



A PEARL of an ORPINGTON

Aesthetic Beauty pure, the Yellow Black-Laced Colour.

**By: Helmut Demler,
Specialist Breed Judge**

The Honorary member and specialist Breed Judge of the Orpington Club, Rolf Daubenthaler from Mühlbach in 1997 wrote in his book about the yellow black-laced Orpington:

"Von Veltheims great efforts with the Yellow Black-laced Orpington produced in the 70's a colour of the Orpington that conquered and took the hearts of the breeders by storm and became one of the most beloved colours of all time. The creator, Jobst von Veltheim surely could not possibly have even dreamed off such success! It was a colour worth all the effort!"

Jobst von Veltheim occupied himself, from 1955 with the creating of 'new colours' in the Orpington. For the 100 year Anniversary of the Braunschweiger's Poultry Breeders Association he showed for the first time the 'blue-yellow' Orpington, which was also the colours of the City Flag. From those the 'yellow-black' later to be called the 'yellow black-laced' were created. This colour was more wanted than the 'yellow blue-laced' because of their much weaker colour contrast. The first exhibition quality was presented in 1963.

Right: The first yellow-black laced cock with the grade V/97 points at the Club Show in Alzey-Heimersheim 1981, spoken of then as the 'Cockbird of the Century'. The breeder was Hermann Stübs from Nidda, Germany, who who his now very ill and can no longer keep/breed his poultry. Photo: H. Demler.



This latter colour is the youngest in the story of the Orpington Breeders history. According to Jobst von Veltheim, his main idea was to start with the Mahogany colour far more than the Yellow Black-Laced. He crossed a reddish cockbird with a black hen, and then a cock bird from the F1 was paired to a Speckled Sussex hen. In the F2 a Yellow Cock bird was used, however, instead of the Mahogany colour appeared the lacing!

To 'fix' this lacing, a very heavy 'square' form Barnevelder Hen was used and later Yellow Orpington hens. When von Veltheim also tried crossings with Blue Orpington's, Blue Laced birds were produced.

In 1965 the first Yellow Black-Laced were presented at the National Show in Frankfurt, the name was given officially when the Colour was recognised on the 15.12.1972.

Links: A pullet at the Nationale Rassegeflügel-schau Leipzig 2004, grade V / 97 Points. Breeder and owner: Helmut Demler. Photo: J. Wolters.

The Creator writes about the problems of making the colour:

"With the Black-Yellow it was particularly difficult to achieve the correct lacing. It appeared almost impossible on the soft feathering to 'fix' a clear and distinct lacing. After breeding several hundred birds, eventually a percentage were produced with consistently good lacing, at the same time it was comforting that the full 'square' form of the birds was also achieved.

If I can continue with this

exercise of creation of a new colour, with the time, money and all the work involved then must eventually by 1971/72 a large number of the best laced birds be produced. The question is, if left to Nature, if the lighter or darker 'tone' of Yellow will predominate? Maybe one day when the colour is recognised, it should be named the 'Black-Gold', as with the large Yellow Orpington is more and more in the critiques described as 'Golden-Yellow'. With me now, more and more often are Red-Brown Laced produced, which could be called Mahogany colour; this is due to the long years of crossing to the Barnevelder.

I observe the birds closely and understandably I state, that only the one colour variety that will breed true during the years, can be recognised. In two or three years we should know more!"

This was written by Jobst von Veltheim in 1970 directed to the then BZA (= German Standard Committee) Chairman Friedrich Regenstein. In this writing was clearly stated the problems of this colour/marking, also mentioning the varying colour of the Yellow, over which a definite decision was taken at a later date.



After the recognition of the colour von Veltheim gave birds to several breeders to widen the genetic base. Hermann Stübs had the first birds, the two breeders following their own breeding plans. Stübs crossed in a Black Orpington hen, which had a positive effect; his birds having a much richer ground colour. The colour was a Cinnamon yellow colour and because of the Black cross the Black Lacing was also much more well defined than before and with his birds the light feather shaft disappeared.

Right: 1,0 Orpington, at the Hannover Show in 2005, grade V/97 pnt. For this rare, beloved but still very difficult-to-breed colour, this is a perfect cock! Some minor wishes: a bit more back length and more defined markings on the thighs. As for type, ground colour (cinnamon), lacing and comb this is a top class bird, only seldom seen!

Photo: J. Wolters.



Jobst von Veltheim's birds were overall paler due to the Yellow Orpington cross, so that his birds also retained the paler ground colour and light feather shaft.

At the National in Nürnberg the decision was made that the Cinnamon colour was to take precedence. Following this ruling the colour rapidly became more popular and in 1981 the first V (= Excellent) grade bird, a cock bird, was exhibited by Hermann Stübs. This bird was nominated as the 'Year Hundred Cockbird'. This was written by the Fancy Press as: "The High Point in the Story of the Yellow Black Laced Orpington was in the year 1981, when Hermann Stübs at the National Club Show in the Turn hall in Alzey- Heinersheim showed the 'Year Hundred Cock Bird'; it was a V cock bird that in the post war years could not be equalled! Patient breeding and enthusiasm were at last rewarded!"

The author remembers well today this phenomenal bird and the 'Winners' Party that was held after the Judging with Hermann Stübs having a place of honour!

Besides the Creator of this colour, Jobst von Veltheim, Hermann Stübs had done so much for the popularity of this colour and marking.

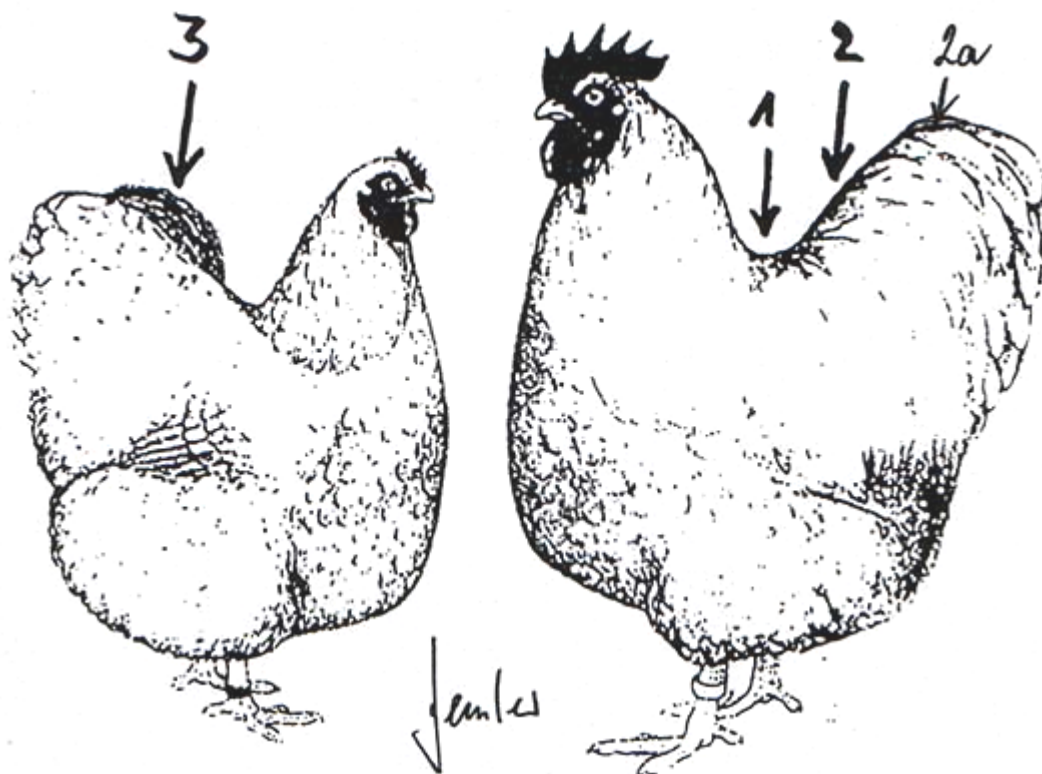
Hatching eggs and chicks were sent not only over all of Germany but also to neighbouring Countries. The Yellow Black-Laced lived an enormous rise in popularity in the whole of Europe.

The Yellow Black-Laced, can be spoken of as a 'difficult' colour/marking to achieve perfection, but its future can be assured, even when in the past the variety had had high and low points with the actual numbers of breeders.

In the wide Colour palette of the Large Fowl it is a 'special' one-off. Also in recent years there has been a rapid development in this colour in the Bantam Orpington's.

The breeding and recognition of this very individual colour variety is a fitting Monument to Jobst von Veltheim, who although now of a great age is still fit and active.

Some information on the typical form of the Orpington



The 'cube' shape form is typical for this breed and gives the correct overall picture: that with the stated size and 'square' appearance from all sides, so that the length, breadth and height should all be equal. Birds with strong, not loose feathering and appearing deep in stance are of more worth; the hens should be even more of these proportions than the cocks.

Back, back-tail line, cushion?

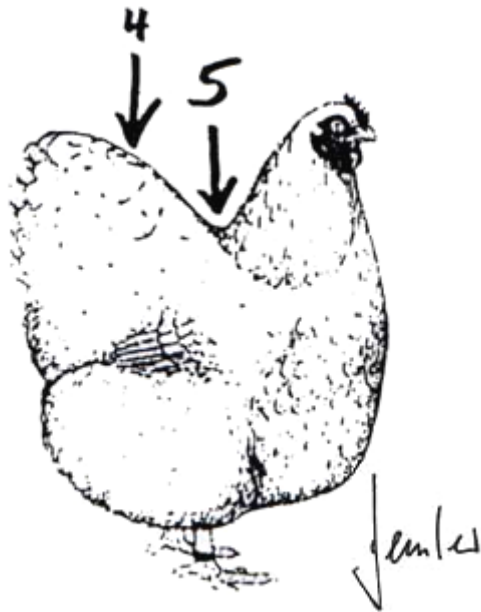
(1) What is understood by the optimal length of back?

2 to 3 Fingers broad (= 3-4 cm) should be between the neck hackle and the start of the saddle hackle. The neck-back-tail line should show a regular curving line with adequate and visible length of the back. It is a fault if the neck hackle is adjacent the rising tail. In this case the judge would speak of: 'more back length needed' or 'too short back'.

(2) This is an example of an even rise to the tail, to be more precise, this is the only right line, so without any cushion! We want an all in one sweeping, unbroken line.

(2a) The top (highest point) of the tail is before the end of the tail!

(3) This kind of tail line is called a saddle cushion, and not wished at an Orpington hen. As a rule, birds with such a poor back/tail line will not achieve more than a (B) 90 grade. Hens like this should not be exhibited, and also ideally not be bred from!



(4) This is how we want the back-tail line at the hen: flowing and slightly rising to the tail, saddle wide, but smooth and flat, no 'ball' cushion as in the Cochin.

(5) The ideal: a visible back and an even curving topline neck-back-tail, where the highest point is just before the tail end.

**Right: A beautiful hen with a very good cube-formed body and a graceful appearance with an outline approaching concave, her cushion slightly rising to the tail. Broad, shiny feathering with a splendid ground colour and lacing. So indeed an ideal hen!
Breeder: Karl Speck, Oetigheim, Germany.
Photo: H. Demler.**





Left: Photo of a hen's tail:
This is what an Orpington's tail should look like; no flat tail feathers! An excellent example of how it should be!
Photo: H. Demler

The description of the Yellow Black-Laced colour/marking, according to the German Standard

Cock

Head a dark Gold-Yellow, the neck feathers, Gold-Yellow with a distinct black feather shaft marking and black lacing around the edge of each feather.

The saddle feathers a dark Gold-yellow with a Black tip and black lacing preferred. The back and wing coverts a rich Dark Golden Yellow to Golden Brown, in colour noticeably more intense than the rest of the ground colour. The large wing covert feathers (Bar) a rich dark Yellow to Cinnamon colour with distinct black lacing.

The secondaries that form the wing 'triangle' Gold yellow with a greater or lesser amount of clear black lacing on the outer edge of the feathers with a 'half

moon' black lacing at the feather end.

The primaries have the inner feather webbing a blackish Brown, the outer webbing gold yellow to Cinnamon colour; some black flecking and possibly white tips are tolerated.

The breast a dark Gold Yellow to Cinnamon with broad black lacing with intense sheen. The thighs and belly as the breast but with the lacing even broader. The feathering behind the thighs showing greyish black. The tail coverts a dark Golden Yellow to Cinnamon with black lacing with an intense sheen. The main sickle feathers Cinnamon colour with a half moon shape at the feather tips and black lacing; some black flecking is 'normal' (unavoidable).

Left:
A perfect ground colour and lacing! Photo: H. Demler

Hen

The main colour is a dark Golden yellow to Cinnamon Colour (every feather of the body should have even, broad black lacing); the overall



impression should be a darker shade than the cock bird. The neck feathers a dark Golden yellow, with very broad lacing often making the feathers almost appearing black. The primaries, belly, abdomen and main tail feathers, as with the cock bird, with the white tips to the primaries and light black flecking to the large tail covert feathers as stated.

Leg colour: white; a light grey is tolerated with the hen.

Eye Colour: orange-red, with the hen a light brown cast is normal.

Faults:

For the Cock: too pale, 'brassy' neck and saddle feathers, lacing missing on the breast; also the tail coverts and the large wing coverts (Bar) too red, brown or pale colour tone; heavily flecked under-feather.

For the Hen: too dark or pale, uneven, flecked ground colour, pale feather shaft marking, poor lacing.

Both Sexes: missing thigh markings, heavy flecking or peppering to the middle of the feather colour (the Gold Yellow), very pale vent feathering, flecked leg colour, pure brown eye colour.

Weight: Male 4, 0 – 4, 5 kg, Female 3, 0 – 3, 5 kg.

Egg minimum weight: 53 g.

Shell colour: Cream colour.

Ring/Band size: Males 22, Females 20.

Right: Junggeflügel-schau Hannover 2005.

This is the most beautiful cock ever seen since the creation of this colour.

Breeder and owner: Helmut Demler, Alzey, Germany.

Photo: Rudi Proll.

For more information and breeders addresses, please contact the Orpington Breeders' Club in Germany; in the Internet you can obtain more information at: www.sv-orpington.de

