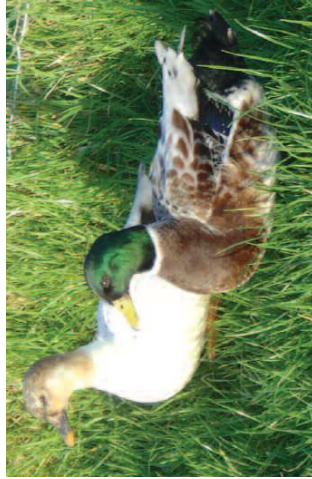


# The Silver Bantam Duck

**B**antam and Miniature ducks are a useful show classification for smaller breeds, at 1/4 to 1/3 the size of the standard ducks. They are popular pet ducks for the garden, requiring less space and food than the heavy ducks and the Runners. They are also quieter than Call ducks, lay more eggs, but will still go broody and rear a clutch. Their one disadvantage is that they can fly.

Bantams and Miniatures weigh between 32 and 42 oz, and include the Silver Bantam, Black East Indian, Crested Miniature and Silver Appleyard Miniature. It is believed that Call ducks were used to 'bantamise' these breeds. If Calls are crossed with larger ducks, their small size certainly brings down the size of the resultant cross from the larger parent.



■ **Silver Bantams, 2007 (Simon James)**

Whether Calls were used to create the BEI is a bit of a mystery. The BEI is a very old breed itself, going back to at least to the 1830s when it arrived the UK (1). Its early origins and simple colour genetics define it as a long-established 'classic duck'. But Calls certainly were used to create the Silver Bantam duck and the Crested Miniature.

## The Silver Bantam Duck

Reginald Appleyard of Ixworth in Sussex was the originator of the Silver Bantam. We are fortunate to have early evidence of the development of the breed from both Appleyard and John Hall, John has produced exhibition waterfowl and also wildfowl all his life, and he also worked for Appleyard at Ixworth in the 1950s. So first-hand information has been available from two sources.

John has always maintained that Reginald Appleyard produced the Silver Bantam from a cross between a White Call drake and a Khaki Campbell duck on the River at Ixworth in the 1940s (1). Appleyard first exhibited the Silver Bantam at the Warwickshire Federation of Young Farmers in 1950. The breed was eventually on show at Olympia and was publicized by Colonel A.A. Johnson (who bought Appleyard's establishment). Both Colonel Johnson and the reporter Easom Smith wrote

the plumage of the Silver Bantam as 'a variation of the large Appleyard, with similar colouring' yet illustrating the typical Bantam female. The description was corrected in the 1997 standard but no photograph given.



■ **Silver Bantam duck - 1982 Standard**

Many exhibitors and judges did not know the difference between the two colours, and show classifications in the late 1980s and early 1990s offered only one class for the Silver Bantam Appleyard, as it was then called. Confusion reigned until the Miniature Appleyard had had more publicity and show classifications were expanded to accommodate both forms.

## Colour of the Bantam

Since the publication of the more detailed BWA Standards of 1999 and 2008, the Silver Bantam has made bit of a comeback. Birds exhibited in recent years have not been quite the same as the originals. They are slightly larger and the ducks tend to be too 'white', but the basic colour is there, including the brown hood.

The original cross of the White Call and the Khaki Campbell ducks would have given a mixture of brown and dusky genes—combined with whatever the White Call was hiding. White is a

masking colour, so to produce the 'silver' (the harlequin gene) the white drake must have had 'silver' or harlequin genes, which are not present in the Campbell. The mallard series allele in the Call is unknown, but is likely to have been dusky.

To simplify the possibilities in the F2 generation (below), the complicating factor of the recessive white gene has been left out. All F1 hybrids would have appeared 'not-white' because they would have had

only one recessive c gene. In subsequent crosses of siblings, 1/4 of the population would have been C+ / C+ (not white), half C+ / c



■ **Silver Appleyard Miniatures. They have mallard restricted instead of dusky genes, and show well-developed eye-stripes, males and females.**



■ **Silver Bantam ducklings**

(carrying white) and 1/4 c / c (white again because they are homozygous).

It has also been assumed that the offspring were homozygous for m<sup>s</sup> (dusky) leaving only the

F1	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup>	D <sup>+</sup> / d	males
	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup>	D <sup>-</sup> / d	females

shown a light brown colour in the body feathers and would have shown a bronze wing bar. They would have been Bantam Harlequins.

F1 Male	Li <sup>+</sup> / D <sup>+</sup>	Li <sup>+</sup> / d	li <sup>h</sup> / D <sup>+</sup>	li <sup>h</sup> / d
F1 female	Li <sup>+</sup> / D <sup>+</sup>	Li <sup>+</sup> / Li <sup>+</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / D <sup>+</sup>	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / D <sup>+</sup>	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / d
	Li <sup>+</sup> / -	Li <sup>+</sup> / Li <sup>+</sup> d / -	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / -	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> d / -
	li <sup>h</sup> / D <sup>+</sup>	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / d	li <sup>h</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / D <sup>+</sup>	li <sup>h</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / d
	li <sup>h</sup> / -	Li <sup>+</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> d / -	li <sup>h</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> D <sup>-</sup> / -	li <sup>h</sup> / li <sup>h</sup> d / -

Li<sup>+</sup> / li<sup>h</sup> (dark phase/harlequin phase) and D<sup>+</sup> / d (not brown/brown) genes to be sorted out. All F1 individuals must have been heterozygous for brown/not brown and dark phase/harlequin phase.

Some of these birds would have been white or carrying white. But some would have been Silver Bantams. The shaded squares in the bottom right denote birds homozygous for harlequin phase. The D<sup>+</sup> / - and D<sup>-</sup> / -

An indication that this really happened is in John Hall's report of Silver Bantams from the 1950s (1). He recalled that a few females were produced with a yellow-gold wing bar and markings instead of the original colour. The yellow-gold wing bar would, of course, be from the brown genes of the original Khaki cross.

(1) More information in *The Domestic Duck*, C&M Ashton (2001, 2008)

Note: Capital letters denote dominance; \* denotes the genes of the typical mallard

	Mallard series: restricted M <sup>s</sup> mallard M <sup>s</sup> dusky m <sup>s</sup>	Phase: dark phase Li <sup>+</sup> light phase li harlequin phase li <sup>h</sup>	Brown dilution: d / - (sex-linked)	White: c
Khaki	m <sup>s</sup> / m <sup>s</sup>	Li <sup>+</sup> / Li <sup>+</sup>	d / -	C <sup>+</sup> / C <sup>+</sup>
White Call	m <sup>s</sup> / m <sup>s</sup>	li <sup>h</sup> / li <sup>h</sup>	D <sup>-</sup> / D <sup>-</sup>	c / c