

History of the Tortoiseshell

Many years ago, the Tortoiseshell Cavy was a popular established breed with full standard, numbers declined in the 80's and have since been relegated to Rare Varieties.

Guidance notes

The Tortoiseshell is a smooth coated cavy, carrying a chequerboard pattern of square-cut patches of black and red, of equal size, with a dividing 'line' formed by the meeting of patches on opposite sides of the body running the length of the cavy both top and underside.

No patches should overlap the central line, either on top or under side.

There is no set sequence for the patches; but in considering the quality of a Tortoiseshell the overall balance of patches and colour on each side and top & under is important.

On well-marked exhibits 4 or 5 patches on each side would be preferable to three, but not at the expense of a loss of uniformity in the size and shape of the patches.

Each patch should consist of a solid colour, clearly defined from surrounding patches, and with no intermingling of hairs of a different colour.

The Tortoiseshell Cavy

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Standard of points

Head, Eyes & Ears	<p>Head to be short and broad, with a gently curving profile.</p> <p>Muzzle to be of good width and rounded at the nostrils.</p> <p>Eyes to be large, bright and bold and set with good width between.</p> <p>Ears to be large and drooping, and set with good width between.</p>
Body Shape	<p>To have short, cobby body with good width across shoulders and body.</p> <p>To be fit and of good substance, with plenty of firm flesh.</p> <p>To have good size appropriate to age.</p>
Markings	<p>To consist of patches of black and red, evenly distributed on each side of the body on either side of a central 'line' formed by the meeting of patches of different colours.</p>
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Head Markings	<p>Head to have two colours divided down the centre.</p>
Line & Distribution of Patches	<p>Patches to be placed on each side of the body so as to give no overlaps over the central line top or under.</p> <p>Each side of the body of the cavy to have three or more patches.</p>
Shape & Clarity of Patches	<p>Patches to be square-cut with straight edges and of equal size</p> <p>Patches to be clean-cut and distinct from each other, with no intermingling of colours.</p>
Colour	<p>Colours ideally to conform as nearly as possible to ESCC Standards, although slight variations from these should not be penalised so long as colour is rich, even, of glossy sheen and carried well down to the skin to avoid any appearance of flakiness.</p> <p>To be free from white hairs (see Faults below).</p> <p>Eye colour to be dark.</p>
Coat	<p>To be soft, clean and groomed free of guard hairs.</p>

Specific faults

Line Faults- (In descending order of significance, i.e. worst faults first, but dependent on extent of failing)

Band. A patch of colour going all the way around the body

Belt. A patch of colour going more than half way round the body

Overlap. A patch of colour overlapping the centre line, top or under

Solid Head. Head of a single colour

Dutch-pattern Head. Head with the same colour on each side of the head with a blaze of a different colour. This is a minor fault

Distribution Faults

(In descending order of significance, i.e. worst faults first)

Missing Colour. An absence of any of the two colours on either side of the cavy

Shortage of Patches. Less than three patches on any side of the body, two patches being better than one.

Clarity Faults

Brindling/Roaning: Intermixing of any colours (white for roaning) where patches meet

Colour Faults

Intermixing of hairs of a different colour (white for roaning) within patches

A small amount of brindling or roaning should not be too harshly penalised on an otherwise well marked exhibit

Some young cavies may show evidence of roaning that will disappear with the adult coat. This should not be viewed as a serious fault.

Exhibits carrying small clumps of white hairs that do not in total exceed the size of a £1 coin may be shown in Tortoiseshell classes. This to be penalised according to the size of the clumps.

Further faults can be found @

<http://britishcavycouncil.org.uk/Breeds/NTWCC/TortandWhite-Std.shtml>

Breeders List; Janet Saynor- Saywell cavies