

# Genetic Origins of Fancy Pigeons

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## ABSTRACT

To study the evolutionary biology, pigeons are the best in avian kingdom. Fancy pigeons in the markets and pet shops of Bangladesh helped to observe their wild-type characteristics. According to the gross figures of this note, such characteristics of the fancy pigeons in the color group (brander, archangel, nun, strasser), structure group (scandaroon, fantail, mookee, swift), flying (tumbler), and wattle (barb) were similar with many wild species of pigeons or doves. Among the four categories, the genetic similarities were found the most in the color and structure group.

**Keywords:** Wild Pigeons/Doves, Fancy Pigeons, Molecular Study, Color, Structure, Flying, Wattle.

## INTRODUCTION

Continuous inbreeding within rock-pigeons showed some changes and after domestication when people looked sufficient variations then they completed selective breeding between or among their pigeons. Many of the morphological features found in the domestic breeds through the efficiency of selection [1]. Plumage color, body structure, flying, and wattle of fancy pigeons have been gradually developed by the breeders. From the very beginning in the world, people were habituated to fly pigeons regularly and ultimately made a highflying group. Based on the dispersal capabilities in avian families, pigeons are the most effective colonist [2]. Pigeons have radiated into over 322 species and may occupy some of the harshest environments [3]. The objective of this study is to observe some characteristics of fancy pigeons which were available in their wild ancestors.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

To get some ideas on genetic resource, strasser, mookee, barb, fantail, tumbler, archangel, swift, nun, brander, and scandaroon pigeons were observed from the pigeon markets and pet shops of Dhaka Bangladesh. The characteristics of these pigeons were compared with the wild pigeons or doves by using pictorial field-guide books.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Color:** The Nicobar pigeon is metallic purple green throughout except its white tail. Black face of Namaqua dove (*Oena capensis*) is resembled with the nun pigeon. Scaled pigeon (*Columba speciosa*) has nice white cap on the head and this is similar with Indian mookee pigeon. A pictorial book on the pigeons and doves of the world could help a lot to observe

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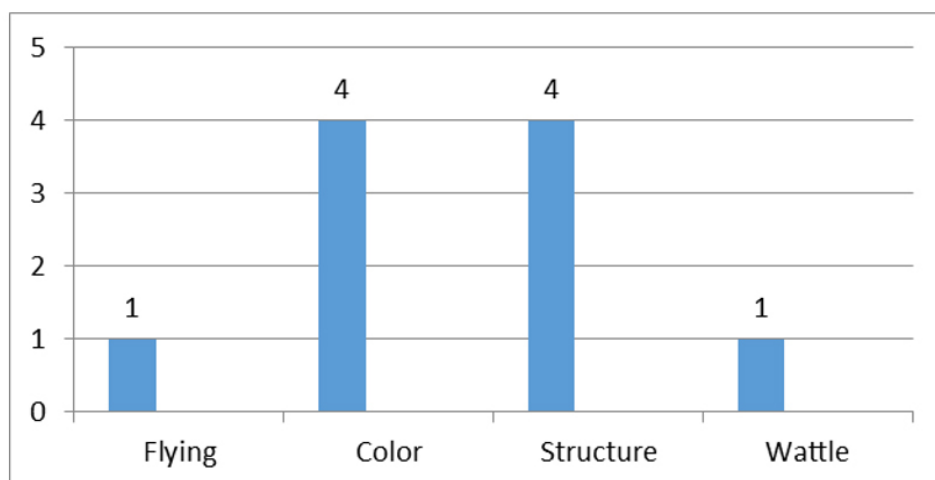
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the similarities between domestic and wild pigeons or doves [4]. **Structure:** The length of the tail of swift pigeon is longer than other fancy breeds. Long tail of cuckoo doves is similar to the swift pigeon. **Flying:** Most of the tumbler pigeons, they have pearl irises, similar to the wild common wood-pigeon (*Columba palumbus*). **Wattle:** A hypertrophied red

orbital ring is present in one subspecies or rock-dove namely *Columba livia gymnocyclus* of Africa [5]. It is to be also found in diamond dove (*Geopelia cuneata*) of Australia, bare-eyed pigeon (*Columba corensis*) of South America, speckled pigeon (*Columba guinea*) of Africa and in the blue pigeons (*Alectroenas spp.*).

**Table 1.** Fancy pigeons with their wild-type characteristics

Group of pigeon	Wild species	Characteristics	Fancy pigeons
<b>Color</b>	Snow pigeon	Head color is black	Strasser
	Namaqua dove	Face is black	Nun
	Maranon pigeon	Bronze	Brander
	Nicobar pigeon	Metallic purple green	Archangel
<b>Structure</b>	New Caledonian imperial pigeon	Elongated body with curved beak and head	Scandaroon
	Scaled pigeon	White-capped	Mookee
	Cuckoo dove	Long tail	Swift
<b>Flying</b>	Pheasant pigeon	Supernumerary rectrices (tail feathers)	Fantail
	Common wood-pigeon	Pearl irises	Tumbler
<b>Wattle</b>	Speckled pigeon; Bare-eyed pigeon	Eyes are wattled	Barb



**Figure 1.** Number of fancy pigeons on the basis of their groups.

## CONCLUSIONS

Humans preferred various colors and patterns of their pigeons first. The Nicobar pigeon is a wild species has metallic purple green plumage. The supernumerary tail feathers were common in pheasant pigeons led to the form of the fantail pigeon though these tail feathers have been increased gradually. Some wild doves have special markings like the black head and breast of the Namaqua dove is resembled the nun. The scaled pigeon has a nice white cap on the head and is very similar to the mookie pigeon. Animal breeders have postulated long tails in swift pigeons like the cuckoo dove. Ingredients on different or exceptional characteristics of fancy pigeons were available in many wild species of doves or pigeons.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None declared.

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