

Congratulations on Your New Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever

Welcome to the wonderful world of the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever. Together, you and your new Toller puppy will be sure to experience some wonderful times together. Whether you plan for your puppy to be a cherished family pet or you have dreams of getting involved in various AKC events, you selected a wonderful breed when you brought home your Toller.

From Puppy to Adult

Over the next year to 18 months, your ball of fur will grow into a mature adult. The official breed standard describes an adult Toller as a medium-sized, powerful, compact, balanced dog...the smallest of the retrievers. Some key physical characteristics:

- Ideal height (at the withers) is 18-21 inches (males) and 17-20 inches (females), with weight in proportion to the height and bone.
- Coat should be water-repellant double coat of medium length and softness with a dense undercoat.
- Color is any shade of red, ranging from a golden red through dark, coppery red, with lighter featherings on the underside of the tail, pantaloons and body.

Always Ready for Action

Tollers are highly intelligent, alert, outgoing and ready for action. They are intelligent and curious about the world around them, but they can be somewhat reserved around strangers. Many have a "spark of individualism," and their owner may find the dog feels doing things "their way" is the best way.



Born to Retrieve

The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever was developed in Nova Scotia in the early 19th century to toll (or lure) and retrieve waterfowl. The playful action of the Toller retrieving a stick or ball along the shoreline arouses the curiosity of the ducks offshore. They are lured within gunshot range, and the dog is sent out to retrieve the dead or wounded birds.

Today's Toller has a strong retrieving desire coupled with a love of water, endurance and intense birdiness. Many Tollers live in hunting families, and breeders continue to emphasize hunting ability in this versatile breed.

A Good Start in Life

If your Toller puppy is like most, he or she is very active! It's your responsibility to channel this energy into productive outlets so your puppy can develop appropriate social behaviors.

All puppies should be socialized at a young age by introducing them to a wide variety of people and places. In addition, basic puppy obedience classes will help the communication between owner and Toller. However, many Tollers have their own timetable for learning. They are ardent observers of life and as young dogs are easily distracted. While they learn quickly and often graduate first in their puppy classes, they also bore easily. Training must be kept short and light, fun and challenging.

It is worth your time to search for excellent training classes. Consult other dog people, and ask your veterinarian. Request an opportunity to observe a class in action before you enroll your puppy. Most importantly, remember that training must be continued in your daily life, not just on class day.

Toller owners often find that their dogs are happiest when working, and decide to pursue more advanced, serious training with their Tollers. You may decide that you want to pursue obedience competitions, agility trials, tracking or hunt tests or flyball...all are excellent sports for your athletic dog.

Health Comes First

As soon as you get your puppy home, have him examined by your veterinarian. If you do not have a regular veterinarian, now is the time to select one. The vet will conduct a physical exam to be sure that your puppy is healthy and will evaluate the vaccination and health information provided by your breeder.

Your breeder should provide you with information regarding the health status of the parents of your puppy. This should minimally include hip evaluation certificates from the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA), eye evaluation certificates from the Canine Eye Registration Foundation (CERF), genetic testing reports from Optigen—a lab that tests for Progressive Rod-Cone Degeneration (prcd), which is the most common form of Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA) in Tollers and could include thyroid, cardiac and elbow certifications from OFA.

The American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation has a specific fund for Toller health research called the Toller Donor Advised Fund. You can support our research efforts by making a contribution to the Toller DAF by calling toll free 888-682-9696 or by making a direct contribution to the Health and Genetics Committee of the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club (USA). For more information go to the club website: <http://www.nsdtrc-usa.org>.

To Breed...or to Spay or Neuter

Breeding dogs is a huge responsibility that requires copious amounts of time, energy and money. Responsible breeders seek to improve their breed with every litter. If you are truly interested in breeding your Toller, consider consulting your puppy's breeder and other Toller breeders.

If you are not going to breed or show your dog in the conformation ring, one of the best things you can do for him or her is to spay or neuter. Spaying and neutering have proven health benefits. The American Kennel Club welcomes spayed and neutered dogs to participate in all phases of obedience, tracking, agility and field events, but not in regular conformation classes at dog shows.



Learning More

There are many additional resources for you. One of the first things you should consider is joining US Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club. It is an active, vibrant club full of members who are committed to continuing to improve the breed. Answers to many of your questions may be available on the Club website: www.nsdtrc-usa.org. When you join the Club, you will begin receiving a quarterly newsletter called *Quackers*, and you'll receive a membership directory that will help you get in touch with other local Toller owners. For membership information, email membership@nsdtrc-usa.org.

You should also take a close look at the American Kennel Club website at www.akc.org. It includes a lot of information for new dog owners, as well as detail about a variety of dog events.

Here are some additional materials that are available for you to order. If you are interested in any of these, you can order them through the Club website at www.nsdtrc-usa.org.

Sample issue of *Quackers* newsletter

\$4, plus shipping and handling

Toller Powerpoint CD

\$5, plus shipping and handling

Toller breed video [DVD]

\$12, plus shipping and handling

Toller softcover book

\$29.95, plus shipping and handling