

Are You Prepared For That New Member Of The Family?

After you have thoroughly researched the Rhodesian Ridgeback breed, and before getting in touch with any breeders, you need to ask some questions of yourself. You need to ask: Am I (we) prepared to:

- Always keep this dog safe by providing a safe, fenced area where it can exercise. Never permit it to run loose, never permit it to ride in the back of an open pickup truck or be chained or tied up outside, permit no teasing or abuse by children or others when the dog is playing in its own yard (or any other time) - such as poking sticks through the fence, yelling at it, tossing things at it.
- Give this dog enough attention and exercise and firm but loving discipline as is given to human children? Puppies need a lot of TLC each day and as they grow they also need exercise along with the TLC and firm discipline so that they may learn right from wrong and become good canine citizens.
- Live with shedding (although Ridgebacks don't shed as much as some long-haired breeds), and the small amount of grooming needed for a Ridgeback - such as nails, brushing, baths, cleaning of teeth, ears, etc., and keeping it parasite free for the next 10 to 15 years?
- Spend the amount of money required to provide proper veterinary care, including but certainly not limited to: vaccines, heartworm testing and preventative, spaying or neutering, annual checkups, and any medications required for any illness the dog may contract? Or the surgery required if the dog swallows something that could injure its internal organs? Or hip and elbow x-rays?
- Keep the breeder informed and up to date on this dog's accomplishments and problems?
- Take questions to the breeder or other appropriate professionals before they become problems that are out of hand?
- Have the patience to accept (and enjoy) the trials of Ridgeback puppy hood which can last for up to two or three years, and each stage thereafter? To become educated about the proper care of the breed and correct training methods?
- Continue to accept responsibility for the dog despite inevitable life changes such as new babies (human), kids going off to school, moving, etc.?
- Resist impulse buying, and instead have the patience to make a responsible choice of a puppy?

If you can answer "yes" to ALL of the above you are ready to start seriously contacting breeders. Start early because most responsible breeders have a waiting list ranging from a few months to a couple of years. Remember, the right puppy or adult dog IS worth waiting for!

Rescue Dogs --- Rescue dogs may or may not be responsibly bred. However, since in many instances they are adults, or older puppies, it is easier for rescuers to evaluate them for any signs of a problem before you fall in love with one of them - something that can't be done with a puppy. This is only one of the many advantages to adopting a Rescue Dog!

The members listed in this directory have paid for the opportunity to advertise herein. The club does not endorse or recommend any breeder, nor does it guarantee the puppies or services of any breeder. This directory is designed for the convenience of prospective owners of Rhodesian Ridgebacks trying to locate a puppy or a grown dog, or for those seeking a stud service or a rescue dog. Since the club makes no recommendations, it is suggested that a potential buyer or breeder contact several of the breeders in this directory in order to develop a frame of reference. As you interview a breeder, look for a person who is dedicated to the improvement of the breed, who only breeds when they feel they can make an improvement in their already show-quality breeding stock, and someone who does not produce Ridgebacks for profit. Be advised that everyone who advertises in this directory has agreed to abide by the Club's Code of Ethics, as printed herein. More specifically, they have agreed to the following conditions:

1. Will x-ray the hips of all breeding stock.
2. For breeding purposes, will use only dogs free of hip dysplasia.
3. Have obtained an OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for Animals) certification of clear hips, or an OFA Preliminary x-ray.
4. Agree to abide by the Club's Bylaws, Code of Ethics and the regulations of The American Kennel Club.

ANYONE WHO DEVIATES IN ANY FASHION FROM THE CODE OF ETHICS SHOULD BE AVOIDED

There are several things you should expect to receive when you purchase a puppy or an older dog from a breeder in this directory:

1. The AKC Registration Application, completed and signed by the breeder, should be provided to you at the time you take the puppy home. The papers are never to be sold separately from the puppy. If there is a co-ownership agreement involved, be certain that you fully understand the impact of the co-ownership and that you receive a copy of any contract or agreement that you sign. All co-owners have a legal right to the dog.
2. The Medical Record, containing puppy's date of birth and dates of inoculations and wormings, on the veterinarian's letterhead or medical jacket with his name, address, and phone number, so that he may be contacted if necessary. A 48-hour health guarantee is standard, giving you time to have the puppy checked by your own veterinarian to assure its health.
3. A Pedigree, signed by the breeder, containing the AKC registration numbers of the pup's parents and any available registration and OFA numbers of the puppy's ancestors. Photos of parents are optional, but always a nice touch. You should ask to see the OFA certificate for each of the parents, and the breeder should be able to give you the OFA history of all the dogs in the pedigree.
4. An Instruction Sheet, giving the quantity of food the puppy has been eating, the brand of food recommended by the breeder, and the schedule on which the puppy has been fed. This is very important, since verbal instructions are quite often forgotten as you concentrate all of your attention on the new puppy and taking it home.
5. A small supply of puppy's current food and a gallon jug of puppy's water, to be replaced by your water as the puppy drinks, so that the puppy will not suffer digestive upset from the change.

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