

Colours... (part 3)

by Carol Gold

MARKINGS

Having asked for information about the occurrence of white Beardies in the last issue, I received some questions as to what exactly was a "white Beardie" and how to tell correct markings.

As a rough rule of thumb, a "white Beardie" would have more than two-thirds of his body coloured white, so that instead of being "slate grey or reddish fawn, black, all shades of grey brown and sandy, with or without white Collie markings" as the Standard requires, he would be incorrectly a white dog with coloured markings.

A mis-marked Beardie would have the main section of his body coloured, but the white would have spread too far into the colour, so that he would be white over more than a third of his body. Alternatively, he could have white splotches where they don't belong, in the middle of his body or back.

A correctly marked Beardie can have white on the following parts of his body, but doesn't have to have white at all: muzzle, blaze between the eyes, chest, front feet and legs, collar, hind feet up to the hocks, tail tip.

Both eyes and both ears must be coloured. The white collar, if he has one, must not extend back past the start of the shoulders. It is most typical for the coloured markings to extend partway down one or both front legs so that the white collar doesn't run into the chest markings when viewed from the side. Perhaps the sketches at the end of this article may help describe typical and other markings. Remember, "Old English" markings are wrong in a Beardie!

RIDGE OF NOSE

"What colour should the ridge of a Beardie's nose be?" is another question that has popped up. The hair that grows along the ridge of a Beardie's nose is very fine and very sparse--there should be hardly any of it there. But the few hairs that grow there will determine by their colour, the colour of the nose ridge. On a Beardie, white hair grows from pink skin; black or blue hair from greyish or blackish skin; and brown or fawn hair from brown or fawn skin. So if a Beardie is brown and white and the brown extends partway along the muzzle, then the nose ridge will be brown where brown hair would have grown and pink where the the white muzzle hair would have grown. Same for black, etc.

NOSE

The nose itself--that rubbery, cold, wet, sniffing appendage at the very front of a Beardie--should be entirely self-coloured to match the coat colour. The coat colour at birth, that is. So a black nose belongs to a black born dog, but a blue dog will have a nose with a steel blue cast to it. And there is a definite difference between the brown nose of a brown and the brown/fawn nose of a fawn, though sometimes--like blue and black noses--you have to look at them together to tell the difference.

Whatever the colour, there should be no pink patches on the nose itself by the time the dog is mature! Sometimes, a puppy's nose is patchy and this is acceptable as long as the colour fills in by the time he is two years old at the very latest! After a Beardie is two, a patchy nose is a serious fault because it indicates a loss of pigment.



These are the most typical Beardie markings.

These markings are also correct, but have about the limit of desirable white.

This is a white Beardie. Some whites have slightly more or even less coloured markings.

REMEMBER: A BEARDIE CAN BE SOLID-COLOURED WITH NO WHITE
(Taken from the Bearded Colleague)