

# CHOCO CHABOS!

GENETICS OF CHICKEN COLOURS FOR DUMMIES  
SIGRID VAN DORT

*... another breed with  
sex linked recessive chocolate  
from Dr. Carefoot!*

*All Chabo photos:  
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Translation Polish to English:  
Krzysztof Andres*



*Stanislaw with Thai breeder  
Suthin.*

The dark brown colour pops up more and more in the chickenworld. In the other article (in Dutch) Chocoholics, the colour is explained and it tells the story of the three breeders in the UK who saved the choc-gene from Dr. Carefoot. In short: there are two dark browns: - not true breeding (heterozygous) dun colour, in the hobby called chocolate (which is wrong, it must be dark brown dun) - and the sex linked recessive chocolate from Dr. Carefoot which is until now only known on the Orpington bantams in England and... in the Seramas in my coop.

Some fellow genetic freaks called me 'Lucky' and said/wrote "Why do YOU especially have a colour which is so rare and only present in England in your hen house?" Just coincidence, present from Faith. I've got quite some requests for the gene and it's going to start to travel as soon as possible because this true breeding 'choc' is beautiful and gives no segregations as in dun colour which runs from dark brown dun to khaki to almost white and everything inbetween depending on the 'construction' of the present black and amount of copies of dun colour in the bird.

There is another person intrigued by dark brown as chicken colour, that's Stanislaw Roszkowski, owner of the Polish birds/poultry mag 'Woliera' in which he gives plenty of room to his special articles about poultry.

Stanislaw is a chicken freak, he travels all around the world in the search for rare and unknown breeds. Also in Holland he's known by the Poland Breed Club.

In the Mai issue of Woliera there was an article called 'Chocolate Dance'. It seems as if everybody in the world is busy with dark brown chook! In the article the explanation of dun colour on Polands and how it inherits. At least that was what I could make of it, including the triangle scheme of segregations in dun colour and lots of photographs of dun colour Polands, with and without beard. I was running thru the pages and suddenly I saw beautiful photographs from.... dark brown Chabos/Japanese bantams! They gave me a chicken-skin!

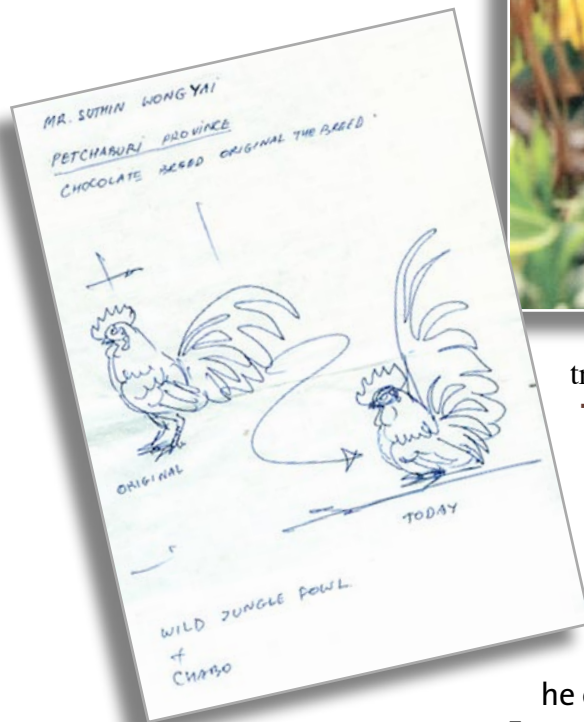
About half a year ago I learned that the dark brown in my Seramas was not dark brown dun colour but the sex linked version from Dr. Carefoot. And suddenly there was the AHA: Serama's own quite some Chabo blood, you can see that in the tail, short legs occur, cocks can develop (too) large combs over the years, so that colour must come from the Chabo and is flown into the Seramas one moment in Asia.

Such a 'discovery' is a wonderful feeling and I was eager to know what was written in the article Chocolate Dance in Woliera. I don't read one word Polish and I contacted my gene freak colleague from The Coop in Poland, Krzysztof



Andres, a student on the University of Krakow and almost finished with his degree in genetics. He read Woliera in the university library and he did see the article. The days went by slower as usual while I was waiting for his

Right: Suthin Wong Yai, Thai Chabo breeder. Below his scetch and watercolour painting.



translation, Krzysztof is busy, busy, busy. And finally there it was!  
**The story from Stanislaw about chocolate Chabos is as following...**

(...) I visited Japan and had a meeting with Suthep Chongulia, he told me there were dark brown chickens in his country. This information was already confirmed by the German Kurt Michel – Thai breeders have chocolate Chabos – which

he once wrote to me. I would be great if I could bring them to Europe, said Kurt. He knew that Suthep was invited for a large animal exhibition organised and lead by the king of Thailand in Bangkok, December 2007. I was surprised when I saw the 'chocolates' for the first time! There was one pair exhibited, which was shown to me by Suthin Wong Yai. I made over a dozen photographs, afraid I would never see them again. They were perfect representatives of their breed. What struck me was the hackle which was curled upwards like a fringe. Actually I was very keen on meeting Mr. Suthin. It was a wish I could have perhaps some eggs from him. But in the meantime I realized how unrealistic this idea was since he, as the only breeder of chocolate Chabos in Thailand, never shared anything with fellow breeders, they were his 'treasure'! Why should he give eggs to a European who was actually a stranger/foreigner who he saw for the first time in his life?

During other trips to Japan I discovered how to go along with Asians, they are very mistrustful towards strangers. You first have to gain their trust and show your intentions are ok as white



Page of the article in Woliera.





Red Jungle Fowl x Chabo was the first cross in which chocolate occurred.

foreigner.

Mr. Suthin was very kind and invited me to see his coops with Chabos. The Thai bantams are more colourfull than European or the Japanese ones. Their Chabo standard is interesting, the silhouet of the cock should fit into falling drop of water and all bodyparts are well defined and outlined with examples on photos. I was very much interested in the history of the chocolate Chabo. Mr. Wong is an artist and can make beautifull drawing and he made a scetch how they were created. Approximately twenty years ago a Red Jungle Fowl cock crossed with a Chabo hen. I want to remind you that next to Eastern India, the Indochinese peninsula with Burma, Loas and Thailand, is considered as the original habitat of Red Jungle Fowl. From this wild mating the first dark brown Chabo crossling was born. Suthin told me the crossed at first the hybrids to Chabos. For a long time he only paired brown hens to brown cocks because he thought that would be best. But how about inbreeding? Perhaps the two translators (one from Thai to English, one from English to



Page of the article in Woliera.

Polish) were not precise enough? And very important information was that crossing chocolate to chocolate gave always chocolate. Therefore the inheritance of this dark brown was different from the dun colour which was discovered in the Araucanas. At the moment there is the believe there are two genes that cause the dark brown colour. On is dun colour ( $I^D$ ) and the second – recessive – is the sex linked gene which is called chocolate and it has the symbol 'choc'. It's probably that Mr. Wong's Chaobs carry this gene 'choc'. It's inherited the same way other sex linked recessive genes (s+, k and others). The chapter Chabos appeared to be closed now. Suddenly, during my last trip to Japan, to the show of the Japanese Breeders Club, held April 20 in Tokyo, I saw a pair of chocolate Chabos! And there was also the above mentioned Thai breeder



Czekoladowy kogut chabo sfotografowany  
w ogrodzie pana Suthin Wong Yai.







Suthep Chongulia.

‘So not only Thai breeders have chocolate Chabos?’, I asked surprised.

‘These are dark blue’, was told to me.

Was this a comprehensible answer for a European? They were dark brown!

‘We call this colour dark blue although they look dark brown’, was the explanation.

‘We Japanese have actually a problem in naming colours. Red is blood or sunset for example. In the wild Jungle fowl are many feathers with a brown shade, specifically in the wings, when we look at those from a certain distance we can’t see they are bronze coloured’.

Actually, I did not understand this explanation from Mr. Hirofumi. Perhaps a European is too literally and we always want to put things in boxes? The Japanese culture is full of ambiguities and insinuations. For me, something is brown or not. How can blue be brown?

**Stanislaw Roskowski**



So far Stanislaw’s story of his surprising trips to Thailand (2007) and Japan (2008) where he saw the chocolate Chabos.

One could conclude from the above story that he was also helped by Faith as large breeder of dark brown (dun colour) Polands and Bearded Polands.

But could it be something else is going on? You must have the ability to recognize a colour. I bet there are many mis-coloured blacks born in numerous breeds. On The Coop a breeder tuned in from the US, in one of the chocolate topics, who told she had regularly mis-coloured, so brown, Orpingtons in her black stock. These were culled, they were not according to the Standard. It’s very likely that lots of mutations are culled because they didn’t fit into the standard picture.

So when you keep your eyes open, being informed very well about the colour genes that are wandering around, you can easily recognize a mutation. Don’t cull everything that doesn’t fit, because you know yourself where they originate from, a true breeding pen! Give these ‘culls’ time to grow out and see how they develop. Therefore it’s not Faith nor coincidence that gene freaks discover something special amongst their birds, it’s a matter of recognizing and test breed to see if it’s what you think it is.

The British chocolate Orpingtons are not the only ones anymore with their unique ‘Carefoot’s chocolate’, that’s for sure!

The Chabos carry this colour even a longer time and the Seramas got this colour from the Chabos somewhere somehow via a wandering time path in their history.

The gene is present in Holland, and also in the Seramas in the US of



course and I started to 'transplant' it into the Silkie bantams.

I was looking for black Chabos quite some time and found them recently in Belgium. It's a rare colour. Choco Chabos will be around here too in near future, not via Red Jungle Fowl but via the Seramas!

**So the chapter 'chocolate' isn't closed at all....  
it just started!**

## Chocolate Seramas

*... now is known where they  
come from...*



It seems as if the chocolate Chabo was used in the Serama later in time than the beginning of this tiny breed. The chocolate cocks are very large (550-600 grams to 400 - 500 grams normally) and the pretty large combs but very regular and sophisticated. Unfortunately the characters of my choc cocks is a bit shy and they are impressed too fast, therefore they keep their tails not upright but at 45 degree angle. But I'm working for improvement and the daughters seem to be better a bit, just like a few of their sons.



*Three chocolate Serama sisters age 4,5 months, this  
photo is 2,5 months old, they are all the same size now.*



# UPDATE: BLACK CHABOS ARRIVED!



One day after I uploaded this article on my website (Thursday, 6-19), the black Chabos crossed my path. They come from a Belgian Serama breeder who wants to switch from old to young breeders. He visited me Friday 19 and Saturday 20 we drove to Antwerp... that is stupid coincidence... The animals on the Dutch internet market place were imo not typey enough according to the Japanese standard. I did research in several Japanese books and the original standard (only looking pictures of course!). An advertisement on the Dutch Chicken Forum didn't have any results. Blacks are rare. These Belgian Chabos are pretty original in Japanese type, the cock carries his tail like on

Japanese standard pictures, here that's called a squirrel tail. (Tail should come out of the hackle, bend a bit backwards and fit in the shape of a falling water drop.) When he's walking and pecking in the grass his tail falls over his head, upright it touches the comb. I think for the cross with choco Serama this is perfect.

I know that compensational breeding is a difficult road full of potholes, but is there any choice? The hens are very melanized with traces of black in their combs (from black head Chabos) and over-pigmented irises. The more black the better is my thought (correct?) because the recipe of the choco Serama cock is unclear to me. He can be a melanized eb Asiatic partridge, but just as well a 'black' wheaten as many more of my Seramas. Both have a wing triangle which is brown (s+) whether white and brown (S). The crosslings of choco Serama x black Silkie bantam have chipmunk stripes but that doesn't mean anything. Under the black Silkie can be eb-partridge which makes with Pg (Pattern gene) also specks & stripes in chick down, and eb is dominant over eWh Wheaten. Perhaps they're both?

With this quad black Chabos I can make a reciprocal cross (*black chabo cock x choco serama hen* and *choco serama cock x black chabo hen*). The road of black Chabo cock x choco Serama hen will take at least 3 years in order to get a pure breeding choco cockerel! Countdown creating choco Chabo can commence... will be continued...

Sigi.