

THE 2017 SERAPHIM STANDARD OF PERFECTION

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ORIGIN: 1986 East Moline, Illinois, in the loft of Anya (Anne) Ellis. Recognized by the National Pigeon Association in 1995. Recognized by the French National Pigeon Association (SNC) in 1997.

THE NAME: Seraphim (pronounced sara-fim) is a plural word. Seraph is the singular form of the word. It is correct to say, “I have one Seraph, but soon I will have 10 Seraphim.” There should never be an ‘s’ on the end of Seraphim.

GENETICS: Seraphim are recessive red or recessive yellow birds that molt to white because they stop producing pigment. Genetically they are Satinette-marked piebald birds that have color on the shield and tail. Juveniles that have color on other parts of the body will still turn white. The shield turns white because of the ‘white-sides’ gene (tested by Tim Kvidera). Research on why the tail turns white is ongoing. More than one gene mutation is involved and these genes can be separated from the white-sides gene. Since each colored juvenile feather that falls out is replaced by a white feather, it can take

two molts for birds to become completely white. Birds hatched late in the season may not drop every juvenile feather due to the onset of cold weather.

OVERALL IMPRESSION: Adult Seraphim have the appearance of a white angel. They are statuesque and elegant. When stationing the head is held high, the tail low with the chest projected upward and forward. The frill is prominent and the wing butts are clearly delineated from the body. The flights rest on the tail and the back is smooth, lacking 'sails' in the covert feathers. The feet are covered with small feathers and a sweep of ankle feathers giving the appearance that Seraphim have white stars for feet. Hens will appear somewhat more delicate and refined than cocks.

The head is the most heavily weighted feature in judging Seraphim. The curve from the tip of the beak to the tip of the needle point peak is unbroken. The head is rounded and the beak is down set and large enough for Seraphim to feed their young. The eye is bull and the cere is unobtrusive and very light pink or almost white in color. There is a medium gullet that adds weight to the head. A convex and unbroken mane flows from the tip of the peak to the shoulder. Seraphim have a prominent chest frill.

BREED CHARACTERISTICS

COLOR: (10 points): Recessive red or recessive yellow that molts to white. Young birds will often retain some colored feathers until the second molt. This is not considered a fault in young bird competition since it proves birds are indeed young Seraphim. **FAULTS:** Failure to molt to white in two seasons. **DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:** Colors other than recessive red and recessive yellow that molt to white.

STATION: (15 points): Head held high, tail touching or nearly touching the ground. Elegant, with a clean, uninterrupted line from the shoulder to the tip of the tail. Graceful with flights resting on the tail. Shoulders are concave and the wing butts are held out separate from the chest and clearly delineated.

FAULTS: Refusal to station. The presence of "sails." **SERIOUS FAULTS:** A duck-like stance with an elevated tail and an arched back. Flights consistently carried below the tail. A short, stocky body with rounded shoulders.

HEAD: (25 points): Graceful, rounded over the top of the skull, having a concave dip (swoop) between the top of the head and the tip of the peak. The back of the skull is visible and the tip of the peak is below the top of the skull. The desired "Apple" head results from adequate head height and a somewhat rounded skull. The light pink beak protrudes slightly beyond the frontal, but the setting of the beak is 'down-faced'; the beak is small but strong and adequate to feed young. A medium gullet adds mass to the head; a visible gullet **MUST** be present. **FAULTS:** Flat head (lack of a swoop), peak too high or too low, weak or thin beak, angular head. Head too short from front to back because peak and mane are underdeveloped so they do not stand far enough out from back of head. **SERIOUS FAULTS:** Skull too small so head is too small in proportion to body, egg shaped skull rather than round causing lack of skull height above the eye, skull too narrow, lack of skull height above the eye, pinched frontal, frontal too prominent, frontal too broad between the eyes (eyes should be visible when looking straight at the face.) **DISQUALIFYING FAULTS:** Lack of a gullet. Beak too small.

PEAK: (10 points): Needle point peak that stands well out from the back of the head, and is separated from the head by a dip called the 'swoop'. The tip of the peak is below the top of the head. **FAULTS:** Tufted peak, twisted peak, flat peak (partial shell crest), peak set too high or too low, lack of swoop (dip) between the peak and the head, peak set too close to the head. **DISQUALIFYING FAULT:** Shell crest.

EYE: (5 points): Bull (very dark). The cere is almost white. **FAULTS:** A faint light ring or faint light spots are minor faults. **SERIOUS FAULTS:** Pearl eye(s), orange eye(s), eye cere any other color than almost white.

FRILL: (10 points): Thick (dense), heavily ruffled, wide, long, prominent, with feathers turned in many directions. (A zipper frill is not the ideal). **FAULTS:** Too little frill, wispy frill, frill too short or crooked, frill that turns only to one side. A zipper frill is not the ideal, but it is preferable to a thin, wispy frill, or a frill that turns to one side only.

NECK: (5 points): The neck is medium sized, not thick. It broadens as it flows from the head to the shoulders. A medium gullet is necessary as it adds volume to the head and dignity to the bird. (Owl breeds all have a gullet.) **FAULTS:** An overly long neck. A too large, overly pronounced gullet in a relaxed bird. **DISQUALIFYING FAULT:** Absence of a gullet.

MANE: (5 points): A well developed mane should stand well out from the back of the head and flow smoothly from the tip of the peak to the shoulder in a convex, unbroken curve. The two sides of the mane should meet in a line down the back of the neck. The mane should appear symmetrical when viewed from the back. **FAULTS:** A break in the mane. Undeveloped mane that makes the head appear short from front to back. Mane not a continuous convex curve when viewed from the side. Disorganized feathers that do not meet in a straight line at the back of the mane. No visible meeting line where the two sides of the mane meet. Mane not symmetrical when viewed from the back.

TAIL: (5 points): 12 feathers, slightly flared. Width 2.25 to 2.5 inches. Feathers aligned and touching each other, carried angled toward the ground. Tail should be long and touch or almost touch the ground. **FAULTS:** Tail too narrow (too well closed). Tail too open (fan shaped). Tail V-shaped or with twisted feathers. Tail held in an elevated position. Tail too short.

FOOT: (5 points): Each toe individually covered with tiny smooth feathers, giving the appearance of a glove with toenails protruding beyond the end. There should be a 'sweep' of ankle feathering that curves across the top of the foot at the ankle. These feathers should not be sparse, but they should not have the appearance of a muff. The glove feathers and the sweep feathers combine to give the foot the appearance of a white star. **FAULTS:** Too much ankle feathering so that 'sweep' feathers appear to be a muff. Too little ankle feathering (sparse sweep feathers or no sweep feathers). Loose toe feathering, too much or too little toe feathering (exposed toes). **SERIOUS FAULT:** A true muff is a serious fault.

CONDITION: (5 points): Clean, white, smooth appearance, firm feel, solid chest muscles. **SERIOUS FAULTS:** Dirty, thin, poor feather quality, loose feathering, lice, holes in the feathers.

ORDER OF JUDGING:

Station

Head

Peak

Neck

Mane

Tail

Frill

Foot

TRAITS TO BE JUDGED DURING HANDLING:

Eye

Foot

Condition

Notes for Judges: Foot, Eye, and Condition are all to be judged during handling; all other qualities are to be observed in the show cage. Some eye faults can only be seen during handling; the foot should be closely evaluated for feather nubs indicating the toes are not bare; the body must be felt for physical condition and feathers must be inspected for lice, holes, and dirt. Stress can alter the

stance, feather tightness, and overall appearance of the bird, so they must be observed in a calm state in the show cage before handling in order to form an accurate impression of the bird's actual quality. The back may arch in a stressed bird; the head may become boxy in a stressed bird; the peak may lower and become twisted or tufted in a stressed bird; a mane break may appear in a stressed bird. If a bird is stressed the Judge should come back to it once it has settled.

Revisions by Anya Ellis and David Coster