

Puppy Selection

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How To Make The Right Choice When Choosing A Puppy

Are you tired of hunting birds all day long without having a single flush? Want an easier way to find the few downed birds that you do get an opportunity at? Would you like to have your own bird finding pointing dog? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then it is time to consider getting your own pointing dog puppy.

The first step to acquiring a new bundle of joy is to decide what breed of dog you want. The type of breed can be impacted by the species of birds your hunting and where you hunt, for instance if you hunt grouse and woodcock in the New England North East then the shorter in stature Brittany may be the best choice. If you spend time on the open plains of Kansas then the larger running breeds such as the English pointer or the German Shorthaired Pointer should get the nod. A little bit of research of the potential breeds at this point is well worth it.

Now that you have the breed narrowed down, the task of finding a breeder is next. It is important that time is spent finding a good quality breeder. To find a breeder it is a good idea to go to clubs such as American Kennel Club (AKC), North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association (NAVHDA), or one can also get breeder information at local clubs designated for specific breeds. With the popularity of the internet, there are even web pages designated for gun dog breeders to advertise their bloodlines and litters.

As you narrow down your selection for possible breeders it is important to build a good relationship with the breeder that you have selected. You can never ask too many questions, and be sure to take a good hard look at the sire and the dam. The old adage of the apple does not fall far from the tree does hold true. You will want to make certain that you like how the sire and dam hunt, their physical attributes, and their demeanor towards life in general. If you are comfortable with the breeder that you have chosen and like the pairing of the sire and the dam, then you will want to be sure to ask to be put on a waiting list for an available puppy or the next breeding.

Once the puppies are on the ground the real difficult task is next. Which one do you pick to take home with you? A couple of things to look for are temperament, use of nose, and physical attributes. I like to make several visits to form a final conclusion on which candidate will get the nod. If the chosen breeder resides in an area that makes visiting difficult, then ask the breeder assist with making the following observations.

1) Temperament is to be considered the dog's personality. For the average hunter a middle of the road dog will do fine, one that is not too aggressive or even overly submissive. Ask the breeder to take the entire litter out at once and allow them to do their own thing. Here you are looking for 2 types of dogs, the ones who sit and quiver in the corner, and the ones who bully the others around. You are looking for a middle of the road dog, and want to find the dog who is content in the pack playing, but will also get out and about trying to explore on its own. On any given day different dogs may be more aggressive, or may explore differently. This is why I like

to make several trips. You will want to make note of what happens in these sessions and over time you can develop an idea as to who is aggressive and who is not.

2) Use of nose is also critical. You will want to take the puppies out one by one to see them use their nose. You want to find the dog that is searching the area over with its nose to learn its surroundings. Here you will also see the puppies' desire to hunt. The more the puppy finds at this stage the better.

3) Physical attributes should play a role in the selection process as well. A final decision should not be based solely on markings, but if breeding is a future intent, then now is the time to get a puppy that looks the way you want it to. Length of coat, to size of head should all weigh in.

In conclusion, picking a new puppy is not a job to take lightly. Finding a good breeder can streamline the entire process. Spending time with the litter is a must, and if you select the right dog now future training will be greatly simplified. If you take the time and consider all that is listed above you can rest assured that you will make the correct decision.