

About “glasses-rabbits” and “ghostfaces”

100 years breeding history of the Blanc de Hotot



This beautiful buck was presented by Wilhelm Burmeister from Schönkirchen at the 21st federal buck exhibition in Neumünster 2007 (96 points, medal by the central association of rabbits, ‘ZDRKE’).

Picture: Sabine Rübensaar

The Blanc de Hotot is a tough breed and without a doubt they have charm. However, at the beginning they were not very popular and they owe it to Friedrich Joppich that they finally had their breakthrough. This beautiful buck was presented by Wilhelm Burmeister from Schönkirchen at the 21st federal buck exhi-

bition in Neumünster 2007 (96 points, medal by the central association of rabbits, ‘ZDRKE’).

Blanc de Hotots are cylindrical but elegant rabbits and their whole body is of a bright white. The deep black rings around the eyes and the dark brown eyes make a nice contrast. The breed originated from France where they were bred by

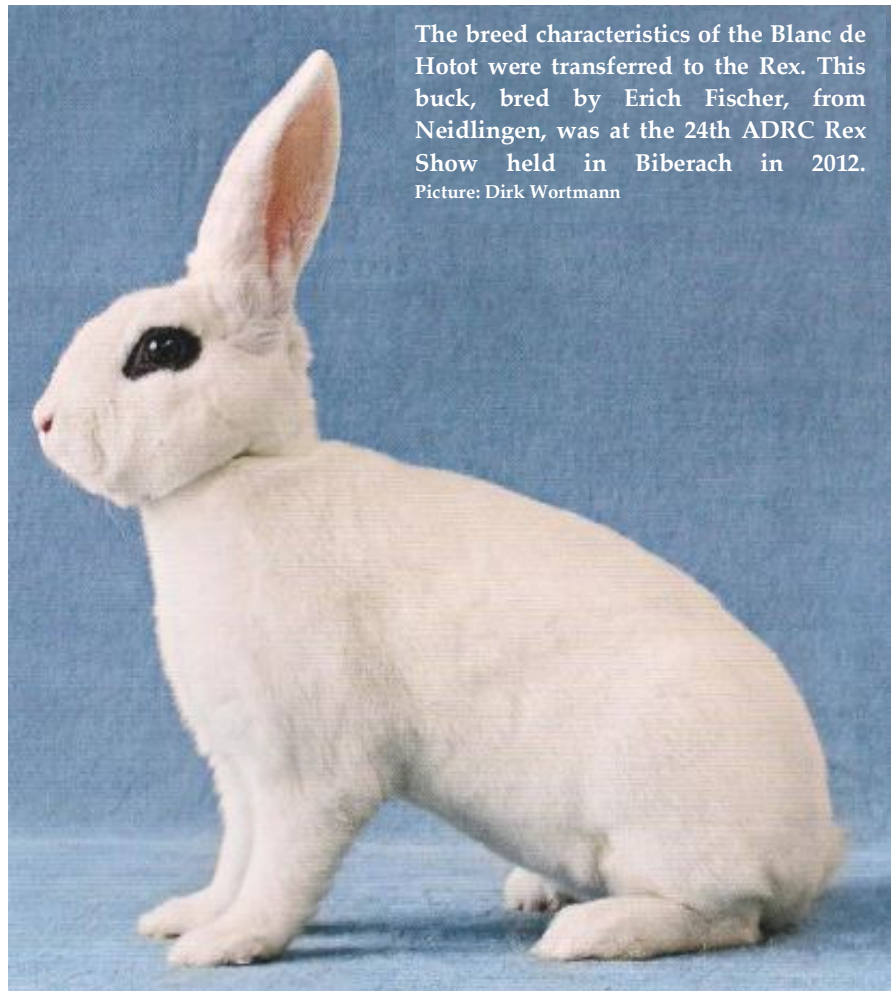
Eugénie Bernard on her country estate Château de la Butte in Hotot-en-Auge in North France. 100 years ago the breed was first exhibited and acknowledged in France. It was called ‘Hotot blanc’. In Germany the breed was only recognized in 1961. Today, Blanc de Hotots normally weight more than four kilograms; the highest weight that

middle heavy rabbits can attain is around five kilograms. The Blanc de Hotots show similarities with the White Viennese, but they are seen as superior and more elegant. Moreover, their back is wide and light and they have good muscles. Thus, the body is cylindrical and wide. The breast is full and the back is well rounded. Neck and nape, however, are hardly visible. The back is softly arched and the back line is well balanced. The middle long and straight "flower" (or tail) lies close to the body.

The head is preferred as short as possible. The forehead and the snout are wide. The rabbits have big and lively eyes. Their meaty ears are worn straight upwards. They have plenty of hair and are rounded at the end. The length of the ears should fit harmonically with the length of the body. The strong legs of the rabbits are of middle length and the hind legs are well proportioned. Their fur is around three centimeters long and the undercoat is comparatively thick. The



Blanc de Hotot, 29th National Rabbit Show held in Karlsruhe in 2009, 97.5 points winner, Bernhard Glutting, from Rednitz-hembach. Picture: Karin Wolters



The breed characteristics of the Blanc de Hotot were transferred to the Rex. This buck, bred by Erich Fischer, from Neidlingen, was at the 24th ADRC Rex Show held in Biberach in 2012. Picture: Dirk Wortmann

fur border is good and even. Female rabbits are more refined. If possible, they should have no loose fur on their front.

This breed only exists with a black and white fur. The foundation color is a bright white throughout. Moreover, the fur is supposed to shimmer. The rings around the eyes are three to five millimeters wide. They are deep black, without jags and if possible both rings should have the same width. The eye lids are flesh-colored on both sides. The claws do not have a color; the eyes are dark brown. They should have no spots.

Wide, small or irregular eyes, flesh-colored lids, white in the rings around the eyes, less dark hairs around the head or the ears or a hint of yellow or grey are flaws in this breed. A big flaw is rings around the eyes that are more than 6 millimeter wide, eye lids that are broken up or white, dark spots on the body, head or ears or rings

around the eyes that are of a different color.

With split breeds the litter can contain "whites" and animals with both markings – meaning those with spots and those with larger parts of discolored fur. The typical color and pattern of the offspring's fur can be seen a few days after their birth.

The breed is strong, fertile and easy to breed. The goals of breeding are a good shape and a good length of the ears. Flaws around the eyes are hereditary. Slender rabbits with a back that is not well-rounded are not the goal of breeding. Height and weight have to correspond to each other to create a pleasing breed. A good fur and a strong undercoat are wanted. Today there exist perfect, well-bred animals that can be used for further breeding. The unusual fur of the rabbits has made them popular.

Breeding History

Eugénie Bernard is said to have begun the breeding

with lightly colored pinto rabbits. Presumably these animals had the DNA of both pinto rabbit breeds: The old Papillon and the French butterfly rabbits could have played a role. In 1927 the breed came to Switzerland where they are still popular today. From 1929 on they could be found in Holland. In France, large Hotot farms were created. Around 1930 Friedrich Joppich bought the animals and brought them to Germany. He exhibited them in 1936 in Berlin. Joppich was the only Hotot breeder for many years in Germany. In 1959 Dr. Kissner imported more animals from Switzerland. Joppich also cross-bred White Viennese and Champagne d'Argent. Around 1959, Joppich introduced the Thuringian Willi Höch to the breeding of this race. The unique fur was by then transferred to other races such as dwarf lops and color dwarfs.



In addition to the Blanc de Hotot, the Dwarf Lop (left) and the Dwarf Hotot (right) also found their place in rabbitries.

Pictures: Tobias Reinmuth



Only little was written down about Hotot rabbits. Joppich wrote an article in the "Geflügel-Börse" (No. 78/ 1935) about their different weights. He imagined the breed to be ideally around seven to eight pounds heavy. The French standard even was eight to nine pounds and the Swiss seven to eight. Joppich preferred the Swiss standard. Today four kilograms is seen as ideal in Switzerland.

After the Second World War the breed was less common. In the "Kaninchenzüchter", part of the specialized press, an article about Otto Munkelt from Naumburg was published in September 1954. A further article was published in the "Deutschen Kleintierzüchter" No. 19 / 1955. Although the breed is strong and has many good qualities, not many people were breeding it. Joppich argued for the breed in the

specialized press for several years. It is due to him that the breed finally spread.

The unique allure of this old breed called "glasses-rabbits" that is bred since more than 100 years, has been transferred to other breeds. This is another success of the Blanc de Hotot in its long breeding history.

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Translated by Christin Bohnke