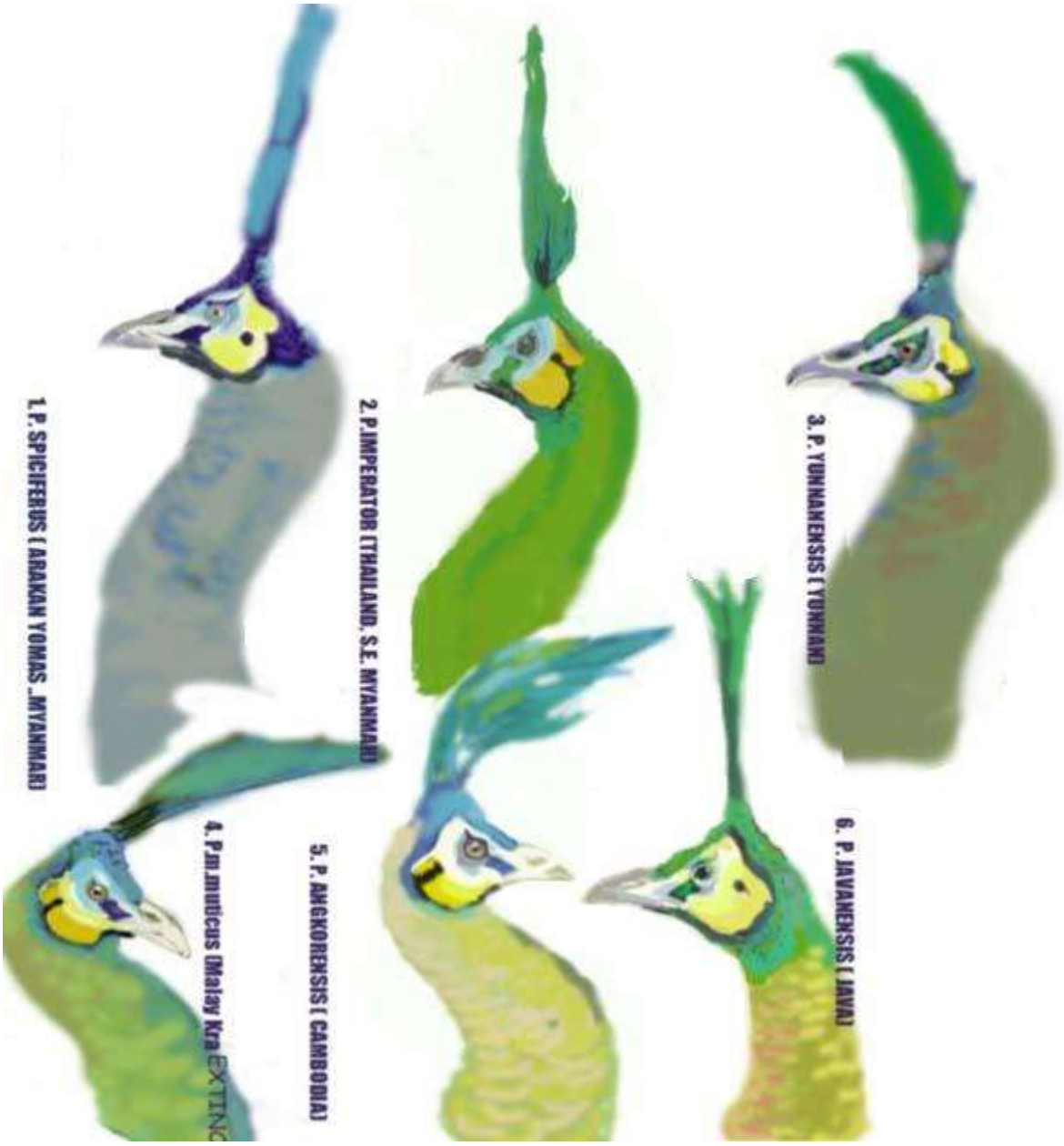
A Monograph of Peafowl of the Genus *Pavo*

By Frank Lin



(Photo courtesy of Kermit Blackwood and Kasetart University in Thailand)

Overview

The Indian Peafowl, *Pavo cristatus* has been considered one of the most beautiful birds in the world. However, the Indian Peafowl has a close relative, the Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus* of Southeast Asia, which has an even more extravagant beauty. There is a lot we do not know about these brilliant birds. Some of the observations made by naturalists have been misunderstood, while several recent findings have unfortunately been ignored by many. I hope with this article I can bring more awareness towards this fascinating group of birds.

Characteristics

Peafowl of the genus *Pavo* are slender-necked and long-legged birds. The male has a large train of eyespot feathers, also known as ocelli or penumbrae. This is often referred to as the tail, but it is really the bird's upper tail coverts, which are really small in other birds. The real tail is actually behind the train and is rather short and dull. Peafowl have a metatarsal spur used for fighting. The shape of the spur varies throughout each subspecies of Peafowl.

The male Indian Peafowl has a blue neck and green backplate. The feathers surrounding its eyespots are green. The Indian Peafowl's crest is fan-shaped and its face has a white double-stripe along the eye. The scapulars are light brown with black barring across the whole wing. The bottom part of the wing is black with some blue iridescence and the primaries are rufous. The male, with train included, has a length of 2.13 metres, while the female is around a metre in length.

The Green Peafowl is larger, the male with train included can be 3 metres in length while the female is 1.1 metres. The ocelli are surrounded with green feathers but these also shimmer in purple under bright light. With a tufted crest, iridescent green neck and shimmering blue-black wings, the Green Peafowl can be said to be even more dazzling that its Indian cousin – a living Phoenix. The Green Peafowl's facial skin is also more colourful, as it has a whitish-blue double stripe that goes around the eye and a yellow crescent of skin behind it. Unlike the Indian Peafowl, the female's plumage looks almost exactly like the males even though it lacks the train and is slightly duller. Juvenile birds are almost indistinguishable from females.

Behaviour

With its famous courtship display of fanning its train of eyespots, the display of peafowl is traditionally believed to be polygynous with its display as a means of sexual selection; it is often assumed that females prefer males with more occeli. In the wild Indian Peafowl display in what appears to be a lek. However, a recent study of feral Indian Peafowl has suggested otherwise. It is possible that other cues, such as the loud calls of the Peacock, may be more attractive to Peahens than the feathers. In Green Peafowl, however, the extreme similarity between the sexes suggests a different breeding system. While it is believed that the male is solitary, it is now known that both Peafowl species are monogamous in the wild.

In Indian Peafowl, the "lek" seen in the field is actually the male communicating with his male offspring, some of which have not developed the train feathers. The birds line up in a troop, taking the focus to them instead of the female and young.

In Green Peafowl, the female and juvenile young are almost identical; what is traditionally thought to be a “harem” of females actually being a family unit. The male assists with rearing his young. He tends his young and aggressively defends the nest. When breeding season ends the male’s train of feathers are moulted and his plumage becomes almost identical to the rest of his family. The male may also moult and take over parenting if the female dies unexpectedly. Females tend to leave the family unit after a few years while the young males may remain with their parents. These birds serve as helpers, helping to raise young in the breeding seasons to come. With one female and several males taking care of the young, it could be said that Peafowl are facultatively polyandrous. This complex social structure can be seen in few other birds

Could the peafowl’s display be more than just a courtship display? It is very possible that it can also be used as a threat display towards intruders; dangerous animals are sometimes brightly coloured to serve as a warning. This may be why peacock are so eager to display to anything, not just peahens. Both peacocks and peahens display so it appears that it is a method for the birds to communicate with each other. If one bird fans his train, his relatives will start to fan their tails and this leads to a protection against intruders.

The facial pattern of peafowl resembles that of a pit viper. This is an extraordinary method of mimicry. When threatened, it looks at the predator with a stare similar to that of a green pit viper. This sort of mimicry has been referred to as Maahesian Mimicry. The Green Peafowl also has good camouflage – its iridescent feathers refract and shimmer in light, but are almost invisible in the dark, hiding the birds from any attacking predators. Thus, while Peafowl appear stunningly brilliant in sunlight, in their forest dwellings they appear rather drab, and this applies to all the subspecies. Predators of peafowl include Tigers and large Bird of Prey, as well as monitor lizards which feed on the eggs and chicks at the nest.

The peafowl's' diet consists mostly of small animals and seeds. They have even been known to hunt venomous snakes. The Indian Peafowl has been known to hunt King Cobras, and Indigenous people of Southeast Asia have often referred to the Green Peafowl as a "Dragonbird" or "Snake Dancer," due to its aggressive nature and snake hunting behaviour.

Peafowl habitat varies from species to species. Some birds can be found in many kinds of rainforests and savannahs of Southeast Asia while others may be found in more coniferous and mountainous forests.

Taxonomy

The Green Peafowl is a galliform bird, belonging to the order Galliformes. Traditionally, it is placed in the family Phasianidae, which also includes pheasants, partridges, and francolins. The Green Peafowl has traditionally classified as a species with three subspecies listed here:

- ***Pavo muticus muticus***, Carolus Linnaeus, 1766 – Confined to Java. This is often considered to be the brightest species of all the birds, with a vivid golden-green neck and violet-blue wing covers. It is the rarest and most critically endangered of the three different subspecies, the last stronghold being in the national parks of Ujung Kulon and Baluran. This form is often referred to as "**Java Green Peafowl**," which is sometimes used to refer to all subspecies, leading to much confusion between the three subspecies and integradation between them. This subspecies is traditionally believed to have also occurred in Malaysia before being hunted to extinction in 1960.

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- ***Pavo muticus spicifer***, George Shaw, 1804 – The dullest and bluest of the three subspecies, it too was found in Malaysia, as well as Northeast India, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand. Although it has a reputation for being rather "drab," it is a majestic bird, leaner and larger than most other Green Peafowl. This form is very rare and has been expirated in much of its range. It is often believed to be common in captivity, but in fact the pure subspecies is rare. The presence of the *imperator* subspecies in Burma also creates further confusion. It is commonly referred to in the avicultural world as the "**Burmese Peafowl**".

- ***Pavo muticus imperator***, Jean Theodore Delacour, 1949 – The last form recognized, its plumage is intermediate between the two forms. Imperator does not have much iridescence compared to that of *muticus*. It does have more vivid facial skin than any other form. There is often much confusion between the two subspecies. This is bird is often referred to as the "**Indo-Chinese Peafowl**," because it is found throughout the forests of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and China. It is still common in some parts of its range; the best place to view them is Thailand. Pure captive populations are rare and mostly mixed between the subspecies. *Imperator* has some strong regional variation between the wide ranges of habitats it inhabits; as the focus of this article this will be further discussed later on.

This classification is almost universally accepted by the scientific community, but a few people have tried to look beyond this and study the various birds. Preliminary data collected by Kermit Blackwood, Euan Malone et al. suggests that there are more subspecies or species of peafowl. There are at least 4 species groups, and as many seven species have been described. The research done by Kermit would also split the *Pavo* Peafowl, along with Congo Peafowl (*Afropavo congensis*) and Argus "Pheasants" (*Argusianus* and *Rheinardia*) into a distinct family. The Arguses would also be separated into more distinct species. Indeed, recent research done by Chinese scientists has suggested that the Phasianidae is paraphyletic and should be split into several families.

Hard scientific data has not been published, but the study is ongoing. Data has been gathered and extensively researched for over 15 years, and Kermit continues to gather data for his publications.

Each Green Peafowl species lives in a distinct ecological zone, their evolutionary histories analgous with the pheasants of the genus *Lophura*.

Peafowl Species (*Pavo*)

Malaysian Green Peafowl *Pavo muticus* (Extinct in the wild)

The true *Pavo muticus muticus* - The Malaysian Peafowl (Photo credit to Martin)

Habitat: Lowland, semi-deciduous dipterocarp forest and lowland rainforest
Distribution: Extinct. Pahang Malaysia (*muticus*), Isthmus of Kra (*kra*)
Subspecies: Greater Malaysian (*P. m. muticus*), and Kra Isthmus (*P. m. kra*/*malacense*).
Description
This is the brightest of the six species. Its neck is a brilliant golden green and its train and back plate is the color of roses. On its crown there is a very tall blue crest and a mound at the base. The crest is often so tall it falls forward. The Kra subspecies has a much glassier hue to its neck, which is similar to that of spicifer and annamensis. The Pahang appears to be most closely related to *Pavo annamensis*, from which it is thought to have diverged from. While there are still some significant differences between the two, there is some possibility that *muticus* was actually a distinct subspecies of *annamensis*.

This species was thought to be identical to the Javanese Green Peafowl, but fossil records from the Pliocene epoch rules this out. Delacour thought the two forms were identical but could not conclude definitely and admitted he did not have enough specimens to study from. The two forms are phenotypically distinct, and recent genetic work shows that the two are not identical. However, it is unknown which form was first described by Linnaeus. Kermit thinks it may be the Malaysian, but if it was Javanese, it would lead to the Javanese being called *muticus*.

Sadly, hunting and habitat destruction have both contributed to the species' demise in the wild by 1960. There are still a handful of these birds left in captivity, being bred and introduced back to Malaysia, but it is possible other breeders may have birds of other forms which may also be released along with them. Even with a reintroduced population, the original knowledge of the birds that inhabited Malaysia is gone forever. These new founders will have to adapt to the environment again.

Java Green Peafowl *Pavo javanensis*

P. javanensis javanensis

Habitat: Coastal rainforest and dry monsoon forest, Plains/Savannah

Distribution: Confined to the Sunda Straits, Java

Subspecies: There are two very distinctive subspecies, the North-western Ujung Kulon (nominate *javanensis*), South-Eastern Baluran (*baluranensis*)

Description

Though similar to the Malaysian Peafowl, the Javanese Peafowl is genetically distinct, and in fact belongs to a totally different lineage. There are two very distinctive subspecies, named after the national parks they live in. The forests of Ujung Kulon are home to the nominate subspecies. It has a straight and unsheathed crest and a green neck. The facial skin is also somewhat pale and pastel coloured, but still more intense than the Malaysian Peafowl. Baluran National Park is home to the Baluran subspecies; it is fairly common here. This subspecies is brighter overall with vivid facial skin similar to that of the Siamese Imperator; the war stripe is bold tangerine and the loral axe is blue. The Baluran subspecies is so distinctive it has been suggested they have evolved from escaped Imperators from Thailand! Indeed,, Siamese Imperators were introduced to Thailand. Birds that were smuggled by illegal wildlife traffickers were also released into Baluran; these birds are of unknown origin and may have hybridised with the Baluran birds. The crown of both subspecies flat and green, and there is not as much of a mound at the base of the crest. The crest is straight in both subspecies but the end of the crest varies between the two subspecies; the nominate Ujung Kulon has a straight crest which is not sheathed and the Baluran has a sheathed crest. The train may appear rosy purple in colour like the Malaysian Peafowl, but the backplate is dull green.

***P. j. baluranensis*. Note the more vivid facial skin and bluer head.**

Burmese Green Peafowl or Spicifer *Pavo spicifer*

P. spicifer spicifer

Habitat: Semi-evergreen rainforest; dry montaine forest, northern subtropical forest and elephant grass/bamboo forest. The Arakan form lives in evergreen, elephant grass and timber bamboo forests.

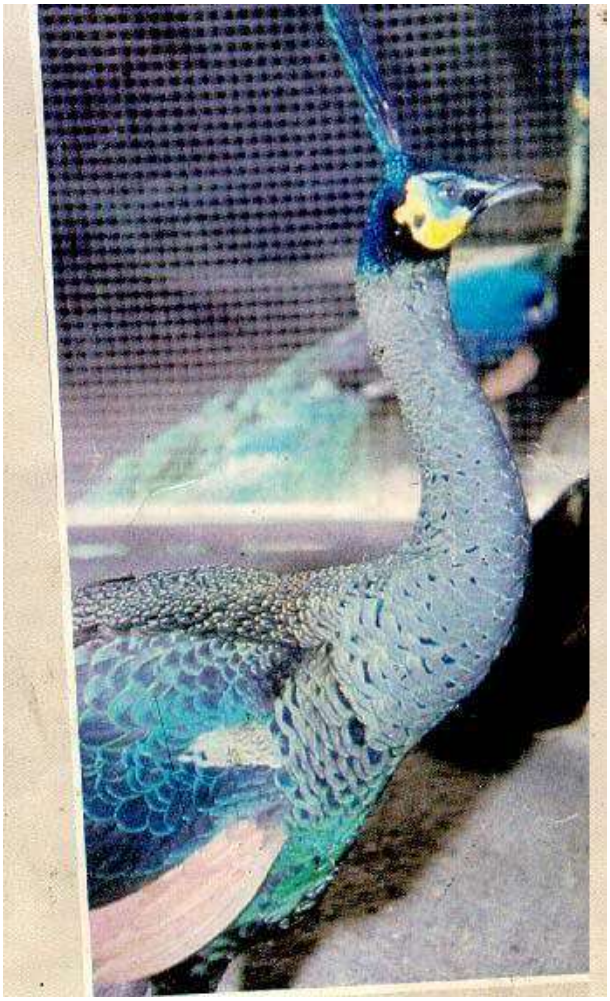
Distribution: Southern Burma (*spicifer*), Salween Drainage basin (*tennasirim*), and Arakan Yomas in Burma, India, Southern Tibet (*arakansis*), Thailand, Malaysia (*tennasirim*).

Subspecies: Southern (nominate *spicifer* Tenasserim/Shan Plateau/Salween (*tennasirim*). The Arakan subspecies *arakansis* may be a distinct species.

Description:

spicifer represents a distinct lineage that diverged from *antiqus*. It is related to *annamensis* and more distantly to the Malaysian *muticus*; both species can have pale irises and both have a blue head. From the Spicifer evolved *javanensis*. Like *antiqus*, this bird is a bit dull compared to the others but it is very large. Although some *muticus* birds were reintroduced into Malaysia, identification of several photos of the Malaysian birds suggests that there were at least some spicifers were involved in the reintroductions. Nonetheless, this form was also formerly distributed in Northern Malaysia along the Tenasserim. This form also exists in the Salween drainage basin in Burma and is also very unusual in that it inhabits moist evergreen forests and is quite distinctive. Unlike the Imperator, Spicifers are very quiet birds as the structure of the syrinx is different.

The conservation status of the Spicifer is uncertain. It is almost extinct in the eastern parts of its range in India and Bangladesh; the last large population remains in Burma.



P. (spicifer) arakansis

Indo-Chinese Green Peafowl or Imperator *Pavo imperator*

***P. imperator imperator.* (at Ueno Zoo, photo by me)**

Habitat: Moist deciduous forest and tropical savannah
Distribution: Central and West Yunnan China (*yunnanensis* and *tonkinensis*), Thailand (*siamensis*), Vietnam (*cattiensis*, *tonkinensis* and *imperator*), Laos (*tonkinensis*), Cambodia (*siamensis*), Eastern Burma (*siamensis*)
Taxonomy: Widely diverse species with at least five subspecies: nominate Vietnamese (*imperator*), Yunnan (*yunnanensis*), Tonkin or Hue (*tonkinensis*), Southern Vietnamese (*cattiensis*), and Siamese (*siamensis*). Some genetic work suggests that some Siamese birds are genetically distinct.
Description
This species is wildly diverse, with its five subspecies. With the most developed syrinx of the Green Peafowl complex, they are the loudest of all Green Peafowl and the most closely related to the Indian Peafowl. The nominate subspecies is confined to Vietnam, and is bluish overall with a rather pale and dull facial skin, and a tall crest similar to that of the Pahang. In fact the whole appearance is strikingly similar to the Malaysian Peafowl in some ways. This bird is hard to find in captivity, while the Siamese Imperator *siamensis* is the most common Imperator. It has a jade-green neck and the most vivid facial skin of any Green Peafowl. The crescent is a very bold yellow-orange and the double stripe is a very bold powder blue. A similar form also exists in Uthai Thani, but is genetically distinct; this form is intermediate between the typical Siamese *imperator* and *annamensis*; this could be a relictual population of ancestral Imperators which may also clade with *spicifer* and *annamensis*. The ecology and behaviour of *imperator* is intermediate between *cattiensis* and *siamensis*. The latter two subspecies have prominent barring on the hind wing while in the nominate *imperator* the barring is less prominent due to the iridescent wings overlapping the barring pattern. *tonkinensis* is a very interesting bird. It resembles a hybrid, but genetic work done by the Kunming Zoological Institute, has disproved this. The Indian Peafowl evolved from a similar bird to this.

***P. i. tonkinensis.* Note the blue overall and short crest and bright red primaries. This bird closely resembles an Indian-Green Peafowl hybrid.**

During the peak of the Holocene Period and other warming periods, the Imperator suffered a major decline when most of Southeast Asia was flooded. The other species that were alive at the time, Spicifer, and Annamensis started to expand their range. When the floods came, annamensis migrated towards islands of what are now the Cardamom and Elephant Mountain ranges in Cambodia and the Boloven Plateau of Laos. Now, however, the Imperator is quite common throughout Southeast Asia.

***P. i. siamensis.* Note the vivid tangerine and blue facial skin.**

Annamese Green Peafowl *Pavo annamensis*

Greater Annamite Dragon, *Pavo annamensis annamensis*, Yunnan, China. Note the blue head and golden neck.

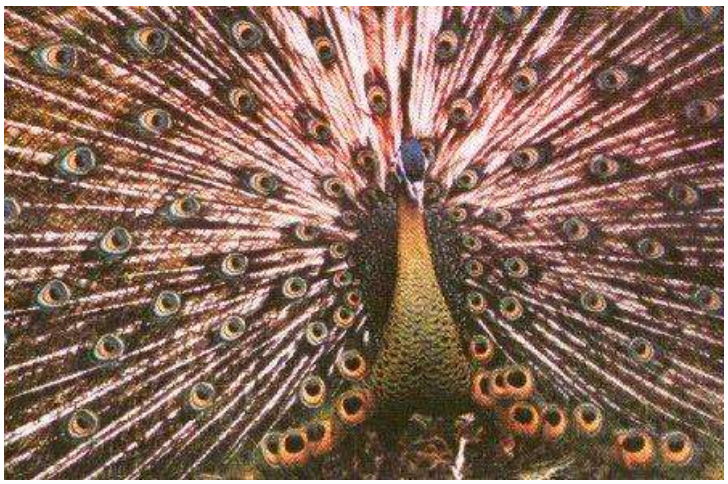
Habitat: Broadleaf evergreen, mixed broadleaf and deciduous broadleaf forests. Western Cambodian race inhabits more mountainous broadleaf forests and grasslands.

Distribution: South Yunnan China (annamensis), Annamite Range in Laos and Vietnam (*laotius* and *annamensis*), Western Cambodia (*bokorensis*), Eastern Cambodia (*annamensis*) Uthai Thani in Thailand (*uthaiensis*)

Subspecies: Subspecies include Greater or Yunnan (nominate *annamensis*), Cambodian (*bokorensis* see below entry; taxonomic position is uncertain) and Laotian/Boloven (*laotius*), Uthai Thani (*uthaiensis*).

Description

This form is very distinctive; its colours almost approach the vibrance of *muticus* birds. The morphology of the bill, spur and crest are unique. The neck is a brilliant golden similar to *muticus*. The male also has a blue head and a tall crest with long strands of feathers. The crest has a mound at its base. The backplate can appear a dark blue under low light but it often appears a lush green or gold in direct sunlight. In most birds, the irises are unusually pale, almost translucent; the bird can be described as being "cat-eyed". Both sexes show blue violet secondary wing coverts. This species inhabits broadleaf evergreen and hill forests of Eastern, Vietnam, Laos and southern Yunnan China, which are unusual habitats for Green Peafowl. There are some variations between the subspecies; the Laotian form of the Bolovan Plateau is slightly bluer than the nominate form of Yunnan and Vietnam. Birds existing in Thailand are intermediate between this bird and the Imperator, possibly a zone of intergradations; birds of this area will be tentatively referred to as *uthaiensis*. *annamensis* represents another distinct lineage that diverged from *antiqus*. From annamensis evolved *muticus*, *imperator*, and subsequently *cristatus* from the latter.



Pavo* (*annamensis*) *bokorensis

Along Western Cambodia's Elephant and Cardamom Mountain ranges lives the most distinctive subspecies, *bokorensis*. It has been biogeographically isolated, living in more mountainous areas compared to other *annamensis* forms. However, if this species were split, that would lead to *Lophura (nycthemera) annamensis engelbachii* (Engelbach's black silver pheasant of Boloven Plateau) and *Pavo annamensis laotius* being split too. *bokorensis* and *annamensis* diverged long ago. It is unusual for Green Peafowl because pairs make duet calls.

Yunnan Peafowl *Pavo antiqus*

Habitat: Montane forests

Distribution: Endemic to China in Northern Yunnan (*antiqus*), Sichuan and Tibet (*deqenisis*)
Taxonomy: Subspecies: Deqen (*deqenisis*), Yunnan (nominate *antiqus*).
Description
A living fossil, the Yunnan Peafowl is the northernmost and easternmost species of Green Peafowl. Barely changing since the Pilocene Epoch, it is the largest and oldest species of Green Peafowl alive, and the ancestor of all the modern species of Green Peafowl. It is a majestic bird; its large size making it the largest galliform alive today in terms of wingspan and length (The Wild Turkey is heavier but smaller.). It is sometimes referred to as *Pavo yunnanensis*.

This bird was first described by Kermit in 2000 as something of an enigma. He described that the wings were more long and slender, the bill was like that of a Monal, and the hind toe was also very long. The neck is rather dull, but is still a beautiful bronze and pine green in direct sunlight. The Yunnan Green Peafowl favours mountain forests and can be found along large, beautiful blue lakes of China and can be seen flying across islands.

In terms of the morphology, this is believed to be the closest relative of the extinct *Pavo bravardi*, the oldest form of Green Peafowl. However, the two species are so ancient they can be reclassified in a new genus, *Protopavo*. *bravardi* was a very big bird, almost identical to *antiqus*. It must have been huge, considering the size of the Yunnan bird.

The Deqen Dragon is from which all modern species of Peafowl have diverged from. It had diverged from *Afropavo* (Congo Peafowl) much earlier, prior to the Miocene.

Unfortunately in the case of Green Peafowl in Yunnan, while they are protected, the people frequently mistake hybrids and Indian Peafowl for Green Peafowl.

Indian Blue Peafowl *Pavo cristatus*

Habitat: Dry deciduous forest, Monsoon forest and semi-arid savannah
Distribution: India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan. This species has also been introduced worldwide.
Taxonomy: Traditionally thought to be monotypic, but two subspecies have now been recognized: Nominate Indian (*cristatus*), and Sri Lankan/South Indian (*singhalensis*), The nominate subspecies has at least two distinctive phenotypes: Nepalese (*nepalensis*), and Simla (referred here as *simalensis*).
Description:
This is the most iconic and most distinctive species of the genus. However, the Indian or Blue Peafowl is only the youngest species of Peafowl, a million years younger than the oldest species *antiqus*, and having diverged from Imperator. The different subspecies and geographic forms of Indian Peafowl have never been described in the western world. Early scientists were ignorant of the hard work done by Indian naturalists who were foremost in their knowledge of the Peafowl. The revised taxonomy would divide the Blue Peafowl into two different subspecies: the nominate subspecies and the basal Sri Lankan race *singhalensis*. The Singhalese race can be set apart by its more prominent barring on its wings and more orange on its outer primaries. They are slightly more colourful and have a more slender and robust build. Its crest is slightly more bounded back than the nominate Indian Peafowl and has a greener sheen. The wing morphology is slightly different making it a better flier. This form appears to be more basal of the two subspecies. The nominate Indian Peafowl subspecies has several different geographic variations in Nepal, as well as Simla and Rajasthan in India. These two forms are not genetically distinct enough to be considered subspecies, but they are phenotypically distinct from the normal nominate Indian Peafowl phenotype.

Captive Indian Peafowl at a zoo, possibly Sri Lankan/South Indian Subspecies, *Pavo cristatus singhalensis*

The Indian Peafowl has been domesticated and has a wide variety of colour mutations in captivity. These rarely occur in the wild but selective breeding has ensured the survival of these mutations. The wild phenotype of Indian Peafowl is different from captive birds; they are more slender whereas captive birds are somewhat chubby.

Conservation

There are many problems that peafowl face in the wild, and because of this they are becoming rarer. The Green Peafowl has been evaluated as Endangered in 2009 by the IUCN Red List due to hunting and habitat destruction. The Indian Peafowl is common, but we do not know enough about this bird to say its wild populations are safe. The captive Indian Peafowl have been domesticated and the phenotype is no longer the same; most captive birds are somewhat chubby and stockily built while wild birds are almost as lean as Green Peafowl.

Hybrids with the Indian Peafowl are also a huge issue. In Yunnan, the numerous forms of Green Peafowl are hybridising with the Indian Peafowl. Xishuangbanna is known for its Peafowl but only a few there are pure. A lot of pure birds have mixed with the Indian Peafowl set free in the area.

In Bhutan, away from the Dragon's native range, Buddhist leaders also keep hybrid peafowl. For years and years these have been repeatedly backcrossed with Indian Peafowl, and the birds resemble an intermediate between the two. Epistasis (white feathering) occurs as well, resulting in numerous mutations, including an all white form known as the "Diamond Thunderbolt." This form, though white, still has iridescent plumage. Other hybrids may resemble the black-shouldered mutation of the Indian Peafowl.

It is disappointing how some breeders lie about the purity of peafowl. Some intend to hybridize Green Peafowl with Indian Peafowl to create the "Spaulding" breed. A lot of breeders keep hybrid peafowl but end up labelling them as pure. These birds closely resemble pure greens but must never be bred with a true pure green. We refer to such birds as "peridot."

Hybridisation does not only happen between the Indian and Green Peafowl; it also occurs between the different species of Green Peafowl. This is predominant in captivity, as even the purest birds may have some genes of other species. In these hybrids, epistasis can still occur. Epistasis may also occur due to chemicals in the environment. Some peafowl found in Vietnam were found to be epistatic due to the presence of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. There are many captive birds labelled as *spicifer* but in reality they appear to be Imperators or partial hybrids with the Indian Peafowl.

Despite the fact that such birds are not the best for conservation, we still have to value these birds. As Green Peafowl get closer to extinction, Evergreen Peafowl may be the last hope for the Green Peafowl to survive in the wild. Evergreens are still priceless heirlooms and may teach us a thing or two about the behaviours of the birds in captivity.

But the most immediate danger to the Green Peafowl is the fact that their habitats are being destroyed. Trees are being cut down and as this happens, birds will die of starvation, and cannot adapt to the new environment. This leads them get hunted as well. Peafowl feathers are often seen for sale in markets. It's a debate if these came from actual Green Peafowl or did they come from Indian Peafowl. Feathers can be collected humanely because males moult them after the breeding season. Nonetheless, the Green Peafowl has also been hunted for food, and their eggs and chicks have been sold in the pet trade. In addition, Green Peafowl are thought of as a crop pest and poisoned, especially in China.

There are still some chances for peafowl to survive. Protected areas have been set up around the Green Peafowl's range, which includes national parks. These national parks are home to hundreds of the last pure Green Peafowl still alive on this planet today. Throughout the range of the Green Peafowl, surveys are done to research the bird's ecology, the bird's status in the wild, and ultimately what caused the decline in the first place. Conservation organizations are also doing a lot to educate the local people to help them realize the value of ecosystems and their animals.

However, the peafowl population is still declining and in 2009 the species as a whole was reevaluated as "Endangered." There is still a lot needed to be done to save these birds. Entities such as the United Peafowl Association (UPA) and the World Pheasant Association do not take enough action to conserve the wild population of Peafowl. The former is a breeder's organization which recognizes various domesticated breeds and does not care for conservation. The World Pheasant Association is mainly focused on pheasant conservation and has made some mistakes into the reintroduction of Green Peafowl into Malaysia. Thus, I am of the opinion that a separate association should be made dedicated to the conservation of Peafowl. Another measure that should be taken is captive breeding and reintroduction of the pure peafowl species, not just "Green Peafowl" in general. This means breeding pure Malaysian birds for release into Malaysia, Spicifer for release in Burma. Hybridisation must be stopped and a studbook should be made in order to keep track of the numerous forms of Green Peafowl. With these actions provided there may still be a glow of hope for these magnificent animals, living phoenixes.

Special Thanks

I would like to thank Kermit for providing the whole idea behind this article. His research is groundbreaking and I really hope that one day he can publish his data. I would also want to thank Martin for sharing some of his information on his website.