

# Green Peafowl and Hybrids

Tips and Tricks to identify unpure birds.

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## Points of interests are :

- the body shape and volume,
- the length of the legs,
- the built, length and shape of the crest, at males / females,
- the shape and colour of the breast feathers, at males / females,
- the colour of the upper back feathers at females

### the body :

All Green Peafowl in the wild are large and slim birds. In free range nowhere exist birds with short legs and low or round bodies. All these appearances are effects of hybridisation or inbreeding. Measurement studies at museum skin collections and live birds showed, all wild forms have lengths of the „lower legs“, what really are the growed together bones of the middle foot, of about 16 cm at males, females little shorter.



thai male

In opposite to wild birds, hybrids with *Pavo cristatus* do not show this elegance of slim and large bodies.

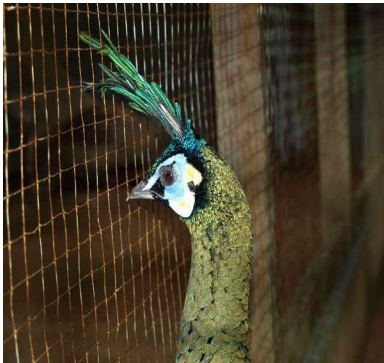
And all hybrids of *Pavo muticus* show traces of the domesticated ancestor *Pavo cristatus*, traces that will be found in the shape and volume of the body. These birds look very short legged and low. Nearly the whole upper part of the leg is inside the flank feathers not visible and unuseally short.



typical hybrid

### the crest :

The crest of pure *Pavo muticus* is a long and slim bundle of a group of feathers. Little differences show the several subspecies in the manour how the birds wear the crest in angle to the head. Malay birds keep the crests forward above the beak, Thay birds and Javanese in a different angle backwards, and spicifer subspecies almost straight upon the head. But all subspecies show the same shape of the crest feathers, at males slim long feathers with a sharp lancette pointed end, length between 14 and 16 cm, at females also the slim feathers, but not a sharp point at the end, more rounded and little shorter, 12 – 14 cm.



malay bird



burmese bird

This is like crests of pure bird must be. Long and slim, with needle sharp points at male's crest end and round endings at females.



Crest of pure thai bird

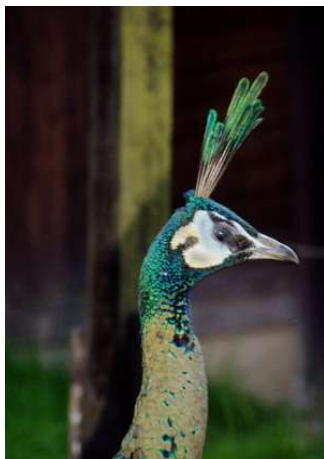
The crests of hybrids look totally different. In all cases they are very much shorter than those of pure birds. May be the length only will reach 4 to 5 cm. But most important is the built of the single crest feathers. Hybrids do not show the long and linear slim lancette feathers of pure birds. Hybrid crest feathers look like longer Cristaus crown feathers.



typical hybrid crests

A naked middle shaft with a round or oval tip at the end. Even backcrossed hybrids of several recrossing generations do show this distinguishing mark, only little longer, up to 10 cm length.

In comparable pictures - Left - a pure Spicifer female with long lancette crest feathers, round endings, - Right – a several times recrossed hybrid with naked shafts and round endings.



### the male breast feathers :

All wild forms of *Pavo muticus* show different colour and hue of their frontal breast feathers. The range goes from greyish green at the northern Spicifer, to pale dark green of the northern Imperator, into yellow golden at the cambodian southern Imperator, up to the bright and shiny light green of Javanese Muticus. The most intense green colour has the western Javanese Muticus from Udjon Kulon area. But one thing is impossible at wild pure forms – the lack of turquoise colour at the male breast. All traces of turquoise are reliable signs of hybridisation.



Javanese



Cambodian



northern Imperator



Spicifer

These pictures show the typical colour in turquoise hue of hybrid birds. This kind of colour does not exist in pure wild forms of all subspecies. The turquoise lack does disappear more and more by backcrossing to Muticus birds. But it is to see clearly up to several generations.

Hybrid



typical hybrid with all characteristics (body, legs, crest, breast)



### **the female breast feathers :**

Females are much more easy to identify as hybrids or pure birds than males. Female breast feathers at hybrids tend to show brown areas at the lower breast of the bird, in the same way Spalding females show that. Females that have brown feathers at the lower breast, or parts of brown, are always Hybrids. Also the turquoise hue does help us to rate them as female hybrids. See these typical brown feathers at following pictures, also the turquoise touched colour.



female hybrid



female hybrids

### **the female back feathers :**

Female hybrids of the first generations show nearly all dull brown back feathers. This mark does disappear more and more by further backcrossings with pure Muticus. All females with brown back feathers are Hybrids. At pure wild birds none of the subspecies does have brown feathers on the back of females. Not even the most „brown“ subspecies Pavo muticus spicifer of Myanmar. At least they show golden brown hued feathers, but all with more or less green outside borders on each feather. Real dull brown feathers does not exist on pure muticus female backs. Some intense coloured individuums of Muticus subspecies appear complete green over the whole back, no brown feathers at all.



both pictures show typical hybrid females