

# *Dutch Helmets at Henk de Vos's*

Henk de Vos from Schoonhoven, the Netherlands is a great lover of the Dutch Helmet.

At the most important Dutch Shows he regularly presents a fine collection of his Helmets. And each time his birds are highly awarded and many prizes are won. Apart from the Helmets, he also breeds Amsterdam Bearded Tumblers, which are mainly kept for the pleasure of letting them fly free.

*Right: Henk de Vos with one of his top birds.*

In Belgium, René Diels from Tielen (near Turnhout) is another lover who has had the Dutch Helmet in his loft for over forty years, together with his Lahores. He shows his birds at various exhibitions in Belgium and achieves good results every year.

What should you do if you are looking for other birds to improve your line of Helmet Pigeons and bring in some "new blood"? Ideally you try to find another breeder to co-operate, because working together is really a good way to progress.

**Text and photos: Piet Steeman (B)**



*Left: René Diels, paying attention to the head shape and marking.*

With this in mind, René Diels made contact with Henk de Vos when visiting the Champion Show in January 2012 in Nieuwegein. It was agreed to meet each other in the summer so on Saturday, August 25 René Diels and Piet Steeman left for Schoonhoven. A trip of nearly a two-hour drive via Rotterdam.

In the courtyard behind his house Henk had lined up several exhibition cages with a dozen of Helmet Pigeons to evaluate and discuss. Each of them were pigeons with good breed characteristics, beautiful type and stance, with pearl eye, a good helmet marking and all in the red colour variety as Henk didn't have any surplus Black Helmets at that time.

*Right: The part of the loft for the young Dutch Helmets. In the middle a red Helmet and on the left a black Helmet. The pigeon in the right is a dark barred silver (dilute blue) Amsterdam Bearded Tumbler.*



*Left: The aviary of Henk Vos, the pigeon in the front is a Spanish Canaria Cropper.*

*Right: A black Dutch Helmet with young.*



*Left: The red Dutch Helmets, young and old, which were offered by Henk de Vos.*

*Below: More Young Helmets ....*





*Left: René Diels holding a blue Dutch Helmet - and Henk de Vos with a red Dutch Helmet in his hands. To the right you can see the dovecote of the Canaria Croppers.*

The available pigeons were very much to Rene's liking and will hopefully prove to be useful in his breeding line. All together 9 Helmets were put in the basket, plus one fine Canaria Cropper hen. The writer of this article, Piet Steeman, is a lover of the Canaria Croppers and the hen is a welcome addition for use in the breeding season 2013.

If you like to read more about Dutch Helmet Pigeons, you can visit the website of the Henk Vos. It also provides some information on other pigeon breeds and many photographs. The website is only available in Dutch:

<http://www.everyoneweb.com/helmduiven/>

Thanks, Henk, for the hospitality and we wish you success in everything you do. It was nice meeting you and getting to know you a little better. We hope to meet again at the coming Shows!

*Below: A Dutch Helmet. On special request drawn for Aviculture Europe by Diana Jacky (USA). According to her, this breed is not known in the USA. She has never seen this breed at the exhibitions and as far as she knows, there is no Specialty Club for the Dutch Helmet in the USA.*



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*Left: Dutch Helmet, red, old hen. Awarded 97 points. Owner Henk de Vos. Winner at the 2008 Avicorni Show, Veemarkt halls, Utrecht (NL). Photo: Aviculture Europe.*

***To end with, some information on the Dutch Helmet's History and Standard.***

*The modern Dutch Helmet is an exhibition pigeon: strong, medium sized and broad. Horizontal stance and medium high on the legs. Well filled head, only slightly protruding forehead. The head profile a well-defined curve from the beak cere to the neck without any sharp or sudden breaks. Eyes are pearl in colour with a small pupil. Eye ceres fine, pale.*

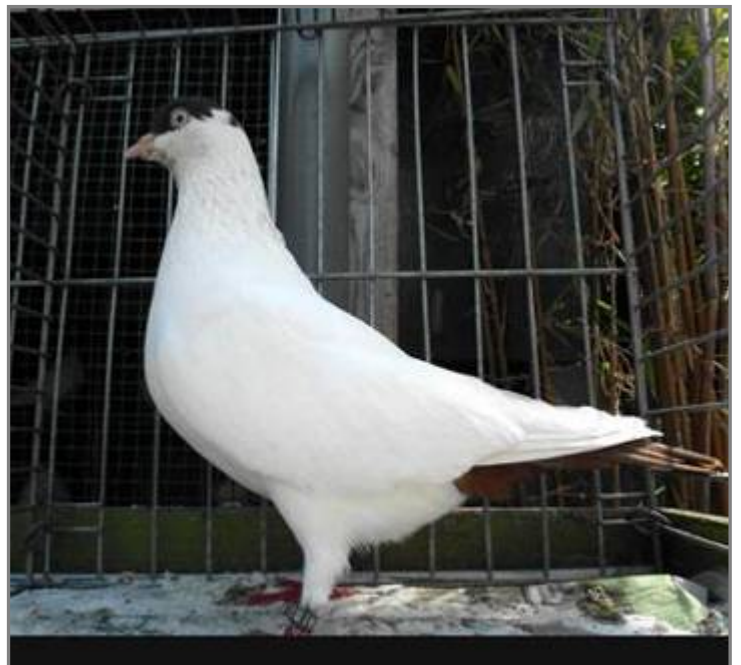
***Right: Dutch Helmet silver barless, young hen, 96 points. Owner: Partnership Voncken. At the 2008 Avicorni Show, Veemarkt halls Utrecht (NL). Photo: Aviculture Europe.***

*The beak should be medium size, horizontal setting, and a clear flesh colour. Neck: Medium length, prominent chest. The back is broad across the shoulders, tapering to the tail, the back line very slightly sloping. Wings: Strong, tightly folded and held close to the body, covering the back well, wing tips normally carried on the tail. Tail: Carried in a horizontal line with the underline of the Body, medium length, broad feathers with rounded tips. Legs: medium length, clean-legged, nails flesh coloured. Feathers: Tight, smooth feathering.*



***Left: A beautiful red Dutch Helmet cock by Henk de Vos. Photo: Aviculture Europe.***

***Right: Another bird by Henk de Vos. Usually, Helmets are not born with a perfect 'helmet' marking. It is permitted to trim some offending feathers which spoil the markings. Be careful though, as too much trimming will only make things worse. Photo: Aviculture Europe.***





**Left: Another very beautiful Dutch Helmet, also by Henk de Vos.  
Photo: Aviculture Europe.**

The standardised colours are: black, red, dun, yellow, blue and silver. The coloured parts are the upper head and the tail. The head marking (cap or helmet marking) should be an even line from the point between the two mandibles (edge of the beak), just under the eye and around the back of the neck.

The tail colour includes the upper and lower tail coverts with a distinct line of demarcation between the white and colour with both upper and lower tail coverts completing the full tail marking.

There are 12 to 20 breeders of the Dutch Helmet in the Netherlands. At the latest

Clubshow of the Dutch Helmet Club, housed at the Keistad Show in Apeldoorn, November 2011, a total of 49 Helmets had been entered, 12 Black, 10 Blue, and 27 Red and Yellow. At the following Grand National Show of the Dutch Fancy Pigeon Association NBS, housed at the Champion Show January 2012 in Nieuwegein, 25 Dutch Helmets were entered, 2 Black, 8 Blue, 10 Red and 5 Yellow.

According to C.A.M. Spruijt, in his book 'De Tuimelaarrassen van 1935', in the early part of the last century the Dutch Helmets were kept as flying pigeons in the Netherlands and in Germany. They had a very good flying capacity and could fly for 3 to 5 hours. They were very popular in Amsterdam. The pearl eye was allowed to be a bit reddish, as all flying pigeons had a reddish eye in those days.

**Right: For many years, Amsterdam pigeon's roof lofts with landing boards high above the city traffic were the domain of the Dutch Helmet. That time is sadly now over; the roof lofts have disappeared and the Dutch Helmet is no longer kept as a flying pigeon.  
Photo Archives Aviculture Europe.**



**Left: Dutch Helmet, red, young male. According to the judge's report, the feathering was a bit loose. In this photo, the wings should be carried on the tail. Awarded 95 points at the biannual Fancy Pigeon Show of South Netherlands, November 2012 in Loon op Zand. Photo: Aviculture Europe.**



*Right: Dutch Helmet, yellow, old cock. Head marking could be more clean and definite, and the feathering smoother.*

*In this photo the stance could be better.*

*Awarded 90 points at the biannual Fancy Pigeon Show of South Netherlands, November 2012 in Loon op Zand.*

*Photo: Aviculture Europe.*



*Left: Dutch Helmet, yellow, old hen. The Dutch Helmet, yellow, old hen. The condition of the tail feathers could be better. The head marking (Helmet) should be better defined.*

*In this photo, the tail is also too loose.*

*Awarded 92 points at the biannual Fancy Pigeon Show of South Netherlands, November 2012 in Loon op Zand. Photo: Aviculture Europe.*

For more information on the Dutch Helmet, please contact:

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