

The Saluki or Gazelle Hound Club



The following is an extract of an Information Leaflet compiled by Lisa Hudson on behalf of The Saluki or Gazelle Hound Club:

The saluki has been developed over thousands of years as a hunter-killer. He is the coursing greyhound of the East and was once known as the Persian Greyhound. He is inclined to great independence of mind and usually makes his own decisions, so care must be taken when he is allowed to run free. Salukis are notorious for refusing to come back when called unless they are ready to do so, so owners must be very patient. Even as a family pet, salukis are not like other dogs. Most salukis will not fetch sticks and consider ball games beneath them. They like running games. They are inclined to chase other dogs, cats, birds and anything that moves with varying degrees of aggression. It is essential that a good deal of time and effort goes into training. The saluki is not a suitable dog for everyone. The incredible beauty and exotic nature of the dog attracts many potential buyers, most of whom realise that the dog is an unacceptable pet shortly after purchase. On the other hand, if care is taken with a new puppy, particularly in the crucial early weeks of its life, to introduce it to young and old, other dogs, traffic, collar and lead, loud noises and so on, you should be blessed with the love and companionship of this beautiful creature for many years. Salukis need plenty of exercise but in between times they are usually very quiet. Take care when walking on a lead, they are very strong and can nearly pull your arm off if they take off after a rabbit or cat! They are good house dogs but do not bark unnecessarily, they need a secure high fence and a reasonably large garden. Salukis need something to do, they can be naughty and destructive if left alone for long periods.

What Can you expect?

Salukis are the most beautiful breed to have around the house. In their habits they are fastidious, although their ear fringes do tend to get in their dinner, so it is necessary. To use a snood at these times.

Salukis are full of character and intelligence, which, although different from that of, say, a border collie, is just waiting to be developed

by a thoughtful owner. Their coats are easy to look after and they are remarkably gentle for a dog of this size. They thrive in human company and are excellent with children if used to them from an early age. The same applies to cats of the family. They travel well and should be acclimatised to the car at an early age. Salukis are proud and sensitive and respond badly to being smacked; they can become distraught if badly treated. It is a good idea to visit someone who has salukis to see how they are in their home environment, and talk to as many owners as you can.



Activities for Salukis

Salukis love to run more than anything else in the world, so any activity that involves free running will be popular with them. Organised running consists of lure coursing and racing.



Lure coursing consists of running a dog after a simulated hare being dragged round a preset track by a cord. This is organised by a number of Hound societies for the benefit of any breed of hound and also by the British Sighthound Field Association (Sec. Gary Peskett on 01202 579934). To race a saluki it is usually necessary to join in with the Afghan societies who are quite happy to have salukis along. Salukis don't like showing nearly as much, but they will

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do it to please someone they love. Information on these activities can be obtained from the secretaries of both clubs.

History of the Saluki

The saluki dates back about 5,000 years. Arabs living in the deserts which have been the cradle of so many civilisations have of necessity produced by careful breeding, two creatures of outstanding beauty.

These are the Arab horse for transport and war, and the saluki for providing food. When the Saluki Club formed in 1923, it was largely composed of members who had seen and admired the saluki in its native land. The saluki is essentially a hunting dog, admirably adapted to the work for which he has been bred for many centuries. He is fashioned for speed and endurance. Salukis have been found in Britain occasionally since The Crusades, and continuously since 1897 when the Hon. Florence Amherst was given a brace of the Sheikh of the Tahawi tribe in the Saliha desert, Egypt. The colours of the dogs found in ancient drawings found in the tomb of Rekh-ma ra, approx 1400 BC, are identifiable with modern hounds, black and tan, gold, grizzle, etc. There is much variation in type amongst salukis, due to the large area from which they originate. There is also a smooth variety, although most salukis in Britain today are feathered. Frequently, hawks were used to assist the salukis in the hunt by attacking the head of the prey to confuse it, making it easier to pull down.

The Bedouin attached great importance to the pedigree of his saluki and it is clear that, from time immemorial, purity of pedigree and strain has been scrupulously considered. Now that life has changed for the Bedouin and the circumstances in which

salukis flourished may no longer exist, the saluki could be lost, unless determined steps are taken to preserve it. This is the aim of The Saluki or Gazelle Hound Club.

Still want one?

This information does not pretend to give a full list of pros and cons of owning a saluki but is intended as food for thought for anyone considering a saluki for the first time. The saluki is a beautiful creature, to see him running free as the wind is a wonderful sight and it is tempting to think you would love a dog like that, but don't be fooled! He is certainly elegant, loving and faithful, but he has another side to his character ~ ignore this at your peril! You should give consideration to your life style and see if a dog of this type will fit in, and whether you are prepared to adapt your lifestyle to accommodate your saluki!



For more information on the breed please contact the Secretary through the link on the home page of the Club website