

Bouvier Des Flandres



A rugged, powerful dog, originally used for herding and protecting cattle in Belgium and France, he has found his way into the towns where he can adapt to family life. His impressive head accentuated by eyebrows, beard and moustache gives him a formidable appearance which belies his stable temperament, and amiable disposition. However, he can and will protect home and family. He is good with children, quiet in the house, but ever vigilant. His rough, dry coat is easy to care for and, although large, he requires only a medium amount of exercise, is not a clumsy dog, but is very social and happy to live in country or city, mansion or flat.

Bouvier can be translated as 'oxherd' or 'cattle herder', with each French or Belgian region having its own type. This is the one from Flanders, which gained a wider reputation during the First World War when it was used both as an ambulance dog and a messenger. Many modern pedigrees trace back to a dog saved by a Belgian army vet after the breed all but died out.

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

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 Bouvier Des Flandres?

There are not currently any veterinary screening schemes or DNA tests for disease relevant to this breed under the Accredited Breeder Scheme, however you should still ask breeders and refer to breed clubs about health issues in the breed.