



## THE ORIGIN OF DUNS; THE COLOURS KHAKI AND CHOCOLATE

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### Introduction

In November 2002 I visited the national poultry show in Columbus, Ohio. This national show is organized in common by the APA, the American Poultry Association, and the ABA, the American Bantam Association, once every four years. One can compare it with a the European Show, although this show is less local than our European Show; American breeders and exhibitors have no trouble to drive 3000 miles, from West to East, to show their birds.

During this show I got acquainted with a new colour: White Crested Khaki Poland bantams. In extremely good quality, which could not be said of all colours and breeds.

My enthusiasm was very obvious, because a year later I got six eggs by mail from America. I hatched 4 out of six! This initial opportunity led to the recognition of this colour in the Netherlands, in 2009.

A reconstruction.

**Right:**  
**White crested Khaki coloured Polish bantams – cockerel (l) and pullet (r) at Wim Diepenbroek's in Holland.**





## The origin

In Columbus I met Al Westling, the originator of this colour. At that time Al Westling, a vital 80 plus years man, was chairman of the Polish Breeders Club of America. His explanation was as follows;

"I had been a pigeon fancier for many years before taking up the breeding of Polish bantams. In 1985, the very first year I had my WC blacks started, the well known dr. W.F. Hollander said he and a co-worker in genetics had discovered and classified a new gene that had been discovered in the Araucana breed. They named it 'dun', because it was much like the dun in pigeons, a dark brown. It was incompletely dominant over black. So a pure dun mated to black would produce brown chicks.

The colour would eventually be admitted to the Standard of Perfection as 'chocolate'.



**Left: White Crested Chocolate Polish bantam cockerel.**

**Below left: White Crested Khaki Polish bantam cockerel.**

The original hen from Hollander was not a true bantam in size, it was rather large. She was similar to a Buff Columbian hen, but her dark markings were brown (dun) instead of black.

To get the size down I mated her to a black Rosecomb male.

They gave me a nice solid dun pullet with a pea comb, which laid greenish eggs. Of course I used my best White Crested black Polish bantam male with her to get crests started and kept only the duns for breeding.



By the time I had them 7/8 Polish with white crests, I showed one male. This would have been 1988, I believe.

Three judges evaluated him, at three different shows. One said it was a poorly coloured dark blue. One looked at the coop tag and remarked that we had no such colour as 'dun'. It was the Dean of the American judges, Eugene Barnard, who said "We have a new variety of Polish". He later complimented me for the accomplishment.

For several years I used my best WC blacks to the WC duns and when the duns were as good as my blacks I eagerly mated my best dun cock to the best dun hen and got exactly what I wanted; a really good khaki male! This was in 1990, and the beginning of yet another variety. The khaki's are pure duns and when mated khaki x khaki they will breed true. The chocolates have one black gene and one dun gene, thus when mated they can produce khaki's, chocolates and blacks. You will notice that I am now calling the duns 'chocolates', the name they have been standardized with."

**Right:  
The plumage  
of a White  
crested  
Khaki Polish  
bantam hen.**



**Below:  
Close-up of  
the beautiful  
soft tones of  
the khaki  
coloured  
feathers at  
the cockerel.**



In the 90's of the previous century the White Crested Chocolate was standardized, the W.C. khaki in 2006.

Back to the show in Ohio; during the show I got a plate with an illustration of W.C. khaki; I could not realize then that this was the beginning of some years of active breeding of this colour.



### **The khaki colour in the Netherlands**

It started with six American eggs. My experience with send eggs had been very disappointing, so my expectations were low. However, four out of six hatched! Later on, it proved to be 2 cocks and 2 hens, a pair of chocolate and khaki each. How lucky can one be!?



**Above: Khaki and Chocolate coloured (left) White crested Polish bantam chicks.**

I bred them the following years, to get some experience. On one hand to experience with the colour and how it behaves genetically. Also, I wanted to spread these colours; sole property does not lead to broad acceptance and it is risky, as well. The latter proved to be right when an unknown dog tore open my pens and killed half of my chickens, among them all the "Americans". Luckily I had some eggs in the incubator and a I could get a cock, given to Ruud Kaassenbrood for crossing with Schijndelaars, in return.

During the European show in Ede in 2005 some khaki Polish bantams moved to Poland. In the Netherlands well known breeders like Cees de Nekker and Wim Diepenbroek got some W. C. khaki and chocolate.

**Note the difference: these are blue Polish bantams at Wim Diepenbroek.**



Both colours offer some challenges to judges in the Netherlands. The colour (description) of khaki is fully unknown; the same applies to the colour chocolate. Khaki looks a bit like brown/blue, although the comparison with blue is fully wrong. This can be seen when both colours are directly compared. Genetically, the two colours are different. Khaki inherits solely khaki.

Even so, Chocolate is no "bad black", but a tender dark brown.

Both colours came, although genetically different, into existence for other breeds. For instance khaki in Sultans and chocolate in Burma bantams. Increasingly, other breeds show these colours as well.

In the past years I had not crossed with Dutch blood, although the American Polands could use it. The crest is pretty large and loose.

One positive side is that the "Americans" are nicely small and have a soft feather structure, in particular the khaki's. Also they are very docile.

Other breeders have crossed with Dutch Polands.

Anyway, this has lead to a fast distribution all over Europe. W.C. chocolates have been presented to the German Standard Committee (at "sight"). In Poland one breeder has created self chocolate bearded Polands.

The first W.C. khaki's moved to France.

### **Recognition in the Netherlands**

As said before, both W. C. chocolate and khaki were recognized in 2009. In close cooperation with Wim Diepenbroek and Cees de Nekker both colours were recognized at the Noordshow.

**Right: These two Khaki coloured White Crested Polish bantams - were part of the collection that accomplished the recognition in Holland at the Noordshow of January 2009.**



Whatever the case, the important thing is that these colours can be easily crossed into other breeds. In other words, Polands have some additional attractive colours, but the possibilities to vary have increased for other breeds as well.