

RHODESIAN RIDGEBACKS - A POTTED HISTORY

The Rhodesian Ridgeback can claim its origins in South Africa. It is known that a type of ridged dog was highly prized by the native Hottentots, and these dogs were crossed with the European settlers imported dogs. Von Rooyen, a big game hunter developed the breed and found they possessed excellent, instinctive, hunting abilities and an abundance of courage; ideal for use as lion hunting dogs. The dogs work by harassing the lion by constant and cleverly made feint attacks, which held the lion at bay; giving the hunter exactly what he was looking for, a deliberate shot at close range. To do this effectively needs a dog of courage, agility, endurance and instinctive skills.

RIDGEBACKS TODAY

Ridgebacks are a powerful dog but can be quite sensitive, **harsh treatment is most definitely not the way to train them**. They need a varied training program to keep them interested, little and often works wonders! They make devoted family companions and guards, but should **never** be classed as a guard dog. Ridgebacks, as a rule are very good with children, but as with any dog, children must be taught not to tease and pester them. It is important to provide the dog with his own bed in a quiet place. They are intelligent, responsive and trainable, but like all hounds are independent thinkers. Some early basic obedience training and socialization is highly recommended to keep such a large dog under proper control. Also they need to be properly exercised - a quick trot around the block is not good enough, about one hour a day is the requirement to keep them in good condition, so be prepared to give up this amount of time. They are athletic so it is important to have a properly high fenced yard or garden.

Although Ridgebacks have short hair they need to be groomed regularly, this is also a good way of keeping in touch with his health and welfare, also helps to keep hairs off your clothes and the furniture.

WHAT TO DO IF A RIDGEBACK IS FOR YOU

If you have decided that you would like to share your life with a Rhodesian Ridgeback, make proper preparations, find a breeder whose dogs you like and find out as much as you can about how to feed and raise your puppy into a well behaved and liked member of society.

There is a further option, which you could consider. RR Rescues are sometimes able to offer adults without pedigree papers to vetted, suitable homes. However, this is not without problems, but if you feel you have the commitment to help an unfortunate dog, ask for advice and contacts.

Some questions to ask the breeder are: -

Have the parents had their hips ex-rayed?

Have the puppies been checked by someone knowledgeable for the hereditary condition, Dermoid Sinus?

Also enquire if the puppies have been bred within the Kennel Club and the Breed Clubs Code of Ethics.