

# SPANISH WATER DOG

## Official UKC Breed Standard

Revised July 1, 2013

Herding Dog Group

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The goals and purposes of this breed standard include: to furnish guidelines for breeders who wish to maintain the quality of their breed and to improve it; to advance this breed to a state of similarity throughout the world; and to act as a guide for judges.

Breeders and judges have the responsibility to avoid any conditions or exaggerations that are detrimental to the health, welfare, essence and soundness of this breed, and must take the responsibility to see that these are not perpetuated.

Any departure from the following should be considered a fault, and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

### HISTORY

The Spanish Water Dog is an ancient breed. Its exact origins are not precisely known. One theory suggests that the Spanish Water Dog's ancestors were woolly-coated dogs that originated in North Africa and were brought to the Iberian Peninsula by the Moors during their occupation (710-1036). Another theory is that these dogs might have come with the various barbarian tribes that invaded Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. Regardless of the breed's origin, it is documented that by 1100 a woolly-coated shepherd dog existed throughout the Iberian Peninsula. It was primarily used to herd goat, sheep and other livestock. Some, however, were used to hunt upland game and waterfowl, while others worked as assistants to fishermen.

In the mid 1970s Antonio Garcia Perez and Santiago Montesinos began efforts to get the Spanish Water Dog

recognized as a pure breed. In 1985, the breed was officially recognized and admitted into the Fédération Cynologique Internationale.

The Spanish Water Dog was recognized by the United Kennel Club on January 1, 2004. The breed was originally assigned to the Gun Dog Group, and was moved to the Herding Dog Group on July 1, 2013.

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

The Spanish Water Dog is a well-balanced dog of medium size and bone, slightly longer than tall, with a distinctive woolly coat that curls and forms cords; high-set, triangular drop ears; and a tail that is naturally bobtail or docked between the 2nd and 4th vertebrae. In both sexes, masculinity or femininity is well defined.

### CHARACTERISTICS

The Spanish Water Dog is an intelligent and versatile working dog with strong herding, hunting and guardian instincts. He is an exceptional companion, attentive and animated, showing strength and stamina combined with unusual agility. He is versatile and easily trained, performing his assigned tasks with competence and dignity. He is reserved with strangers but should not exhibit shyness. Although an authoritative worker, viciousness toward people or animals is intolerable.

### HEAD

Viewed from the side, ratio of the length of muzzle to length of skull is approximately 2:3. The planes of the top skull and bridge of the muzzle are parallel and are joined by a slight but well-defined stop.

**SKULL** - Skull is flat with only a slightly marked occipital crest.

**MUZZLE** - The muzzle tapers slightly to a rounded tip.

**TEETH** - The Spanish Water Dog has a complete set of evenly spaced, white teeth meeting in a scissor bite. Teeth broken or missing by accidents are not penalized.

*Faults:* Misaligned teeth, under bite, over bite.

*Serious Fault:* Missing teeth leaving obvious gaps.

**NOSE** - Nostrils well defined. Nose is of the same color or slightly darker than the darkest coat color except in solid white or solid beige-colored dogs where the nose color should harmonize with the eye color.

**EYES** - Clear, almond shaped, and of moderate size, neither prominent nor sunken, with pupils dark, well defined and perfectly positioned. Color should harmonize with the darkest color of the coat. White dogs may have either light brown or dark brown eyes,

depending on the pigmentation of the nose. Expression is attentive and intelligent.

**EARS** - Ears are drop, set on high at the side of the head, triangular and slightly rounded at the tip, of moderate size, with length measured by bringing the tip of the ear around to the inside corner of the eye. The ears, at full attention break slightly forward and over from one-quarter ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) to one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) inch above the base.

*Faults:* Prick ears; hound-type ears.

### **NECK**

The neck is short, strong, and in proportion to the body, setting well into the shoulders.

*Faults:* Long, upright neck; stuffy neck.

*Serious fault:* Ewe-neck.

### **FOREQUARTERS**

The shoulder blades (scapula) are long and flat, close set at the withers. The upper arm (humerus) is attached at an approximate right angle to the scapula with forelegs dropping straight perpendicular to the ground. The elbow joint is equidistant from the ground to the withers. The legs are straight and powerful. Pasterns are short, thick and strong, showing a slight angle when viewed from the side.

### **BODY**

A properly proportioned Spanish Water Dog is slightly longer (measured from prosternum to point of buttocks) than tall (measured from the withers to the ground). The body is firm and muscular. The top line appears level at a natural foursquare stance. The chest is deep and strong, with ribs well sprung. The loin is strong and broad when viewed from the top. The underline carries well back with a slight tuck-up. Loin should be short (from side). Croup is slightly sloping.

*Fault:* Square dog, length is equal to height.

### **HINDQUARTERS**

Width of hindquarters approximately equal to the width of the forequarters at the shoulders. The angulation of the pelvis and upper thigh (femur) corresponds to the angulation of the shoulder blade and upper arm, forming an approximate right angle. Stifles are clearly defined, hock joints moderately angled and well letdown. The metatarsi are short, perpendicular to the ground and parallel to each other when viewed from the rear.

### **FEET**

Good feet are essential for a working Spanish Water Dog. The feet are of medium size, oval shaped and compact, with close-knit, well-arched toes. Pads are thick and resilient; nails short and strong. Excess hair between the pads may be trimmed. Front dewclaws may be removed

*Faults:* Rear dewclaws.

### **TAIL**

Tail is either natural bobtail or docked. Tail should be docked between the 2nd and 4th vertebra not to exceed four (4) inches.

### **COAT**

Always curly and of wooly texture. Longer coats may form cords. The Spanish Water Dog should look like a rustic working dog. Traditionally, dogs are sheared completely and evenly once or more per year. For conformation exhibition, the coat must be presented naturally, neither brushed, combed nor otherwise trimmed or clipped for aesthetic purposes. Dogs should be presented with coat of at least one inch in length and no longer than  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Judges must excuse a Spanish Water Dog whose coat appears to have been trimmed or clipped for aesthetic purposes.

*Disqualifications:* Smooth or wavy coat.

### **COLOR**

Colors: White and all shades of black or brown.

Color Patterns:

- Solid
- Bi-color. White and any shade of black or brown.

*Serious Fault:* Ticking. Excessively ticked dogs may be disqualified.

*Disqualifications:* Tricolor; tan points; bi-color where one of the two colors is not white; excessive ticking; albinism.

### **SIZE AND WEIGHT**

Desirable height at maturity for males is 44-50 cm (17.32-19.69 inches); and for females is 40-46 cm (15.75-18.11 inches). Dogs up to 2 cm ( $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch) above the maximum height standard should not be penalized as long as balance is maintained. A correctly-built Spanish Water Dog male in working condition should weigh between 18-22 kilograms (40-49 pounds) and a female should weigh between 14-18 kilograms (31-40 pounds).

*Faults:* Under weight or over weight dogs.

*Serious Faults:* Dogs undersized or more than 2 cm ( $\frac{3}{4}$  inch) oversized.

### **GAIT**

Smooth, free and easy; exhibiting agility of movement with a well-balanced, ground-covering stride. Fore and hind legs move straight and parallel with the center line of the body; as speed increases, the feet, both front and rear, converge toward the center line of gravity of the dog, while the topline remains firm and level.

*Faults:* Poor movement should be penalized to the degree to which it reduces the Spanish Water Dog's ability to perform the tasks it was bred to do.

### **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

*(A dog with a Disqualification must not be considered for placement in a conformation event, and must be reported to UKC.)*

Unilateral or bilateral cryptorchid.

Viciousness or extreme shyness.

Smooth or wavy coat.

Tricolor.

Tan points.

Bi-color where one of the two colors are not white.

Excessive ticking.

Albinism.

*The docking of tails and cropping of ears in America is legal and remains a personal choice. However, as an international registry, the United Kennel Club, Inc. is aware that the practices of cropping and docking have been forbidden in some countries. In light of these developments, the United Kennel Club feels that no dog in any UKC event, including conformation, shall be penalized for a full tail or natural ears.*