



SOUTHERN AFRICAN SHOW POULTRY ORGANISATION BREED STANDARDS

PLYMOUTH ROCK



ORIGIN: American
CLASSIFICATION: Heavy breed: Soft feather
EGG COLOUR: Brown, or tinted (Sitters)
MASSES:

LARGE FOWL:

Cock:	6.5 kg
Cockerel:	5.0 kg
Hen:	4.8 kg
Pullet:	4.1 kg

BANTAMS:

Cock:	1.7 kg max
Hen:	1.5 kg max

The first breed of poultry to bear this name was first exhibited at America's first poultry show, held at Boston, Massachusetts, in 1849. It is believed that these original fowls lost their identity and that the progenitors of our present Barred Plymouth Rocks were first exhibited at Worcester, Massachusetts in 1869. These were composites of several bloodlines. The first and most prominent cross was that of a Dominique male with Black Cochin or Black Java females, which was originally made at Putnam, Connecticut. The Dominique male used was not the American or Rose Comb Dominique male which became a Standard breed in 1874, but a single combed, hawk-coloured fowl commonly found in that locality. This Plymouth Rock was recognized as a distinct breed and was admitted to the first American Standard of Excellence, published at Buffalo, New York, January 15, 1874.

Whether the Plymouth Rock originated from a Dominique-Black Cochin or from a Dominique-Black Java cross was for a time a much-mooted question. The fact that "Black Cochin" or "Black Java" has been used synonymously in show classifications before the first poultry standard was made in 1873 may have led to confusing the Java with the Cochin.

White Plymouth Rocks were admitted to the American Standard in 1888. Some were white sports of the Barred variety, other strains trace their ancestry to other white fowls. Buff Plymouth Rocks became a Standard variety in 1892. The earliest strains originated in Rhode Island, not far from Fall River, Massachusetts, and were first exhibited as Golden Buffs. Buff Cochin blood was introduced in some strains in New York State. Silver Pencilled Plymouth Rocks originated in the State of New York in 1894 and admitted to the American Standard in 1907. Dark Brahma and Silver Pencilled Wyandotte blood was used to produce this variety. Partridge Plymouth Rocks became a Standard variety in 1909. Partridge Cochin, Dark Cornish, Single comb Golden Wyandotte male, Brown Leghorns, Golden Laced Wyandottes and Barred Plymouth Rocks were amalgamated to form the new variety. Columbian Plymouth Rocks originated in Ohio in 1902, as the result of crosses between Light Brahmas, Barred Plymouth Rocks, White Plymouth Rocks and Columbian Wyandottes. They were admitted to the American Standard in 1910. Blue Plymouth Rocks were admitted to the American Standard at Kansas City, Missouri in 1920.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

THE MALE

Carriage:	Upright and graceful. A noble and majestic appearance.
Body:	Rather long, broad, deep; keel extending well to front and rear of legs. Medium length fluff, moderately full.
Breast:	Broad, moderately deep, well rounded.
Back:	Rather long, broad its entire length, flat at shoulders, nearly horizontal from neck to saddle showing a slight concave sweep to tail. Saddle feathers: moderately long, abundant and filling in well at juncture of tail.
Tail:	Medium length, moderately spread carried at an angle of thirty degrees above horizontal and forming no apparent angle with back. Main tail feathers: broad and overlapping. Main sickle: well curved concealing ends of main tail feathers and conforming to general shape of tail. Lesser sickles and coverts of medium length, well curved and sufficiently abundant to almost conceal the stiff main tail feathers when viewed in profile.
Wings:	Medium size, well-folded, lower edge of folded wing nearly horizontal. Fronts, well covered by breast feathers and points well covered by saddle feathers. Primaries and secondaries: broad and overlapping in natural order when wing is folded.
Head:	
Comb:	Single, medium in size, set firmly on moderately large head. Thick at base, straight and upright, with five or six well-defined evenly serrated points, those in front and rear shorter than those in middle. Blade not conforming too closely to shape of head.
Beak:	Moderately short, stout, regularly curved.
Face:	Surface smooth, skin fine and soft in texture.

Wattles:	Moderately long, uniform in size, well rounded at lower edges. Skin: fine and soft in texture, free from folds or wrinkles.
Eyes:	Large, round and prominent.
Ear-lobes:	Elongated oval, medium size.
Neck:	Moderately long, arched. Hackle: abundant, flowing well over shoulders.
Legs & feet:	Legs set well apart, straight when viewed from front. Lower thighs: large, medium length, about 11.5cm from hock to body, well feathered, smooth. Shanks: medium length, smooth, stout. Toes: four on each foot, medium in length, straight, well spread.
Size:	While the size of the male is distinctly large, nothing is more important than the perfect development of every component part of the body, forming a large frame which gives the birds a noble and majestic appearance.

THE FEMALE

Body:	Rather long, moderately deep, keel extending well to front and rear of legs. Medium length fluff, moderately full.
Breast:	Broad, moderately deep, well rounded.
Back:	Rather long, broad its entire length flat at shoulder, extending with a slightly concave incline to tail, feathers, moderately broad.
Tail:	Medium length, moderately spread, carried at an angle of twenty degrees above the horizontal and forming no apparent angle with back. Main tail feathers: broad and overlapping. Coverts: well developed.
Wings:	Medium size, well folded, lower edges of folded wing nearly horizontal. Front well covered by breast feathers and points well covered by back feathers. Primaries and secondaries: broad and overlapping in natural order when wing is folded.
Head:	
Comb:	Single, small in size, set firmly on a moderately large head, straight upright, evenly serrated having five well defined points, those in front and rear smaller than those in middle.
Beak:	Moderately short, stout, regularly curved.
Face:	Surface smooth, skin fine and soft in texture.
Eyes:	Large, round and prominent.
Wattles:	Medium in size, well rounded at lower edges. Skin: fine and soft in texture.
Ear-lobes:	Elongated oval, medium in size. Surface smooth, skin fine and soft in texture.

Neck:	Medium in length, arched. Hackle feathers, moderately full, sufficient to cover shoulders and blend smoothly and evenly with back.
Legs & feet:	Legs set well apart and straight when viewed from front. Lower thighs: large, medium in length, about 10cm, well feathered, smooth. Shanks: medium in length, smooth, stout. Toes: medium in length, straight, well spread, four in number on each foot.
Size:	Large and imposing.

DISQUALIFICATIONS/SERIOUS DEFECTS

The slightest fluff or feather on shanks or feet, or unmistakable signs of feathers having been plucked from them. Legs other than yellow. White in ear-lobes. Lobbed or rose comb. Decidedly wry tail, crooked back, more than four toes, and entire absence of main tail feathers. Trimming, faking and bodily deformity. Split wing, slipped wing and non-growth of secondaries. Pearl or odd eyes. Crooked breast bone. Twisted feather or feathers in wing or tail of any specimen.

COLOUR

THE BARRED

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles and ear-lobes:	Bright red.
Beak:	Yellow, sometimes with a black streak running down the centre.
Eyes:	Reddish bay.
Shanks and toes:	Yellow (two mottles on each leg of a female allowed).
Plumage:	Web, each feather throughout its length crossed with sharply defined, regular, parallel bars of alternate light (short of positive white) and dark (short of positive black) colour, and ending in a narrow dark tip. The light and dark bars in each section of the male shall be approximately equal in width and moderately narrow except in the flight and main tail feathers, which carry slightly wider bars due to those feathers being wider. The light bars of the female should be slightly narrower than the dark ones. A 60% black, 40% white ratio would be about right. The overall impression of the females colour should be crisp and bright, not smokey or dull. All dark bars on a given feather should be approximately the same width. The same is true of the light bars. In general, the width of barring will vary with the size of feathers in the various areas of the body, the wider bars being found on the larger feathers. Much importance is attached to the straightness of the barring as it crosses each feather. There should be no dark overflow into the light bar and no tendency for shafting or

brownish tinge to the dark bar. The light bars on any feather should be of equal width. The same is true for the dark bars on any given feather.

Undercolour of all sections:

Same as web but not as distinct due to looseness of barbs.

Note:

The barred colour pattern as it is expressed in the Barred Plymouth Rock is due to a sex-linked gene. Therefore the male carries 2 of the genes and the female one. This accounts for the slightly lighter overall appearance of the male.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Any colour feathers foreign to the variety; two or more solid black feathers; shanks other than yellow or dusky yellow. (Females, however, may have two mottles per leg).

THE WHITE

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles

and ear-lobes: Bright red.

Beak: Yellow.

Eyes: Reddish bay.

Shanks and toes: Rich yellow.

Plumage: Web, fluff and shafts of all feathers, in all sections, white.

THE BLACK

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles

and ear-lobes: Bright red.

Beak: Yellow.

Eyes: Red.

Shanks and toes: Rich or dusky yellow. Soles of feet must be yellow.

Plumage: Black with a beetle-green sheen. Undercolour to be of a good black.

THE BUFF

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles and ear-lobes:	Bright red.
Beak:	Yellow.
Eyes:	Reddish bay.
Shanks and toes:	Rich yellow.
Plumage:	Surface throughout, an even shade of rich golden buff. (Buff, is a medium shade of orange-yellow colour with a rich golden cast; not so intense as to show a reddish cast, nor so pale as to appear lemon or light yellow. The term is generally used in referring to the plumage colour of all Standard "Buff" varieties of poultry.)
Male:	Head, neck, hackle, back, wing bows and saddle showing greater lustre.
Female:	Hackle, some lustre.
Undercolour:	Matching surface as near as possible.

THE SILVER PENCILLED

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles and ear-lobes:	Bright red.
Beak:	Dusky yellow, shading to yellow at point.
Eyes:	Reddish bay.
Shanks and toes:	Male: yellow, Female: yellow or dusky yellow, yellow preferred.

MALE

Plumage:	
Head:	Silvery white.
Neck:	Hackle, web of feather, lustrous, greenish black with narrow lacing of silvery white, shafts black. Front of neck, black.
Back:	Back including Saddle, web of feather, lustrous, greenish black with narrow lacing of silvery white, a slight shafting of silvery white permissible. Silvery white predominating on surface of upper back; saddle matching with hackle in colour.
Tail:	Main tail: web, black. Main and Lesser sickles: lustrous, greenish black. Coverts: lustrous, greenish black with narrow lacing of white.

Wings: Fronts: black. Bows: silvery white. Coverts: lustrous, greenish black, forming a distinct wing bar of this colour across entire wing when folded. Primaries: black with narrow edging of white on lower edge of lower webs. Secondaries: lower webs, black with lower half white to a point near end of feathers, terminating abruptly leaving ends of feathers black; upper webs: black; the secondaries when folded forming a triangular white wing bay between the wing bar and tips of secondary feathers.

Breast: Lustrous, greenish black.

FEMALE

Plumage:

Head: Silvery grey.

Neck: Hackle: black, slightly pencilled with steel grey, and laced with silvery white. Front of neck: pencilled same as breast.

Back: Steel grey, with distinct black pencillings.

Tail: Main tail: black, except two top feathers which have, lower web, black; upper web: grey pencilled with black. Coverts: steel grey with distinct black pencillings.

Wings: Fronts: bows and coverts; steel grey with distinct black pencillings. Primaries: black with steel grey diagonal pencillings on lower webs. Secondaries lower webs: steel grey with black pencillings, extending well around tips of feathers; balance of upper webs: black.

Breast: Steel grey, with distinct black pencillings.

Body and fluff: Body: steel grey, with distinct black pencillings. Fluff: steel grey, pencilled with dull black.

Undercolour of all sections:

Medium slate.

Note: Pencillings in all Silver Varieties should be distinct in sharp contrast to the ground colour, be regular in shape, uniform in width and conform to the contour of the feather. Each feather in the back, breast, body wing bows and thighs should have three or more pencillings.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Shanks and toes other than yellow or dusky yellow.

THE PARTRIDGE

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles and ear-lobes: Bright red.

Beak: Dark horn, shading to yellow at point.

Eyes: Reddish bay.

Shanks and toes: Male: yellow. Female: yellow or dusky yellow, yellow preferred.

MALE

Plumage:

Head: Web of feather, lustrous rich red.

Neck: Hackle: web of feather, lustrous, greenish black with a narrow lacing of medium shade of rich, brilliant red; shaft black. Front of neck: black.

Back: Saddle: web of feather, lustrous, greenish black with narrow lacing of a medium shade of rich brilliant red, a slight shafting of rich red permissible. Rich brilliant red predominating on surface of upper back; saddle matching with hackle in colour.

Tail: Main tail: web, black. Main and lesser sickles: lustrous greenish black. Coverts: lustrous, greenish black, laced with medium shade of rich brilliant red.

Wings: Fronts: black. Bows: a medium shade of rich brilliant red. Coverts: lustrous, greenish black, forming a distinct wing bar of this colour across entire wing when folded. Primaries: black, with narrow edging of reddish bay on lower webs. Secondaries: lower webs, black with lower half reddish bay, terminating with black at end of each feather; upper webs: black; secondaries when folded forming a triangular reddish bay wing-bay between the wing bar and tips of secondary feathers.

Breast: Lustrous, greenish black.

Body and fluff: Body: black. Fluff: black, slightly tinged with red.

Undercolour: Slate.

FEMALE

Plumage:

Head: Deep reddish bay.

Neck: Hackle: black, slightly pencilled with deep reddish bay and laced with reddish bay. Front of neck: pencilled same as breast.

Back: Deep reddish bay, with distinct black pencillings.

Tail: Main tail: black, except two top feathers which have; lower webs, black; upper webs, deep reddish bay, pencilled with black. Coverts: deep reddish bay with distinct black pencillings.

Wings: Fronts, bows and coverts: deep reddish bay with distinct black pencillings. Primaries: black with deep reddish bay diagonal pencillings on lower webs. Secondaries: lower webs, deep reddish bay with black pencillings, extending well around tips of feathers; balance of upper webs, black.

Body and fluff:	Body: deep reddish bay, with distinct black pencillings. Fluff: deep reddish bay pencilled with dull black.
Undercolour:	Slate.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Positive white in main tail feathers, sickles or secondaries; shanks other than yellow or dusky yellow.

THE COLUMBIAN

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles and ear-lobes: Bright red.

Beak: Yellow, with dark stripe down upper mandible.

Eyes: Reddish bay.

Shanks and toes: Yellow.

MALE

Plumage:

Head: Silvery white.

Neck: Hackle: web of feather, lustrous, greenish black, with a narrow lacing of silvery white; greater portion of shaft, black. Front of neck: white.

Back: Silvery white. Cape: black and white. Saddle: silvery white with an elongated V- shaped black stripe increasing in width, length and density as it nears the tail coverts.

Note: The stripe should extend from near the tip of feather approximately one-half to three-fourths the length of the web and allow a clean break of white between the undercolour and base of stripe.

Tail: Main tail: black. Main and lesser sickles: lustrous, greenish black. Coverts: lustrous, greenish black, laced with silvery white.

Wings: Fronts: white, some black permissible. Bows and coverts: silvery white. Primaries: black with lower edge of lower web, white. Secondaries: lower web unexposed portion, black; edged with white; the white extending around end of feather. The white ends of the upper secondaries growing progressively wider so the exposed portion in the upper row is entirely white, forming a white wing bay when wing is folded.

Breast: White.

Body and fluff: White, except under wings where it may be bluish slate.

FEMALE

Plumage:

Head: White.

Neck: Hackle: web of feather, lustrous, greenish black with a narrow lacing of silvery white; greater portion of shaft black. Front of neck: white.

Back: White.

Tail: Main tail: black, except two top feathers, which are slightly laced with white. Coverts: black, with narrow lacing of white.

Wings: Fronts, bows and coverts: white. Primaries: black with white edging on lower webs. Secondaries: lower webs, lower portion, white extending around ends and lacing upper portion of upper webs, growing wider in shorter secondaries, sufficient to show a white wing bay when wing is folded; upper webs: black.

Breast: White.

Body and fluff: White except under wings where it may be bluish slate. Fluff: white.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

One or more solid black or brown feathers on surface of back; dark spots or mossiness in surface of back or saddle appearing in approximately 15% or more of the feathers of this section, except narrow black stripes extending not over half the length of feather in saddle and near tail of male, or dark markings in cape of either sex; red feathers in plumage.

THE BLUE

MALE AND FEMALE

Comb, face, wattles

and ear-lobes: Bright red.

Beak: Horn shading to yellow at point.

Eyes: Reddish bay.

Shanks and toes: Male: yellow. Female: yellow or dusky yellow, yellow preferred.

MALE

Plumage:

Head: Glossy black.

Neck: Hackle: an even shade of clear bluish slate, distinctly laced with glossy black. Front of neck: same as breast.

Back and saddle: An even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather distinctly laced with glossy black.

Tail:	Main tail, main and lesser sickles, coverts: an even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather distinctly laced with glossy black.
Wings:	Fronts and Bows: an even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather distinctly laced with glossy black. Coverts: an even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather having a sharply defined lacing of black. Primaries: an even shade of bluish slate. Secondaries: lower webs, an even shade of clear bluish slate; upper webs, clear bluish slate, each feather distinctly laced with black.
Breast:	An even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather having a sharply defined lacing of black.
Body and Fluff:	An even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather having a sharply defined lacing of black. Fluff: clear bluish slate, laced with black.

FEMALE

Plumage:	
Head:	Bluish slate.
Neck:	Hackle: an even shade of clear bluish slate, distinctly laced with black. Front of neck: same as breast.
Back:	An even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather laced with black.
Tail:	Main tail and coverts: an even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather laced with black.
Wings:	Fronts, bows and coverts: an even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather having a sharply defined lacing of black. Primaries: an even shade of clear bluish slate. Secondaries: an even shade of clear bluish slate, distinctly laced with black.
Breast:	An even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather distinctly laced with black.
Body and Fluff:	An even shade of clear bluish slate, each feather distinctly laced with black. Fluff: an even shade of clear bluish slate, laced with black.
Note:	Blue Fowl, of a bluish slate colour are genetically black fowl in which the black pigment granules are modified in shape and distribution on the surface of the feather, creating a dilution of black and causing the characteristic bluish slate colour. This condition is the hybrid expression of two heredity colour factors, black and a form of white (usually with some splashing), neither of which is dominant over the other, but which are blending in character. Blue to blue will produce off-spring one-half blue, the other half evenly divided in black and splashed whites; and blue to black, and blue to splashed will produce the parent types equally, while black to splashed will produce all blues.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Red, yellow, or positive white in plumage; shanks other than yellow or dusky yellow.

BANTAMS

Plymouth Rock bantams are miniatures of their large fowl counterparts and the standards for large fowl should be used.

CALE OF POINTS	
THE BARRED	
Type	30
Barring	20
Colour	15
Size	10
Legs and feet	10
Condition	10
Head	5
TOTAL	100
THE BUFF	
Type (symmetry), shape, size and carriage	30
Colour (general)	20
Quality and texture (general)	15
Condition and fitness	15
Head and comb	10
Eye colour	5
Legs and feet	5
TOTAL	100
OTHER VARIETIES	
Type	30
Colour	30
Head and eyes	10
Legs and feet	10
Condition	10
Quality and texture	10
TOTAL	100