

= Field Spaniel =

The Field Spaniel is a medium @-@ sized breed dog of the spaniel type . They were originally developed to be all @-@ black show dogs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and were unpopular for work as a hunting dog . However , during the mid @-@ 20th century they were redeveloped as a longer @-@ legged dog that was more suitable to be used for field work . They are now considered to be a rare breed , and are registered as a Vulnerable Native Breed by The Kennel Club .

Their fur is darker than other spaniels and have no undercoat . Their coats come mostly in solid colours with some occasional markings on the chest . They can make good family dogs and are patient with children , but can require some sort of purpose , be it hunting or agility work in order to prevent them from becoming bored and destructive .

= = History = =

The Field Spaniel was originally developed for the show ring by competitors who were attempting to develop an all @-@ black Spaniel . Some of the breeding methods of those early developers were criticised ; one of the first breeders of the Field Spaniel , Thomas Jacobs , said of the origin ; " Much has been written and said on the purity of the breed ; deprecating the means I have adopted to produce them as calculated to alter a presumed type , and frequent missiles have at me and my dogs from behind the hedge . But where is the pure bred black spaniel we hear so much about ? Proof of the existence of the pure bred one (if there ever was one !) has not been forthcoming . Like most sporting dogs , they are the result of different crosses . "

They were unpopular with sportsmen as the dark colours of the breed did not show up in hunting conditions , and the elongated and short shape of the early breed was not very practical for moving easily through cover . The low @-@ slung variety of Field Spaniel were developed by Phineas Bullock from dogs previously owned by Sir Francis Burdett , the secretary of the Birmingham Dog Show . Burdett was said to have owned a variety of black Cocker Spaniels . Bullock crossed the Field Spaniel with the Sussex Spaniel and the English Water Spaniel . In the 1870s he was very successful in the show ring with his variety of Field Spaniel ; however , it resulted in a dog that was almost exactly like a Sussex Spaniel with the exception of the head itself .

The dog who is considered to be the father of the modern English Cocker Spaniel is Ch . Obo , who was born in 1879 to a Sussex Spaniel father and a Field Spaniel mother . Obo 's son Ch . Obo II is considered to be the father of the modern American Cocker Spaniel , who was described as being only ten inches high with quite a long body .

By 1909 , the average weight of a Field Spaniel was 35 ? 45 pounds (16 ? 20 kg) . Further mixing of the breed occurred with elements of the Basset Hound introduced . Various genetic health issues arose and action was taken in order to correct the problems within the breed . English Springer Spaniels were used to introduce healthier elements into the breed and resulted in the longer legged spaniel that we know today . Most of the modern breed can be traced to four dogs from the 1950s ; Colombina of Teffont , Elmbury Morwena of Rhiwlas , Gormac Teal , and Ronayne Regal .

The Field Spaniel remains a rare breed , even in the UK . In 2009 , a total of 51 dogs were registered with The Kennel Club and has been in steady decline since 2000 . Out of all the Spaniel breeds registered with The Kennel Club , the Field Spaniel has the lowest numbered registered year on year , with only the Sussex Spaniel coming a close second with 60 registrations in 2009 . This is compared to the English Springer Spaniel with 12 @, @ 700 and the English Cocker Spaniel with 22 @, @ 211 registrations in 2009 alone . In order to promote the breed , they have been registered as a Vulnerable Native Breed by The Kennel Club .

= = Description = =

= = = Appearance = = =

The standard size for a Field Spaniel is 17 ? 18 inches (43 ? 46 cm) tall at the withers , and a weight of between 40 ? 55 pounds (18 ? 25 kg) . This places it roughly between the English Cocker Spaniel and the English Springer Spaniel in size . Its long , silky coat comes in solid colours of black , liver , or roan . Tan points , white markings on the throat and the chest can be ticked or the same colour as the rest of the body .

They have a moderately long single coat with no undercoat . Feathering of the fur appears on the chest , belly , ears and on the back of the legs . The coat is not as heavy as that of a Cocker Spaniel but will require grooming in order to prevent mats from appearing in the fur . Docked tails were often used in working dogs , as poor blood flow left healing of the non docked tail difficult .

= = = Temperament = = =

The Field Spaniel can be a good family dog while it has a job to do . They are suitable for dog agility and hunting . Without some sort of purpose , the dog can often try to amuse itself and cause mischief . However , they are patient with children and like to stay close to their family . When socialised , they are good with other dogs . They are generally docile and independent , and are not as excitable as Cocker Spaniels . Stanley Coren 's The Intelligence of Dogs lists the breed as being above average in working intelligence .

= = Health = =

There are a few ocular conditions to which the Field Spaniel has a predisposition . These include cataracts , retinal atrophy and retinal dysplasia . Hip dysplasia has appeared in British lines of Field Spaniels . In a health survey conducted by the Kennel Club (UK) , the primary cause of death in Field Spaniels was cancer , with the second most frequent cause being old age . The median lifespan for the breed was found to be eleven years and eight months , which is five months higher than the median age for all dog breeds .