

XIII) THE BREED STANDARDS

TURKEYS

(Meleagris gallopavo)

All turkeys originated in America, where five subspecies are recognized. The turkey dates back to the Aztec period. It was discovered by a Spanish explorer on the North Coast of Venezuela in 1499 and the first specimens were shipped to Spain in 1500. Sixteen years later some reached France. It is believed that the first turkeys were brought to England from Spain in 1524 by William Strickland and from there they probably came to South Africa.

NOTE: Turkeys thus did not originate in Turkey and also not in Calcutta, India, from which the Afrikaans word “kalkoen” is derived: Kalkutta se hoen = kalkoen.



The Wild Turkey