

# HERDING INSTINCT TESTING



# Herding Instinct

## Recognize

- Family History
- Natural Observation

## Programs

- BCCA
- AKC
- AHBA

## Herding Terms

- Interest
- Style
- Balance
- Eye
- Biddability
- Control

## What's Next?

- Learn about livestock
- Find a trainer
- Time, resources

# Defining Herding Instinct

**Herding instinct refers to the desire of the dog to do something with the stock without fear of them.**

**There is variation and difference in the ways that instinct is shown among the breeds and among individual dogs in a given breed.**

# **Recognizing Herding Potential**

**Family History**

**Natural Observations**

**Instinct Testing**

# Learn About The Family

**Have the parents or other relatives participated in:**

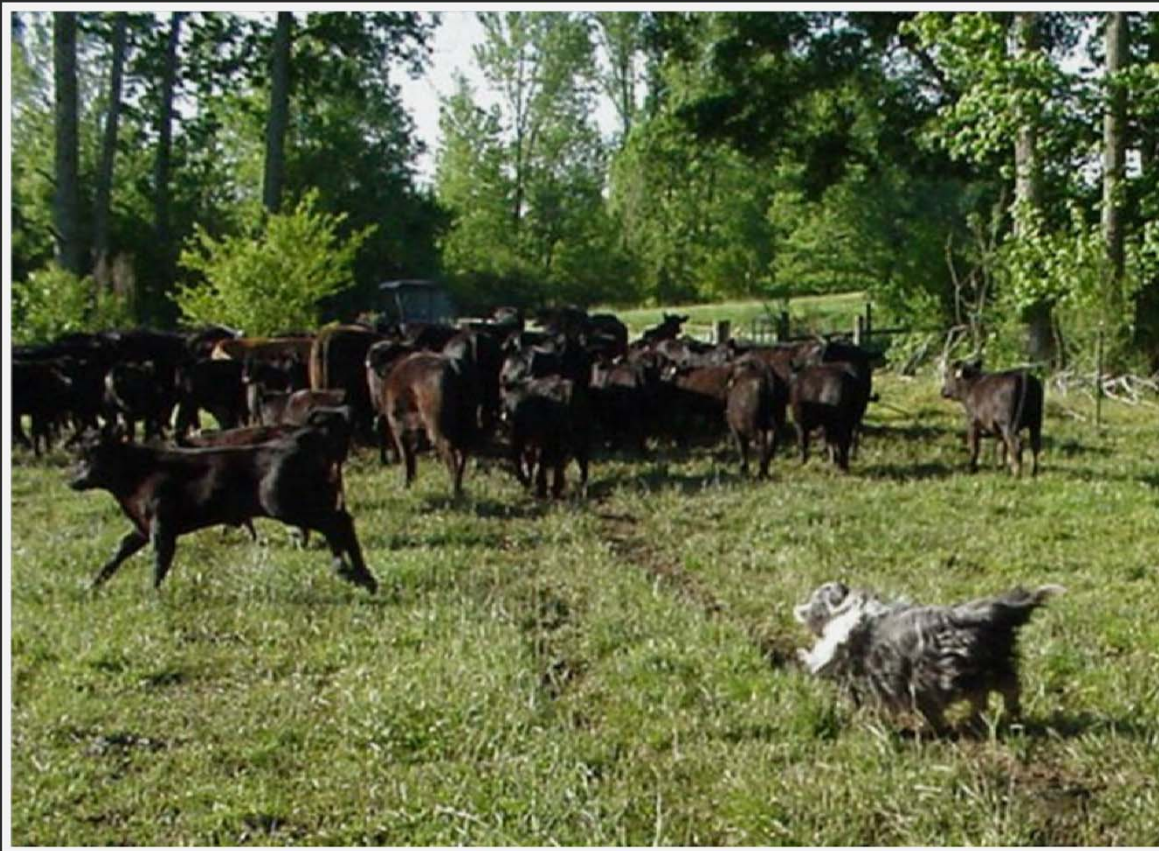
- Farm work?
- Instinct tests or herding trials?

# Farm Work

**Your Beardie's breeder can tell you what farm work the parents and relatives may have done.**

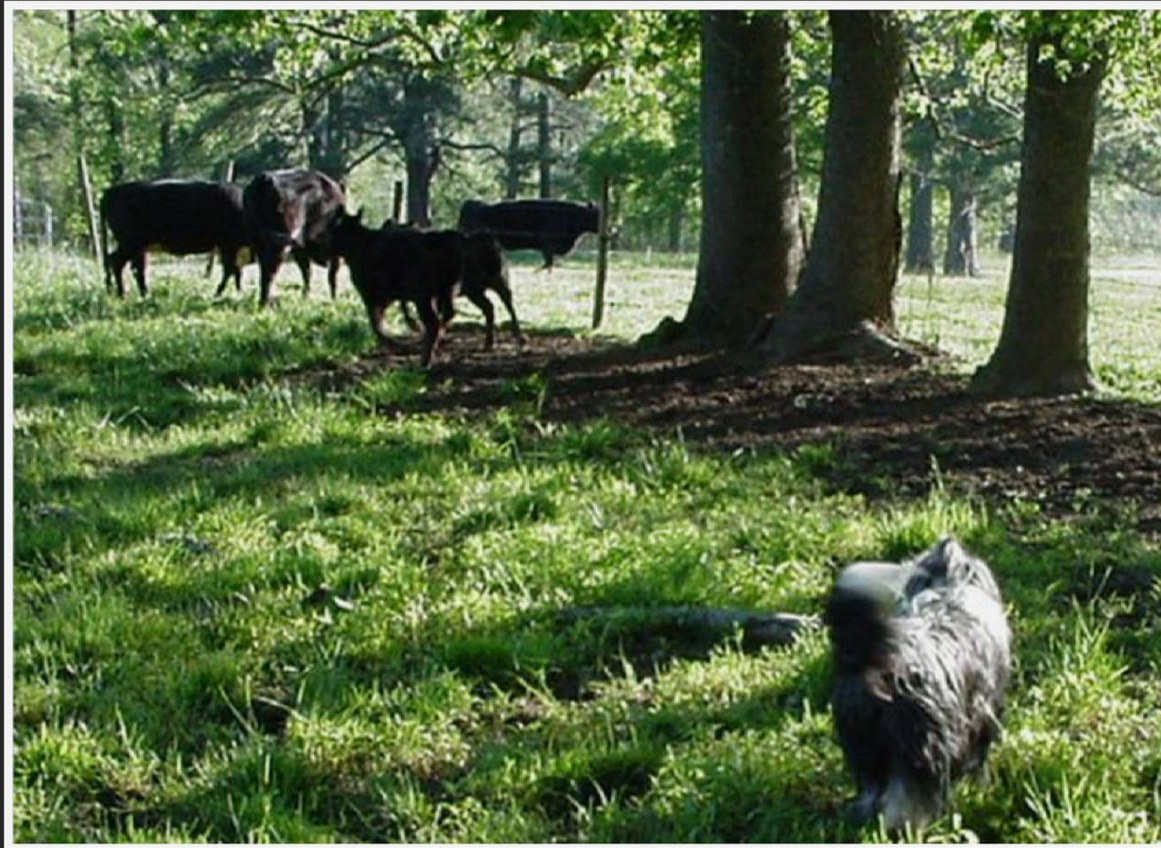
**This is uncommon as most breeders do not live on farms nor have access to farm livestock for other than training purposes.**

# Working Cattle





# Working Cattle





# Holding Sheep for Shearing



# Bringing in the Herd



# Moving Goats





# Bringing in Herd with Lambs



# On The Move





# Moving Along



# **Family History Instinct Tested**

**When a dog passes the instinct test certificate, an abbreviation is placed after a dog's name.**

## **Examples**

**A Beardie named Beardie Blinkworthy, HIC means the dog has a BCCA Herding Instinct Certificate (HIC)**

**A Beardie named Beardie ThatIldo, HCT means the dog has an AHBA Herding Capability Tested Certificate (HCT)**

# **Family History Trial Titles**

**Most titles earned in herding trials are placed after a dog's registered name.  
Example: A dog is named Beardie Do Finklestein, HSAs (an AKC herding title).**

**H = herding title**

**S = started level**

**A = Course A**

**s = sheep**

**In AKC there are also Courses B and C,  
and other livestock (c-cattle; d-ducks)**

# **Family History**

## **BCCA Honorary Herding Awards - ROM**

**Register of merit awards are given to sires and dams for instinct (ROMI), instinct excellent (ROMIX), herding (ROMH), and herding excellent (ROMH).**

**The sire or dam needs to have a specified number of progeny who have achieved a BCCA HIC or an AKC herding title.**

**These awards are given out each year at the BCCA national specialty awards banquet.**

# Natural Observation of Herding Instinct

**You may notice herding type activity in your Beardie's daily activities around the home and yard - i.e., the tendency to gather things together or keep things grouped together.**

**The gathering together should be distinguished from simple chasing (e.g., squirrel, rabbit, cat, bird). Chasing is not herding.**



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# Herding Programs

**Several programs offer herding instinct tests. Some are breed specific (BCCA) and some are for all herding breeds recognized by a program (AKC or AHBA)**

**BCCA: Bearded Collie Club of America**

**AKC: American Kennel Club**

**AHBA: American Herding Breeds Association**

# Testing Age

## Minimum Age - 6 mo

AKC

BCCA

AHBA

## Maximum Age - none

# Instinct Certificates and Titles

<u>Program</u>	<u># Tests</u>	<u>Award</u>
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BCCA	1	HIC certificate
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AKC	2	Instinct Test certificate
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AHBA	2	Herding Certified Tested (HCT) title
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# **BCCA Program**

**A working program was started in 1983. It was adopted by several other breed groups, including the American Working Collie Association, which led to the AHBA.**

**The BCCA used the AHBA instinct test and guide until a major revision in 2008.**

**Dogs can participate if AKC registered or if they have a PAL (formerly ILP) number.**



# **BCCA Instinct Test**

**A sponsor arranges for the judge/tester, site, and paperwork for certificates**

**No training or preparation is needed, although it is helpful if a dog has supervised pre-exposure.**

**The stock are usually sheep or ducks; they should be appropriate for beginning dogs - meaning calm and accustomed to being herded.**

# What Happens at an Instinct Test?

**There may be an educational session about herding and/or pretest exposure to stock.**

**A tester/judge handles the dog or helps the owner do so.**

**The tester evaluates the dog for herding characteristics (see following slides).**

**Test length - 10 minutes or less. If a dog shows the desirable instinct characteristics, the time with stock may be quite brief.**

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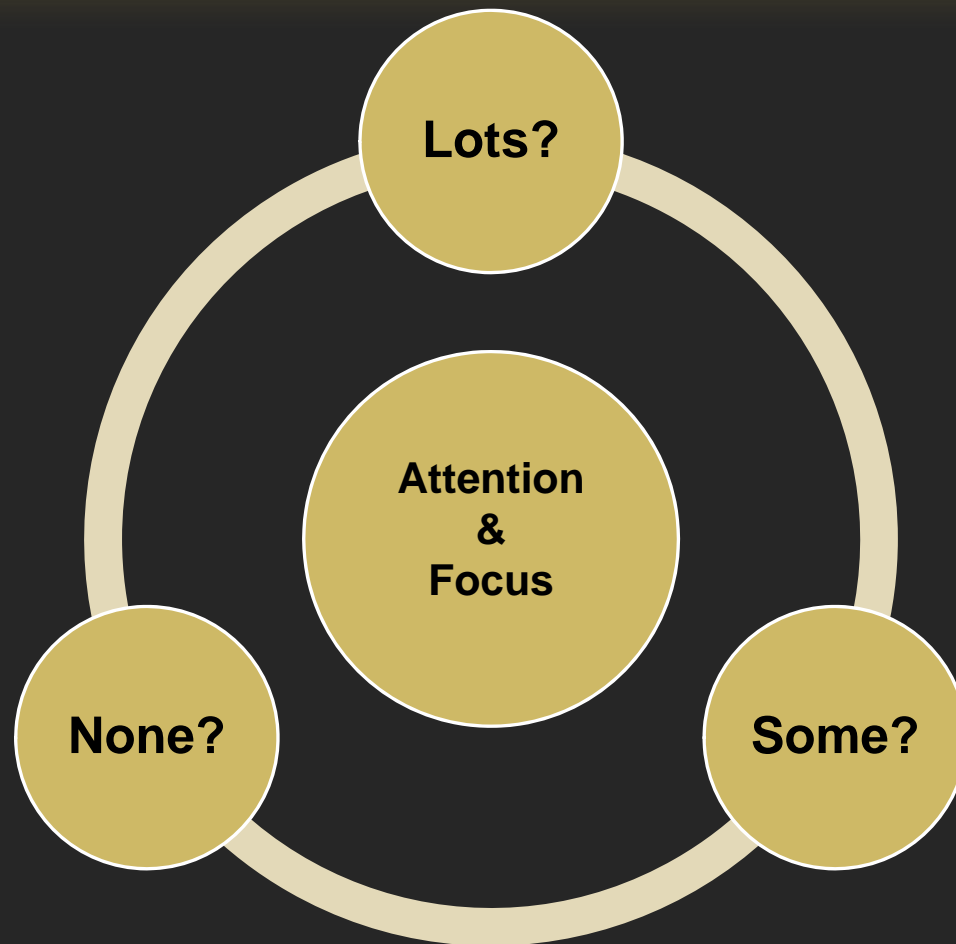
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# Herding Characteristics

**Balance, interest/focus, style (fetch or drive), use of eye, and power are all inherited traits needed to herd livestock effectively. These traits can be enhanced through experience and training, yet only to the degree that the dog has inherited the trait.**

**The dog's everyday life and experiences can influence how the herding traits are expressed. For example, a dog strongly attached to his/her human may be less focused on stock at first exposure than on the human.**

# Interest





## Is This Beardie Interested?



# Interested Puppies



# Very Interested Puppy



## Puppy Interested in Ducks





# Watching Those Duckies



# Interest and Not So Much Interest

You Be The Judge



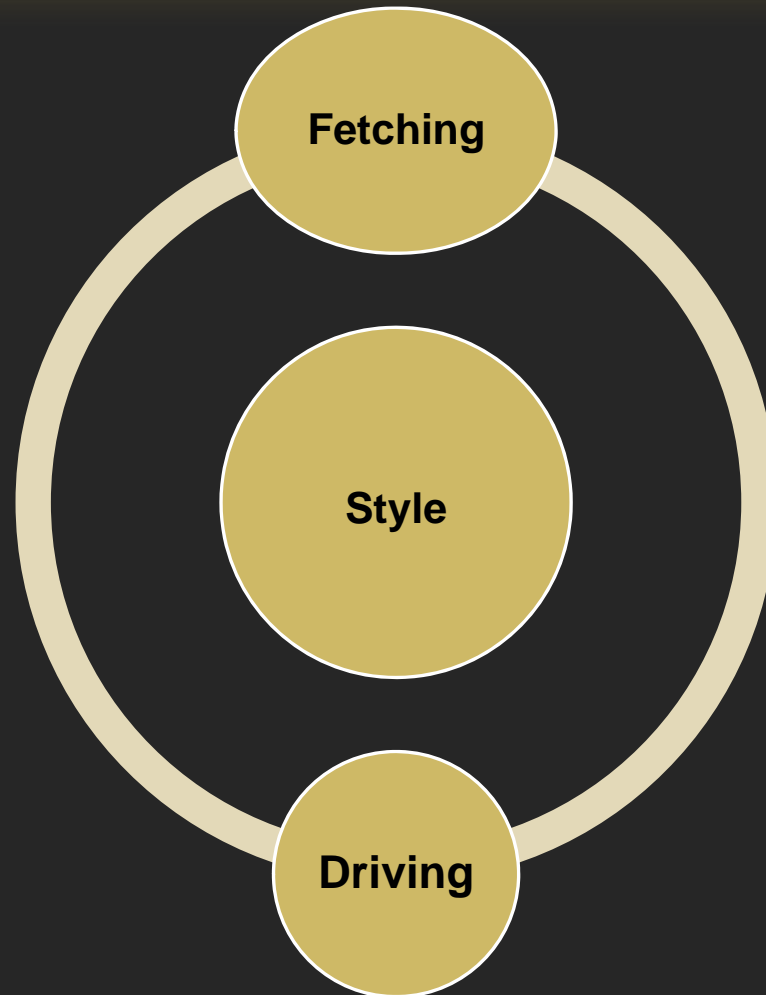
# Lack of Interest

What Happens Then? The Tester May

- **Use another dog to move the stock around to see if the movement creates interest.**
- **Have the dog go outside to watch other dogs work and then come back in.**
- **Change the stock.**
- **Suggest trying at another time. If that happens to you, do not be discouraged.**



# Style



# Fetching Style

**A "fetching" or "gathering" dog displays grouping or rounding up the stock.**

**On initial exposure to stock, a fetching dog may circle around the outside of the stock, bring the stock to the handler, or try to hold the stock in one place - for example against a fence.**

**Beardies generally prefer to fetch.**

# Fetching Goats

## Coming Toward Handler





# Fetching



# Fetching





# Fetching



# Fetching





# Fetching



## Fetching (handler on left)





# More Fetching



# Fetching Ducks



## **Style - Driving**

**Driving dogs push or move stock away from the handler.**

**Beardies are not natural (innate) drivers as a whole, though a few show that preference on the first exposure to stock.**

**Beardies can learn to drive and need to do so for both farm work and competitive trials.**



# Driving





# Young Pup Driving



# Driving





## Driving (handler behind Beardie)



# Driving





# Driving Cattle



# Driving Cattle



BCCA Herding Committee, Aug 2012



# Driving Ducks



# Balance

**Balance is the dog's ability to find the appropriate distance and position (in front of, behind, or off to the side) to control the livestock.**

**The dog's instinct is to reach the balance point.**

**Dogs lacking natural balance need more instruction from their trainer to accomplish the control.**

# Eye

**A dog with strong "eye" works silently with the head (and sometimes shoulders) lowered and keeping a fixed stare on the stock.**

**A loose "eye" dog may be silent or not and the head is higher. This type dog uses body movement for control. "Loose-eyed" means the dog doesn't make constant eye contact with the stock.**

**Beardies generally work with a loose or medium eye and are considered upright dogs.**

# Bark

**Beardies may bark when working stock. A few will always be quiet and those tend to have a stronger eye.**

**Acceptable barking is called a "force" bark to move the stock rather than using a grip (bite).**

**Undesirable barking is sustained yapping or "sass" barking that is directed at the handler and not toward the stock.**

**A young dog or one in early training may overuse the bark but should learn how to use it effectively.**

# Confidence

**Confidence refers to how the dog adjusts to being with and around the stock. A wide range of confidence may be seen:**

- **Very confident and calm with stock**
- **A bit of hesitation**
- **Fearful of stock and will turn or run away from the stock.**



# Biddability

**A biddable dog is one who will respond to pressure from the handler.**

**The handler and dog are functioning as a team to a greater or lesser degree, but the handler is always in the picture from a biddable dog's perception.**

# Biddable

Dog is moving counterclockwise in response to flag



# Biddable

Dog is moving clockwise in response to flag



# Power

**Power is the dog's ability to exert its authority or influence over livestock.**

**Often the upright closer working dogs have more power than those who need to run wider and further away from the stock.**



## What's Next?

- Visit herding trials and observe.
- Visit a training location and observe - preferably where other Beardies are training.
- Seek out a regional Bearded Collie club and ask if any members are herding with their Beardies. The BCCA Web Site is: <http://bccca.us>
- Learn about livestock behavior. Find a trainer who show you how to move stock without your dog - ducks are easiest.
- Enjoy your Beardie and watch that talent emerge.

# Happy Herding

Rain or Shine



# The BCCA Herding Committee is Here to Help You

Contact Elsa Sell, chair,  
([beaconbb@bellsouth.net](mailto:beaconbb@bellsouth.net))  
for assistance with locating  
a nearby Beardie herding  
person or at least a trainer  
familiar with upright dogs.





# The End

