



Congratulations on your new

American Water Spaniel

Congratulations on your recent acquisition of an American Water Spaniel. The American Water Spaniel Club, Inc., the AKC parent club for the breed, includes breeders, fanciers, trainers, and handlers who devotedly support the breed.

The majority of people who own or have owned an American Water Spaniel will tell you that ownership is an experience they love because of the loyalty and the affection given by their dog. Some say that ownership is one of the finest experiences of life.

Our members come from all walks of life. We are a group that is widespread and diverse. We all seek to help you enjoy your new pet to the fullest by providing you with some general and basic information.

The American Water Spaniel is a rare breed. While the American Water Spaniel is one of the few dogs recognized as having been developed in the United States, it has never been a popular dog. The American Water Spaniel was developed by 'market hunters' in the Great Lakes Region of the United States in the early to mid-1800's. The majority of the American Water Spaniel owners and breeders are still in the Midwest.

The American Water Spaniel is the state dog of Wisconsin. Doctor Pfeifer of New London, Wisconsin, was the first to recognize that the little brown spaniels that everyone took for granted were actually a separate breed of itself and ought to be recognized and preserved as a distinct breed.

The American Water Spaniel was recognized by the United Kennel Club in 1920, by the Field Dog Stud Book in 1938, and the American Kennel Club in 1940. There has been an increasing interest in the American Water Spaniel in recent years that led to the formation of the American Water Spaniel Club, Inc. in 1985.

Functions

The American Water Spaniel is a true dual-purpose dog bred to be a companion, to live and work in close quarters, to hunt and retrieve game of all kinds, but excels as a water retriever.

The American Water Spaniel is fairly primitive in its instincts for survival and demonstrates an unusually high tolerance for pain that can render some training methods ineffective. The American Water Spaniel should be happy, energetic and eager to please.

While the breed can adapt to virtually any living situation, they thrive best when they are given daily exercise, which helps maintain their physical and mental fitness. Your American Water Spaniel should never be allowed to run free, but should be confined to a fenced backyard or a kennel run. Keeping dogs tied or chained up is not in their best interest, because they often become injured from these restraints. Without regular exercise, your American Water Spaniel may become overactive and difficult to live with, because of the pent-up energy that develops from confinement.

Feeding

Regular veterinary care, yearly vaccinations and proper feeding are vital to your dog's good health. Today, proper nutrition can easily be obtained from the local feed or pet specialty store by purchasing a quality dry dog food. Puppies will grow properly without supplements or extra treats. When feeding a high quality dog food, extra supplements should not be necessary. Puppies require a high quality puppy food mixed with warm water and lots of love. With proper nutrition, routine veterinary care, regular exercise and grooming, your American Water Spaniel should live from 10 to 12 years or longer.

Training

Basic obedience training is an essential part of responsible dog ownership. It will make your dog a better companion and will help establish a stronger bond between the two of you. Your American Water Spaniel wants nothing more from life than to please you. Therefore, it is your responsibility to train this faithful companion to do as you wish. Training

classes in obedience are available in cities, offered by all breed kennel clubs and dog training clubs. Most have a listing in the newspaper. If none can be found, contact your local veterinarian.

We recommend these classes—ranging from puppy or kindergarten to adult and advanced obedience training. For the more serious owners, there are competition classes and dog shows. All are available in most areas of the country and are offered as a service by the local obedience or kennel clubs.

Most dogs will learn to obey if you use one-syllable words as your commands. Come, sit, down, no, etc. Dogs do not learn words, but they do associate the sound of the command...sit, with the behavior you want them to carry out.

The obedience training will put you one step ahead when you begin hunting. The natural hunting instincts of the AWS should be refined by training to hunt within gun range for upland game and work as a non-slip retriever. Quality training time is the key, the more short training sessions you spend with your AWS, the better hunting team you will be. The AWSC, Inc. holds several training events and hunt tests for the AWS each year.



There are many good books, videotapes and training classes available to help you.

Breeding

Before you consider using your American Water Spaniel as stud dog or brood bitch, remember that no dog with genetic problems should be bred. He or she should be certified free of hip dysphasia by an X-ray sent to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals. He or she should be certified free of genetic inherited eye diseases by an exam from a Veterinary Ophthalmologist and sent to Canine Eye Registration Foundation.

If your new puppy has parents that are OFA certified for their hips and CERF certified for their eyes, their OFA numbers and the word CERF will appear on your dog's AKC registration papers when you receive them from AKC.

One of the best things you can do for your dog is to spay or neuter it unless it is a quality dog that could be bred or shown. The basic disposition and hunting instincts will not be changed by removing his or her reproductive capability and will not, by itself, make your pet obese or lazy.

Having a litter of pups is not in any way beneficial to a female and can occasionally lead to problems. Spayed bitches often are healthier and live longer than unsprayed bitches. Neutered males cannot develop testicular cancer and have a lower risk of developing prostate cancer. After neutering, most males will become more tolerant of other male dogs. Breeding dogs is a great responsibility that requires a significant investment of resources. Breeding and raising a litter involves a great deal of time to socialize your puppies. The average litter size is 6-8 pups.



The American Kennel club permits spayed and neutered animals to participate in all phases of hunt tests, obedience, agility, tracking, and junior handling, but not in most conformation classes at a regular dog show. The American Water Spaniel Club, Inc. holds hunting tests (non-AKC) throughout the year in which American Water Spaniels may earn AWSC, Inc. hunting test titles. A roustabout and water derby are held each year at the national specialty.

For more information, please contact the Secretary of the American Water Spaniel Club, Inc. at:

Secretary@AmericanWaterSpanielClub.org

Or you can visit the American Water Spaniel Club, Inc. website at:

www.americanwaterspanielclub.org



The American Water Spaniel Club, Inc.