

CORAL RINGNECK DOVES AND OTHER COLOR COMMENTS

The newest plumage color in ringneck doves that I have produced I could call rose. If we did not already have pink, I'd be tempted to call it pink. But it has much more color than pink. An alternative name might be "roan". It does have a superficial resemblance to roan Shorthorn cattle. Then we could have blond-roan and ivory-roan as well. But that resemblance is only superficial. And we already call tangerine-roan Ash. Dr. Hollander prefers the most directly descriptive phrase for color combination names. In this case Frosty-rosey. I certainly have no objection to that name, if it is used. (Then orange would be blond-Tangerine, peach would be blond-rosey, pink would be white-tangerine, etc.) But knowing the fanciers penchant for new names (more money for the new color), I am dubious that we could hold its' name as Frosty-rosey. Dr. Hollander's wife suggested coral as a more distinctive name than rose (which can be confused with rosey). It is certainly an attractive color. I have one producing coral male and a sibling of this coral male classified.

Pink doves, by the way, are white tangerines. The very light pink color comes from the white being actually an extreme dilution, so that the reddish tangerine color shows as the remnant of melanin (presumably phaeomelanin) not completely diluted out.

I have been testing albino with tangerine. By definition albino blocks melanin, both eumelanin (black-brown pigment) and phaeomelanin (red-yellow pigment). So an albino tangerine should not show any red color. So far none of 5 albinos which could have tangerine show any pink ($1/2$ chance to the fifth power = $1/32$). A couple more such offspring will make it stastically probable that albino completely blocks tangerine as expected.

Tangerine in one dose (heterozygous) replaces (blocks?) perhaps half the eumelanin with phaeomelanin, also yielding gray flights and neck ring (diluted eumelanin?). Two doses of the tangerine gene (homozygotes) results in pearled, usually white backed; and such homozygotes "block" all the eumelanin or replace it with phaeomelanin. Wild type color presumably has both melanins, but the black hides most of the red. Check the primaries (wing flights) on the wild type dark. These are nearly black since little red pigment is present there. The neck ring also has little or no phaeomelanin. That is surely the reason that these pearled tangerines have near "white" flights and neck ring. Very little red is present there to start with in the wild type dark color. Note that the wild type, and blond wing shield feathers (especially noticable in the juveniles) have a lighter reddish or yellowish border (lacing). When the eumelanin gets blocked by homozygous tangerine these show up red laced-- a pattern effect of the somewhat unequal distribution of the two kinds of melanin in the wild type.

A further note on sex differences in color in ringnecks is that in the wild type dark and blond and rosy doves, the adult male has a very slightly darker head than females. I had practically forgotten this, when Kevin Stalder noted it and reminded me of it in ash and in tangerine birds. I think it shows in reverse in blond ivories and in apricot also since the male has a lighter head than the female in contrast to the body color. Maybe I haven't checked enough such birds yet. You specialists in ivory can help here.