

SCHMALKALDEN MOORHEAD

SCHMALKALDENER MOHRENKOPF (D)

NEGRE A CRINIÈRE (F)

SCHMALKALDENER MOORKOP (NL)

By: Mick Bassett

In Germany this Breed is in the 'Structure' Pigeon Group along with Fantails, Jacobins, Frill backs etc. For me this was a 'Local' Breed when I lived in Thuringia; Schmalkalden is a Local Town in the Thuringian 'Highlands' known as the 'Wald' (Forest).



Right above: Schmalkalden Moorheads in my Aviary.



Left: Schmalkalden Moorheads in red and yellow. Painted by John Hatzmann (NL) in 1998. Owner of this painting is Peter Stallmann (NL).



Left and above: Schmalkalden Moorheads in black at Leipzig (D) Exposition 2006.



Bred originally from Jacobins and Long Muffed Moorhead Pigeons, it was known as a Breed as early as 1895, in fact I have pictures and a Standard from a 1909 Book, which obviously dates to before 1900. (Only Blacks mentioned)

In 1931 The Schmalkaldener Mohrenköpfe Club was formed but after the Second World War only one or two breeders still had this beautiful breed, in-fact today with only 67 Breeders or thereabouts it has not really recovered its former Glory.



Left and above: Schmalkalden Moorhead in yellow and blue at the Leipzig (D) Exhibition 2006.

Right: Schmalkalden Moorhead in black at the Rote Erde (D) exposition 2007.



Above: Schmalkalden Moorhead in red, at the Nuremberg (D) Exhibition 2008.

Right: Schmalkalden Moorhead in blue, at the Rote Erde (D) Exposition 2007.





That is strange, as it is easy to breed if the muffs are trimmed prior to breeding. They are excellent parents, easily rearing 4, 5 or more rounds, and there are few problems with mis-marks. However, to produce birds that measure up to the strict German Standards, in a Breed with definite markings, large muffs AND a 'Cowl' of feathers is not easy and requires patience and dedication.

Left: Schmalkalden Moorhead in black, at the Nurnberg (D) Exhibition 2008.

Right: One of my Schmalkalden Moorhead in blue.



Left: Schmalkalden Moorheads in blue, flying free from the loft.



Also Thuringia is noted for its 'Clean-Legged' Colour Pigeon Breeds, Muffed Breeds never seemingly popular here! . . . Probably the reason why that after the War it was included in with the Saxon Colour Pigeon Group and not with the 'Native' Thuringian Birds!

This was rectified by placing it with the Structure Pigeons and in 1977 a new Schmalkaldener Club was formed. At first only the Blacks were bred, but although at Shows in the 1930's the other colours were seen, it was not until 1986 that these colours were recognised, although being bred in some numbers by the 1960's. So now the colours Black, Blue, Red and Yellow are recognised. These colours should be deep, rich and intense; the Blacks, Reds and Yellows with a good Sheen, and the Blues with a Black Tail-Bar (the others should have solid colour Tails).

For someone who likes a Breed just somewhat 'different', the Schmalk' possesses the size and easy parenting of a Colour (Field) Pigeon, with the Exotic Ornamentation of the 'Structure' Breeds. I have also found it to be very tame and confiding; something that immediately endears a pigeon to me! One Tip: while not 'shy' or flighty, it is not a 'pushy' pigeon and is easily bullied, so does better either alone, as a single Breed, or with other Breeds with a gentle nature.

STANDARD OF THE SCHMALKALDEN MOORHEAD

Origin: Around the beginning of 1900 in the Thüringer and Saxon Mountain Areas. Structure breed, originally a colour breed before developing of a hood, mane and chain.

Overall Impression: A strongly built, long field pigeon type, with a horizontal body underline. Full, rich 'mane' feathering around the neck and 'hood' feathering on the head. Also thick, full and broad muffs.



**Above: Schmalkalden Moorhead in blue
Owner: A. Holger (D).**

**Right: Head detail of one of my blue
Schmalkalden Moorheads.**

Breed Characteristics

Head: Rounded (arched). The forehead broad, and slightly rising front.

Eye: Dark, with small and fine eye-cere. Blacks and Blues in dark colour, Reds and Yellows in pale colour.

Beak: Medium length. Black coloured for blacks and blues. Light coloured for Reds and Yellows. Wattle is small, flat, fine in texture and white powdered.



Neck:

Relative long and strong. The feather structure is full and strong and starts from a more or less elongated parting on each side of the lower neck. The structure consists of fine long feathers spreading forwards to form the 'chain', backwards to the 'mane' and upwards to form a 'cowl' around the head, not obstructing the bird's sight. Forehead and beak should be fully visible.

Breast: Deep and well rounded.

Wings: Long, closed and held on the tail, but not crossing.

Tail: Long and well closed.

Feathering: Opulent, but not weak and loose.

**Left: Schmalkalden Moorhead in blue,
by Mike Bassett.**



For more Information:

Schmalkaldener Mohrenköpfe
Specialty Club from 1977.

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