

The Archangel Standard

Approved by the American Archangel Club membership, August 2020

General Appearance: Hardy, looking, sprightly and of a lively disposition. Closely feathered. The Archangel is an extreme color pigeon and therefore the first impression of an Archangel should be a bird that has a deep rich color, proper demarcation and/or pattern, and a highly polished sheen in those varieties that require said sheen. The second impression should be of good type with proper confirmation and an impression of overall balance. Evaluation of the quality of an Archangel should put 80% importance on color, etc. and 20% on structure/conformation. Faults: A bird that has poor color, demarcation, sheen, type or generally is in poor condition shall be heavily faulted.

Body: Medium build; Cocks to be somewhat larger and bolder looking than hens. Fairly broad through the chest, gently tapering back to tail giving a rather long and slender appearance. Faults: Oversized or undersized, too narrow across chest.

Carriage: Somewhat upright in station. Tail should be held in line with the back which is approximately 40 degrees from horizontal. Faults: Station too horizontal. Tail should not touch the floor. Birds should not crouch in the show pen.

Head and Neck:

Slightly arched, long and narrow, forehead reasonably flat. Either peak crested or plain headed. Faults: Neck too short or too thick.

Crest: The peak crest develops at the back of the shoulders and runs up to the apex, where it forms a sharp conical point upon the head, This point should be positioned high, and formed so that from the shoulders to the peak it resembles an even straight edge. There should be no breaks along the ridge of the crest. A line drawn on the side of the center of the beak through the pupil of the eye, should strike the crest ridge about midway. The peak should be symmetrically balanced in the center of the back of the head. In no case should the peak crest lean to one side or have any indication of crookedness. Plain-headed Archangels are characterized by the absence of a crest. Faults: Poorly formed, crooked, asymmetrical or undersized crest. Gaps or hatchet marks in crest. Shell shaped crest.

Eyes: Dark orange in color. Bright and lively in appearance. In monk marked and priest marked only, bull eyes are acceptable and are not faults. In brown base colored birds a false pearl eye is not faulted. Cere slightly developed and of a light flesh color. Faults: Off-colored eyes except as noted.

Beak: Reasonably long, upper beak slightly bent downward at the tip. Black wings show a horn colored beak with the tip being darker although the tip on the gold (light bronze) variety is not as dark as on the copper (dark bronze) variety. A pure light beak is neither preferred nor faulted. Flesh colored in white wings and dark horn in blue wings. The wattle having a fine light texture, not too developed. Faults: Short or wide beak. Miscolored beak.

Breast: Moderately wide and carried slightly forward. Faults: Narrow breast, protruding belly, sharp keel, skinny, or crooked keel.

Wings: Reasonably long, tightly held, resting above the tail. The tips fall just short of the tail end and are not crossed. Faults: Excessively long or crossed wings, wings carried below the tail.

Tail: Containing twelve retices without break. Narrow, approximately one and a half feathers wide. Tail to be held approximately one-half inch from the floor. Faults: Incorrect number of tail feathers. Forked or split tail. Excessive width.

Legs and Feet: Clean legged, free from any feathering below the hocks. Coral red to brown (depending on base color and age of the pigeon). Strong and not too high. The nails to be of a dark horn color on black wing and blue wing, flesh colored on white wing. Faults: Legs too long or short, giving a leggy or squatty appearance. White toe nails on black wing or blue wing. Recommended band size 7mm.

Archangel Bronze Pattern: The expression of Archangel bronze pattern consists of having the base color overlaid on portions of the body by Archangel bronze. Head, neck, breast, belly shanks and under-tail wedge are to be Archangel bronze. Wings, back, rump and tail are to be the base color. The line of demarcation between the bronze and base colored portions should be clearly defined. This line can be seen if the wing is lifted and should be well defined where the hackle meets the shoulders. Faults: Demarcation poorly defined. Base color in bronze pattern portion particularly the under-tail wedge or bronze in the base color portions. White feathers in any area other than allowed in white flights, monk marked or priest marked varieties.

Recognized White Markings: White Flights: Both wings should have the same number of white flights; minimum 5, maximum 10 per wing, but one flight more or less between wings is not a fault. White flights to be consecutively in from wing tip.

White Flight with Priest Head: The head has a cap of white, with a well defined line of demarcation extending straight through the center of the eye and between the mandibles of the beak, and they will have white flights and a colored tail. The upper mandible must be completely without pigment while the lower remains pigmented with whatever matches the color combination. The eyes must be uniform in color and are usually bull. White Flight with Monk Head: This variety is to have a white head like the priest except that it extends below the beak, and they have white flights and colored tail. The white of the head should reach the same distance below the eye as it does above it, to the top of the head.

Coloration – Archangel Bronze:

Copper: Head, neck, breast, belly, shanks and under-tail wedge are to be a deep brilliant copper-bronze color. It should be evenly and deeply colored with no dullness or fading on the belly. Should have a highly iridescent sheen, the more fire the better. This color should be copper to pink in color throughout. In the white wing Archangels, the copper is somewhat darker and is more of a brownish red. Certain color modifiers may affect the bronze coloration; however, within the limitations of the modifier, the bronze should resemble the copper as described above as closely as possible. Faults: Greenish, yellowish, sooty or plum color or green iridescence in the bronze.

Gold: Head, neck, breast, belly, shanks and under-tail wedge are to be of a golden yellow color. Neither a lighter nor a darker tone is preferred. The color must be uniform over all of the above mentioned parts. In the white wings the color is somewhat darker and resembles more of a yellow color. Faults: greenish, violet, purple or sooty color or green iridescence in bronze areas.

Coloration – Base colors:

Black Wing: Wing shield, back, rump and tail should be as deep and dense a black as possible, free from any trace of slating, check or bronzing. The visible portion of the flights and tail when closed should also be free from any slate, check or bronzing. Wing shield, back, rump and tail should have as much iridescent beetle green sheen as possible, the more sheen the better. The flights should be as black as possible when closed, however when the wing is spread the flight feathers should show a rich bronzing on the inner webs of the copper variety and a chestnut color on the gold variety. Bronze mirroring in the retrices is desired. Faults: purple or violet sheen, however a slight admixture of pink is not faulted. Lack of or poor iridescent green sheen. Slating or blue in the tail.

Blue Wing: Wing shield, back, rump and tail are to be an even shade of blue. The more pure the better, but neither a light or dark blue is preferred. Flight tips are to be dark. Tail has a blue bar. Faults: uneven color or shading. Sootiness or bronzing in wing shield.

White Wing: Wing shield, back, rump and tail are to be pure white. A very light spotting or flecking is noticeable in the flight and tail feathers, but is not apparent unless the wings and tail are spread out. Faults: gray on the back or color flecking in wing shield. When wings or tails are spread a very light spotting or flecking may be visible and is not a fault. Pronounced mirror in the tail is desired.

All Other Colors: Any other base colors and/or modifiers are acceptable. However, Archangel Breeders are to be reminded that color is an extremely important feature in the breed. Faults: poorly colored birds of any color will be heavily faulted.

Wing Patterns: Barless, barred, checkered, T-pattern and solid colored wing shields are all acceptable. Barred birds should have even and clearly defined bars without a trace of a third bar. Checkered birds should have clearly defined and evenly spaced checks. Birds without bars should show no trace of bars. Solid colored shields should be evenly and richly colored.

General Guidelines for Judging:

Referring to the above categories listed in the Standard, length of dissertation has nothing to do with their importance. Whereas the bird as a whole should be judged, including, proper type and conformation of all parts of the bird listed in the first part of the Standard, the Archangel is primarily a color pigeon and therefore the areas of the Standard that cover color, color design, sheen and their corresponding faults should be considered most important. In the Archangel Bronze Distribution Section, proper demarcation and placement of bronze is most important. In the Coloration Archangel Bronze section, rich even copper, or gold, color throughout is very important. In the Coloration Base Color section, a rich and even shading of color is very important and in black wing the proper iridescent beetle green sheen is of utmost importance. It is appropriate to use some leniency when grading hens as they typically do not achieve the standard as effectively as the cock birds.

The Archangel first and foremost is a color pigeon. It is not appropriate to choose a bird with a flawless pointed crest but flawed colors over and above a bird with flawless colors but a less than perfect crest. The concern is not so much with the crest which for the most part is of very good quality. Instead, concentrate more on the color, which presents many difficulties, points of criticism and criteria, which are much more important. We are concerned with an extreme color pigeon. Sufficient white light and proper holding of the bird in relation to the light source is required for proper color recognition.

Goals for white flights are the same as those described in their base colors. Between 5 and 10 white flights are necessary, with the same number on both wings, but one flight more or less between wings is not a fault.

Color Specific Guidelines for evaluating Archangels

Black Wing: Concerning the copper black wing; first and foremost is a pure fiery copper from head to under-tail wedge, without any green on the neck or on the sides. The under-tail must be thoroughly colored. The fiery, shiny edge must extend deep into the feather, so that the fire (red luster) is a continuous one, without dark lines in between. The thighs (especially the visible outside) and vent corners, as well as the neck, must be thoroughly colored. Smut in these areas is prohibited. Special attention must be paid to the neck, as there are many birds now with green luster and smut in that area. A darker or lighter shade of copper is unimportant; of importance is the even quality of the copper. If for example, the neck shows a lighter copper than the breast and sides that is to be considered a fault. Concerning the gold black wing, the most important factor is a completely even and deep gold-yellow with bright shine from head to under-tail wedge, including the breast, sides, stomach, vent and under-tail wedge. The tone of gold can be lighter or darker, but even and bright shine is essential. Birds with green on neck or sides, or even green in the wedge must be faulted. The tail in black wings should be black when closed and even when spread out is the desired color without too much slate. Bronze mirroring in the retrices is desired. Blue is a major fault. Bronzing on the top side is much less objectionable than blue and should not be considered a major fault.

Concerning the wings and back of black wings what is required here is deep black with a lot of iridescent beetle green luster. Blue in the flights is a serious fault. The luster should, as already mentioned, be an iridescent beetle green. By that we mean a green which is not too dark and which has the appropriate shining quality.

The back must appear entirely green, without black cross stripes; otherwise the luster edge does not extend deeply enough into the feather. On the wings, as well, the widest possible luster edge is desirable, with limited purple (restricted to the wing butt). Violet is a big flaw and should be absent. Some purple (reddish luster) is less objectionable than steel-blue (violet) luster on the back and wings. This iridescent beetle green sheen is perhaps the most important feature of the black wing in addition to luster of the copper or gold.

Black Wing Faults: Greenish, yellowish or sooty color in bronze areas. Green or soot in neck coloring. Bluish or slate tails, grey or sooty under-tail wedge. Too much black in shanks. Lack of or poor iridescent beetle green sheen on wing shield back or rump. Gray, blue or dull black on back or tail. Tints of red bars or yellow shadowing suggesting a bar on wings.

Blue wing: Concerning the copper blue wing a fiery copper bronze with an even color throughout is of primary importance. A top bird must show fine fiery copper from head to under-tail wedge, color may not break off and may show no green, with the exception of a breath/tint of green on the upper neck. Deep green on the neck is a more serious fault than diminished fire underneath. When the base color is very good, an excess of rust on the back should not detract and a touch of bar rust should not be counted as a major fault. Bluish ears, blue in the under-tail wedge, too much blue in the shank, green on the breast, sides or tail are bad faults.

Concerning wing and back color the objective is as required in the Standard, a pure pigeon blue. In reality, almost all birds which now show fine copper also have more or less cloudy coloring. Some of the copper blues which are shown are too dark in their coloring. On the other hand, we have no use for birds with fine wing color but a copper that is dull and contains a lot of green.

Concerning the gold blue wing, the gold should correspond approximately to the gold in the gold black wing. Green on the neck is entirely unacceptable; the frequent slight reddish shine must be avoided so that an even basic color with bright shine, without other color interference, will be achieved. Otherwise the rules and suggestions follow those as discussed above. A gold color which is not even throughout is more objectionable than a slightly cloudy or impure wing and back color.

The following are admissible: barless blue wings, blue wings with black bars, with black bars and white flights, with white flights and monk pattern, with white tail and blue checkered, which also occur with white flights. There are fewer difficulties with the black bars, which should appear clearly outlined and narrow, than with all other rare color variations which are mentioned. The demands are the same for all, but because of their rarity, sensitivity and leniency ought to guide the judging process.

Blue Wing Faults: Impure bronze color in copper blue wing. Gray flat blue color in gold blue wings. Green sheen or sooty color in neck. Too dark a color on head in dark bronze or grey head in light bronze. White backs. Barless blue wings that show a hint of bars. Yellow flecking in wing shields. Too much blue or gray in shanks. Blue or sooty under-tail wedge.

White Wing: Concerning the copper white wing, the copper is darker than with copper black wings and shows a little less fire, for the luster edge of the feather is less deep. The basic once again, most important consideration; breast, sides, stomach and under-tail wedge show an even dark bronze coloring with much fire and without green. Attention must also be paid to white shanks and vent corners, they should be thoroughly colored. A small amount of green on the neck may still be accepted, for now, but attention must be paid to pure head copper including crest and fiery neck ring. On the hens the stomach tends to be a shade more dull, that can be accepted. If a bird with fine copper is to be exhibited, allowance can be made regarding the copper on the underside, which will be decreasing. Of importance is the red luster at the feather's tip. Birds without fire are worthless and should be judged as such. The wings and the back should show a pure cream white, but small spurts of color in the connecting area and rump should not exclude birds from receiving a high grade. A bird with fine copper color and a slight color excess in the wing design is better than one with pure wing but duller copper.

Concerning the gold white wing; the gold color may be a hue darker than in the gold black wing, which must be even, without green or red, and possessing a bright shine. The even quality of the basic color is important. Head gold may not be frosted, green on the throat is objectionable

In both copper and gold white wings a light spotting or flecking when the wings or tail is spread out is not to be faulted. Pronounced mirroring in the tail is desired.

The white wing with bars have the same requirements. In addition, two small continuous bars are required in accordance with the basic color and delineated. A bad fault is the hint of a third bar. Because of the bar coloring it is significantly more difficult to achieve than a pure barless wing, please exercise leniency in this regard.

White Wing Faults: Bluish red in bronze areas on copper white wings. Grayish head or beard. Gray instead of white color on back. Colored flecking in wing shields. Too much white in shanks. Gray or sooty under-tail wedge. Blurred or broken wing bars in barred white wings.

Any Other Color: Birds in this class must have the Archangel Bronze pattern. Other base colors or color modifiers may affect the bronze color differently. However, the color of the bronze shade should be even throughout with head, neck, breast, belly shanks, and under-tail wedge thoroughly colored and without green or smut. The base color of these birds should be rich and evenly shaded.

Any Other Color Faults: Greenish, sooty or smutty color in bronze areas. Sooty under-tail wedge. Too much of base color in shanks. Poor or dull base color.

Self and Other Color Patterns Self colored or birds without the Archangel Bronze pattern are shown in this stock class. Selves should be of a rich color with even shade throughout. Depending on their color, they may or may not have iridescent luster. Archangels of other color patterns should have a pleasing and well defined pattern as well as rich color.

Selves and Other Color Pattern Faults: Birds with poor or dull color and birds with poor pattern definition should be heavily faulted.

Type The foregoing guidelines have been somewhat lengthy because there are several color varieties and also many criteria to address for an Archangel to be a good color pigeon. While the Archangel is primarily a color pigeon it should be emphasized that a good type is very important. Simply put, if an Archangel does not have good type it is not a good Archangel.

An important factor of the Archangel type is a good body with a fairly broad chest and then gently tapering back to the tail. An Archangel has a head unique to the pigeon world. The head should slope up from the beak rather sharply and then be flat from the forehead back to the crest. Concerning station, Archangels tend to be flighty, but in the show pen they should station properly neither crouching or leaning back on the tail. Other criteria to consider such as crest, neck, wings and so forth can be ascertained by studying the first part of the Standard and the standard drawing. In general, good confirmation of all parts and an impression of overall balance should weigh heavily in consideration of good type.

Grading and Placement System:

Grading: All Archangels shall be graded using the individual merit system. As follows:

“E” Excellent – 97 points This grade is awarded when a bird meets the highest requirements of the standard of perfection and represents the overall impression of near perfection that is obtainable by breeding the Archangel.

“HS” Highly Superior – 96 points This grade is awarded when the grade “E” can’t be given due to some features that are close to, but don’t meet the qualities of an “E” bird. A bird with only a few minor faults should be given this grade.

“S” Superior – 93 - 95 points This grade is awarded when all the characteristics of the breed are distinctly present and an overbalance is expressed. Some features aren’t developed in the same degree of quality as the higher grades. An Archangel with several minor faults or an Archangel with a few minor

faults and one major fault should be given this graded. In most cases, this grade should be given to the majority of the entries in the show.

“G” Good – 91 - 92 points This grade is awarded to pigeons that either have some obvious major faults or an accumulation of too many minor faults. In addition, “G” rated birds might be out of condition. For example, birds that are missing feathers, bird that are in molt, or have soiled feathers. Out of condition birds might, under other circumstances (good condition), be awarded a higher grade.

“I” Inferior – 90 or less points This grade is given to those birds that have many major faults. A pigeon that shows signs of out-crossing to another breed will also receive this grade. In this case, the judge will usually make the notation that the entry is “not representative of its breed”. For the most part, Inferior rated birds have no value as breeding stock!

Placing: All birds in a class that receive the same grade shall be placed in order of preference by the judge with the exception of “I” Inferior birds.

As an example, a class of ten birds might be graded and placed as follows: HS1, HS2, S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, G1, G2, G3.