

ABSENCE OF BILL RING IN RINGNECK DOVES, Streptopelia risoria.

Some mutant color types like white and albino always lack any sign of a bill ring at hatching. Pied hatchlings also lack the bill ring except very rarely by chance of the variation of position of pigment areas.

I have been watching the bill ring of newly hatched squabs for many years for early diagnosis of blond versus dark, and more recently rosy and ivory which have faint bill rings. Suddenly last year on 21 May 1976, I found a blond squab without any bill ring! Its nest mate had a normal bill ring. Some fluke, I thought -- Interesting, but it won't happen again. The next squab, a singleton, was normal. But in the next clutch of the two squabs, one was normal, while its nest mate had a thin or narrow bill ring -- definitely not normal. Another singleton came along that again had no bill ring! The next full clutch had a normal and another thin bill ring!

This brings us up to date with 3 normal, 2 thin and 2 absent bill rings, all blond color. As they grow up, the bills pigment normally. It looks good for an inherited pattern. It could be a partial dominant and both parents could have been thin bill rings that I didn't really note as a phenotype until the complete absence stimulated me to look closer at the ring.

I worked up the pedigree to see if some ancestors were held in common. New extreme types usually show up by inbreeding. There were 9 ancestors held in common by the two parents, perhaps more since a few ancestral line colony birds came from pen matings.

Unfortunately the last mouse induced paratyphoid "riddling of the dove ranks" knocked out all these birds, except for one thin bill ring. I have no assurance of maintaining the character. Therefore, I am enclosing a list of family numbers which are likely to carry the condition. I may well have donated some of these birds to various ADA or PS&GN fanciers. The starred matings are those with a sibling by my hypothesis proven to be a carrier.

This transient hatchling character need not be limited to my birds. Since one must look during the first two days after hatching in order to note it for sure, few fanciers will have noted such a condition. So now all you fanciers look for this character and study its inheritance, if you possess such a rarity.

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|------|------|------|
| 344  | 414  | 446* |
| 362* | 421* | 451* |
| 364* | 429  | 473  |
| 396* | 433* | 482  |
| 404  | 438  | 485  |
| 413  | 440* | 505  |

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