

## Basenji



History tells us that this fascinating dog was a palace dog of the Pharaohs, and for proof offers paintings of the dogs in ancient tombs, to which the modern version certainly bears a striking resemblance. In the seventeenth century they were sighted in the Congo, now called Zaire, and it is from there that they have been imported to Britain.

A first pair were imported to Britain in 1936 and these produced the first English litter. The next year when the puppies were exhibited at Crufts police were required to keep the crowds on the move, so great was the interest.

The Basenji is clean both in outline and habits - cat-like in the way in which he cleans his feet, and odourless - thus making him a perfect household companion.

He is known as the 'barkless dog' - a unique characteristic of the breed - and expresses his pleasure with a crowing-yodelling noise. The wrinkles on his head give him a quizzical expression. He is curious, self-confident and friendly, and becomes very attached to his human family.

### **What about Health Issues?**

You may be aware that some breeds of dog (and crossbreeds too) can be susceptible to inherited disease. Of course you want to be sure that the puppy you choose is as healthy as possible, and you would like to know that it has not inherited any undesirable disease-causing genes from its parents. There is some help in that DNA tests for diseases in purebred dogs are available for some conditions in some breeds, but there are not very many such tests just yet! There are also, however, a number of clinical veterinary screening schemes that dog breeders can use to increase the probability of producing healthy puppies.

**Details of the various screening schemes, both veterinary and DNA, that are available to breeders in the UK can be found on the Kennel Club's website at:**

[www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth)

Puppy buyers should be aware that, at present, the application of various health screening results to breeding programmes is not always straightforward, and breeders may make choices for various reasons. A responsible breeder though, will always be willing to discuss relevant health issues with you. Breed clubs are often useful sources of breed-specific information.

### **And what health screening is relevant for the Basenji?**

Kennel Club Accredited Breeders must use, or are strongly recommended to use, the following screening schemes and/or advice for sires and dams:

- BVA/KC/ISDS Eye Scheme

This list is not necessarily comprehensive and you should still ask breeders and refer to breed clubs about health issues in the breed.