILES - SMOCK (WHITE) BREASTED BLOOD WING PILE

Cock: Marked exactly as the Black Breasted Light Red, except that the black and the blue wing bars are exchanged for a clear creamy white. The breast may be streaked with red in the Red Pile cocks.
Hen: White with salmon breast and golden striped hackle, or lightly streaked all over with red.

In both sexes:

Fluff: White.
Face: Red.
Eyes: Red in birds with willow legs. Yellow, red or orange in birds with white or yellow legs.
Beak, legs and nails: White, yellow or willow.
Note: Other varieties of Piles may be streaked, marbled or robin breasted, and light lemon or custard in top colour. Dun piles should have slate blue markings in place of red and smoky under colour. Ginger breasted, yellow piles are also acceptable.

SPANGLE

Cock: The cock must resemble the Black Breasted Red (Partridge bred) in colour. Have white tips (spangling) to their feathers. The more of these spots and the more regularly they are distributed the better. The cock should show white ends to the feathers on the hackle and saddle.
Hen: A good even Dark Partridge, as evenly spangled as possible.

In both sexes:

Fluff: White.
Face: Red.
Eyes: Red.
Beak, legs and nails: Any colour to match plumage.

WHITE

Cocks and hens: Pure white, free from any coloured feathers.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Pure white.
Face: Red.
Eyes: Red, orange or pearl.
Beak, legs and nails: White in birds with orange or pearl eyes. Yellow in birds with red eyes.

Cocks and hens: Should be free from any white or coloured feathers.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Black
Face: Gypsy face.
Eyes: Black or dark brown.
Beak, legs and nails: Black, olive green or old lead.



FURNESS, BRASSY BACK and POLECAT

Cocks and hens: These are blacks with colour on their wings or back and occasionally have red eyes and yellow legs, which are allowed. The females are chiefly black, but often much streaked with grey-brown on breast and wings. Polecats are streaked with dark tan colour on hackles and saddle in the males.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Grey to black
Face: Gypsy face.
Eyes: Black or dark brown.
Beak, legs and nails: Willow, grey, yellow, old lead or slate.

CUCKOO OR CRELE

Male and female

Plumage: Background colour, off white with bars across each feather in redgolden, grey or silver. For example, Cuckoos resemble the Plymouth Rock Fowl in markings of a blue-grey barred plumage. Variations of this colour are yellow cuckoos, also creles, creoles, cirches, having some mixture of gold and red in the plumage and white fluff, often extremely pretty.

In both sexes:

Fluff: White or grey.
Face: Red.
Eyes: From orange to red.
Beak, legs and nails: Any self colour. Mottling allowed.

BROWN-BREADED YELLOW BIRCHEN

Cock: Breast reddish brown. Hackle and saddle straw striped birchen brown. Shoulders old gold or birchen. Brown wing bar and golden wing triangle. Tail bronze or bronze black.

Hen: Yellow- brown, with grey hackle and robin breast.

In both sexes:

Fluff: Light grey.
Face: Red.
Eyes: Yellow or red.
Beak, legs and nails: Yellow or white.

SPLASH

Cock and hen: A mixture or single colour of black, blue, red, yellow or white solid feathers in a white or self-coloured fowl.

In both sexes:

Fluff: White to light grey.
Face: Red or gypsy face.
Eyes: Red, orange or dark brown to black.
Beak, legs and nails: Any self colour. White or yellow with red eye. Mottling allowed.

HENNIES OR HENCOCKS

These are found in all the hen colour varieties and should, in their plumage, resemble the hens as closely as possible. They should have their hackle and saddle feathers rounded and the coverts hen-like and not have much sheen on their feathers. This variety often runs large and reachy which is one

of their characteristics. The two centre tail feathers (sickles) should be straight. Legs and eyes as per colour standard applicable. The feathers have light shafts.

MUFFS AND TASSELS

Muffs and Tassels are found in all colour varieties. There have been famous strains of both, though now scarce. Tassels vary from a few long feathers behind the comb, (Topins or Toppies) to a good bunch, but without any skull deformity. Muffs of the old breed were stronger, heavier boned bird than the cocks bred today and were somewhat loose in feather. The Muff forms a distinct beard of fine feathers on the throat, often extending to form a whisker-like tuft under the ears.

NOTES:

1. It is desirable that the toenails match the legs and beak in all colours of Old English Game Fowl.
2. White or yellow-legged birds only, may have white feathers in tail and wings (young birds only). This should be penalised in dark legged bird varieties.
3. Mottling on legs only acceptable where allowed.
4. Dark eyed birds must have dark beaks and legs.
5. Birds with wing bays or triangles must have red, orange or pearl eyes according to the individual colour standards.

BANTAMS

Old English Game bantams should be miniatures of their large fowl counterparts and the same standard, colours and defects are applicable.

SCALE OF POINTS	
Head, including beak and eyes	10
Neck	6
Body, including breast, back and belly	20
Wings	7
Tail	6
Thighs	8
Shanks, spurs and feet	10
Plumage and colour	9
Handling, symmetry, alertness, hardness of flesh and feathers, condition and constitution	15
Carriage, action and activity	9
TOTAL	100