

Brockwell Bake **HERITAGE GRAIN**

Right: Antonio Luis on his allotment with a Madeiran wheat plant he gave a little fertilizer!



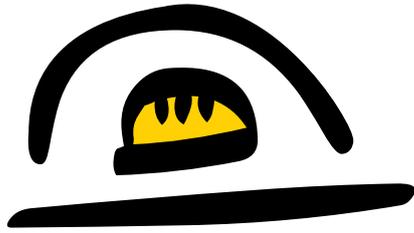
Madeiran landrace

“Landrace” is the term for a farmer selected seed or animal stock that is “hefted” (suited) to their region. Typically they have a broad genetic diversity being designed to meet the challenges of the regional environment and climate without chemical and modern “conventional” cultivation. Very few “landrace” cereals have survived in continuous cultivation across Europe and where they have been saved in gene banks, often over zealous curators have “weeded out” what they see as “off” types thus destroying the landraces true character.

At Brockwell Bake we are lucky to have been given some Madeiran landrace wheat stock by an older plot holder on Rosendale Allotments, Antonio Luis. This landrace has unique scientific interest due to the Madeiran islands mid-Atlantic trade route position, geology and climate. For instance because the islands’ soils are effectively relatively recent volcanic composition they have high metal salts content and so Madeiran wheats can tolerate more aluminium salt than any other known wheats.

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Right: One of our partner bio-dynamic farmers, Michael Duveen walking his Magister crop.

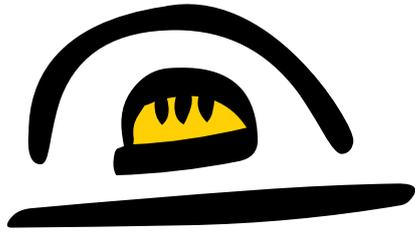


a modern wheat, Magister

Modern wheat, resulting from an American lead breeding programme crossing all other lines with a Japanese dwarf wheat they found during their Occupation of Japan, is characterised by its lack of height compared to heritage wheats. This enables heavy fertilizer use without resulting ripe eared plants toppling over due to their height and ear weight. However the reduced height means the plants no longer out-compete weeds so herbicide is required which in turn results in a monoculture field (and fields across a region) making the crop vulnerable to pest and disease epidemics so then preventative fungicides and pesticides are required. Since only these “High Yield” (high input) varieties are available to farmers legally in the UK the situation is very difficult for organic farmers. “Magister” is a modern wheat variety bred in Germany that is slightly more suitable for organic cultivation since it is one or two inches higher than is typical.

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Right: Mugshot of re-united Paine's Defiance, two blue cone rivet and red on right.



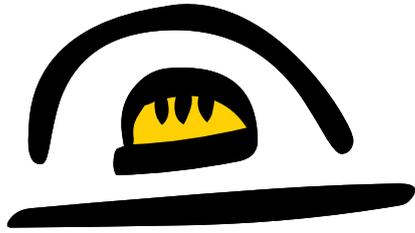
re-united Paine's Defiance

In line with the common traditional practice of growing a mix of varieties together (wheat very rarely cross pollinates, each grain is self fertile) "Paine's Defiance" was expressly a UK origin mix of red and blue cone rivets, rivets being a sub-species of tetraploid wheat related to the durums but more suited to mountainous and northern climates than the Mediterranean durums.

We found just two samples of this anywhere, in the German collection, which commonly has duplicates presumably since it is the re-unified collection of East and West Germany. One was red and one was blue! Evidently not knowing that Paine's Defiance should be a mix of red and blue the East and West gene bank curators (rather typically in this field) took it upon themselves to "de-rogue" what they assumed were interlopers to the line. One wonders which curator choose which colour? Finally, defiantly, Brockwell Bake has re-united red and blue cone rivet!

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Right: Mugshots of this season's Red Velvet Chaff from Rosendale Allotments.



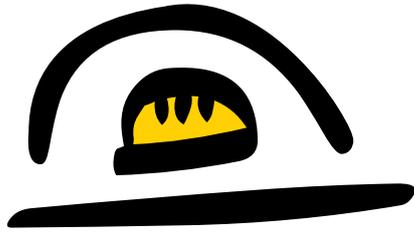
Red Velvet Chaff

A number of historically famous wheats from the West of the British Isles such as “Orange Devon Blue Chaff”, “Hen Gymro” and “Red Stettin” (originally from the Baltics) in Wales are characterised by their fluffy grain hulls. This rather gives the lie to those who historically thought that this furry covering lead to problems in wet late season weather rather than been a protection against such weather. Historically perhaps the most famous of this group, for its bread making flavour qualities, was the sought after “Irish Red Velvet Chaff” of which we think this is the only extant accession found by us in the Dutch gene bank.

Ireland was notoriously exporting its wheat crop because of its quality at the time of the Potato Famine in 1740–1741 and perhaps because of this episode and also emerging competition from North American export wheat, wheat cultivation declined and the varieties that could withstand the wet Irish climate were all but lost so that there are only a handful of local wheats in the Irish collection - not even “Red Velvet Chaff”.

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Right: Our first crop of Old Kent Red on
Rosendale Allotments, Lambeth



“Red Lammas” and “Old Kent Red”

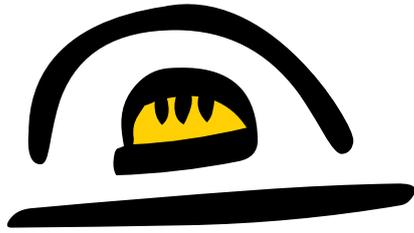
In 1744 Ellis in his “The Modern Husbandman, Or, The Practice of Farming” wrote “RED Lammas. As Wheat is the King of Grain, so this Sort has been deemed, hitherto, The King of Wheats, for having deservedly been under the Reputation of producing the whitest and finest of Flour”

John Ray, the father of British botany recorded Lammas and the local variant, “Kentisch Red” as the two principal red bread wheats of the time in 1660.

Until last year there was only the one accession of Red Lammas in the UK and no example of “Old Kent Red” - in the 2010/11 season we have retrieved 5 other examples from other European countries gene banks, each perceptibly adding to the complexity of the line plus the one surviving example of “Old Kent Red” which was in the Dutch gene bank. We will be making and registering for commercial growing a composite of these Red Lammas selections.

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Right: Winter mix on Windmill Allotments,
Brixton Hill



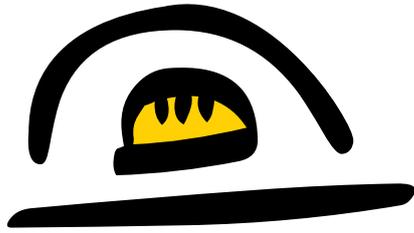
Brockwell Winter mix - Latino (dynamic population)

Our winter mix is a selection from within a mix of over 100 heritage wheats given to us by John Letts of the Oxford Bread Group - we have tried to select out certain "Prolific" types that became popular after the early 19th Century with UK farmers which were less good for bread making rather than animal feed or biscuit baking. In this edition we have mixed in some Spanish accessions, mostly from Catalonia and Asturias for a bit of extra drought resistance.

All heritage wheats, especially farmer created "landrace" types are more genetically diverse than homogeneous modern wheat varieties but growing an obvious mix was practised by traditional farmers as different lines take up different niches on the land allowing less room for weeds and disease and also give a wider range of responses to weather events thus avoiding total crop failure. In theory a mix will also allow for adaptation to the particular land over a period of years.

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Right: A Blue Cone Rivet ear demonstrating why it was also known as Grey Mouse



Blue Cone Rivet

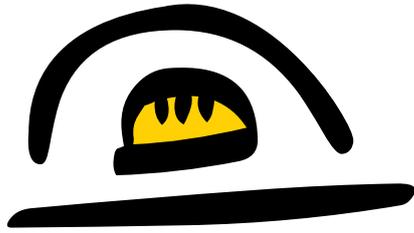
aka Poulard d'Australie, Duckbill, Dugdale, Grey mouse, Grey Rivet

Rivets are a sub species of wheat akin to durum but some of which are suitable to climates north of the Mediterranean. They were popularly grown in the UK up to the end of the 19th Century (having maybe being brought here by the Normans from Sicily) as they are very rugged and productive though not so good for bread when milled by themselves. When mixed with true bread wheat they can add colour, aroma and flavour. Also Blue Cone Rivet was imported to Northern France in 19th Century for pasta making. In some seasons and on some soils it produces a hazelnut flavour.

This is the first wheat that Brockwell Bake will have enough of to mill for the public having been given 7.5K of seed in 2010 by the French heritage wheat organizer and leader, Florent Mercier

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Right: the hairs on the chin of "Old Hoary"



"Old Hoary of Brockwell"

**aka "Kent Woolly eared, Rough Chaff White, Blé à duvet,
Tunstall, Blé de haie"**

This white grained wheat was typically grown in Kent, Sussex and Essex up until the early 18th Century and was highly prized by London millers as a pretty strong bread making wheat, particularly since as white wheats are generally less strong in gluten than red. It was often milled mixed with a quarter Red Lammas for extra flavour and strength.

It is characterised by the uncommon fluffy covering of the hulls surrounding the grain. Because of this when it was imported to France in the early 18th Century it became known as "Blé à duvet" - wheat under a duvet. It had been lost in the UK seed collection but we have imported examples that went from France into the German, Dutch and French seed banks and are about to receive other examples from Poland and the Czech Republic. We will make a composite of these samples which we intend to call "Old Hoary of Brockwell".

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