

HERDING STANDARD FOR THE BEARDED COLLIE

INTRODUCTION

The Bearded Collie is an ancient Scottish breed of herding dog. It is a medium-sized shaggy dog ideally suited to the terrain and climate of its native land. The beardie of the highlands was used for rough work, often independent of commands; gathering sheep from the rugged hill and mountain pastures; moving upright and barking to flush out hidden or lost stock. The beardie of the lowlands was most often used as a drover's dog, sorting and taking sheep and cattle to market. Today's bearded collie is a blend of these two strains.

TRAINABILITY

The Bearded Collie has a strong desire to please, exhibits good stock sense, and is biddable. It is a versatile, highly intelligent herder, capable of thinking for itself and working accordingly. The Beardie is a powerful, confident dog that can readily adjust to free-moving or stubborn stock.

WORKING STYLE

- Due to its heritage, the beardie can exhibit a range of styles from very upright and loose-eyed to silent with moderate to stronger eye. They have the innate ability to handle all types of stock.
- The loose-eyed beardie tends to work closer to the stock and in a more upright position than a dog with more eye.
- UNTRAINED beardies may typically run a straight course toward the stock, casting out as they approach.
- Some beardies can be vocal and must not be penalized when the bark is used by the dog to move or control stock; expect beardies to respond to a challenge from the stock with a force bark and bounce, using grip only when warranted.
- Most beardies will work silently when more accustomed to working stock; a few may use a consistent "work bark" while moving the stock. Barking which interferes with the dog's control of the stock may be faulted.
- beardies are an extremely agile, fast-moving dog. Often, during INITIAL exposure to stock, they will move too fast and close; with further training and experience, they will slow their pace and work wider off the stock.

UNDESIRABLE TRAITS

- Predatory or aggressive behavior toward stock
- Chasing and splitting stock with no purpose
- Excessive fear of handler, judge or stock
- Body biting, wool pulling, or unwarranted gripping
- "Nonsense" barking which disturbs the stock
- Inattention or refusal to respond to direction by the handler

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