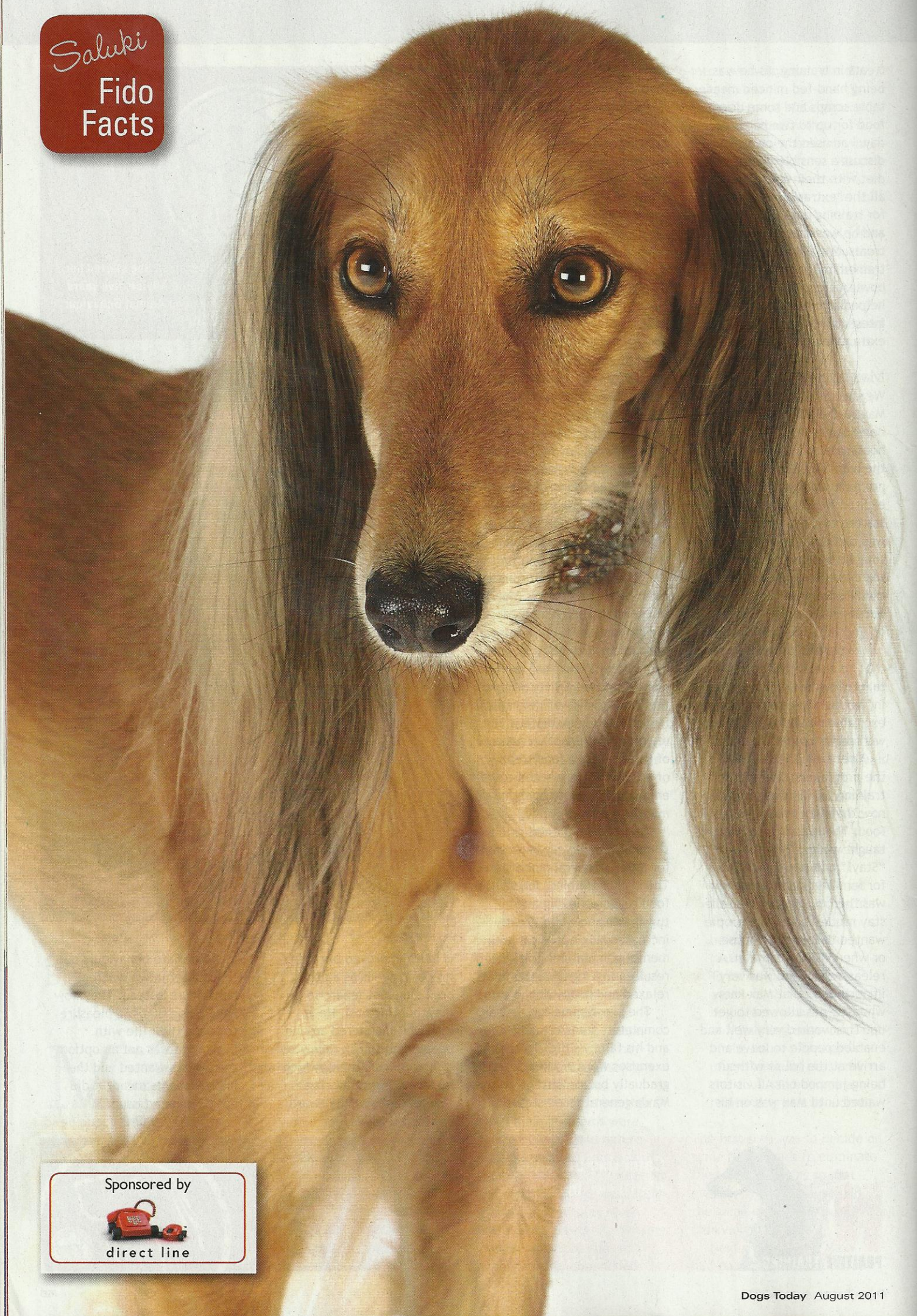


Saluki
Fido
Facts



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Saluki

Fido Fact File

by Robert Killick

Studio photography by Tim Rose @ www.timrosephotography.co.uk

Group:	Hound
Country of origin:	The Middle East
Original function:	Hunting gazelle and small animals
Availability:	Not easy
Average life span:	12 years
Age at maturity:	2-3 years
Height:	Dogs 58-71 cm; bitches smaller
Approximate weight:	23-28kg
Is the breed a natural guard dog?	No, but they will sound an alarm
With strangers?	Aloof
Coat type:	Smooth and silky texture with longer feathering on their ears, legs, tail and sometimes the throat. The smooth type of Saluki doesn't have feathering
Colours:	Any colour or combination of colours except brindle
Does the coat mat?	The feathering can tangle if neglected
Coat care:	A quick brush through daily
Does the coat need professional grooming?	No
Special trimming for the show ring?	No
Exercise:	At least one hour's exercise is needed daily for adults, to include free-running. Known as the marathon runner, the Saluki will run at speed for a considerable period of time, sometimes reaching speeds of approximately 35mph when in pursuit of quarry
Average food bill:	About £7.50 for an adult per week
Ease of training:	Okay with patience
Temperament with children:	Good
With dogs?	No problems
With cats?	Will chase cats in the garden; with early socialisation and careful supervision, he could be trained to live with a family cat
Town or country dog?	Country
Would he happily live in a flat or apartment?	Yes, with sufficient exercise, but not ideal
Will he live in a kennel if necessary?	Not happily
Does the breed suffer from the cold, wet or heat?	Not keen on the cold; some don't like the wet
Hereditary anomalies?	See Dr David Sargan's health MOT
Special considerations:	Salukis should be kept in a slim, athletic condition. They are not keen on being left alone, and have a tendency to chase livestock, so should be on-lead where they are present. Early recall training is essential
Character sketch:	A highly intelligent dog, the Saluki may appear aloof to those he doesn't know, but is a very loving companion to his family

Further Fido Facts

How many in rescue each year?	On average, between 40 to 50
Main cause?	Unscrupulous breeders (not club members) and strays
Rescue contacts:	Rosemary Lewis 01270 811070 and Tania Stevens 01634 221076
Breed club:	The Saluki or Gazelle Hound Club was founded in 1923. Membership costs £14 (single), £20 (joint), £10 (single over 60 years of age), £16 (joint over 60/single overseas), £22 (joint overseas), or £9 (non-Saluki owner/junior member). The club organises three shows each year: one Limited, one Open and one Championship show and publishes a yearbook and a newsletter. For further details, visit www.salukiclub.co.uk or call Ken Allan, club secretary, on 01234 708658. There is also a Northern Saluki Club, visit www.northernsalukiclub.co.uk
Want to know more?	Call our breed advisors in the <i>Perfect Pup</i> section of the magazine

Saluki Fido Facts

**Clair
Chryssolor**
(Anasazi
Salukis) and
Ken Allan
(Jazirat
Salukis) give
their take on
living with
Salukis

'Aristocratic', 'haughty' and 'superior' are words associated with the Saluki. They can also be naughty, plotting and hold a grudge - never forgetting a perceived slight from another dog. Deep thinkers, Salukis have minds of their own and their own time-scale. If you can accept this, you'll be hooked.

People seem to think that Salukis cannot be let off the lead because they will not return and will go off hunting. My dog, Bannon, didn't know this and set the standard for future training. We free-walked in fields with other breeds and people in all weathers and still do. My Salukis keep an eye on 'their' pack and usually return when called.

We are both fortunate to have large gardens, but Salukis will not thrive without exercise. We road walk daily and, living in the country, we beg access to enclosed fields for a change of scenery where they can all run together.

We were both heavily involved on the coursing field with our Salukis. Coursing is one aspect of Salukis we miss - watching a dog run with the joy and freedom for which it was bred over thousands of years is a sight that fills the heart and eye.

Socialised from an early age Salukis respond favourably to most breeds. Very much pack animals, they do not like being left alone and will find things to amuse themselves if bored - with the owner returning home to a scene of destruction.

When it comes to sleeping, a Saluki will find a most treasured piece of furniture or the best Persian carpet to claim as his own. One of the Salukis I've bred lives with Dachshunds, Tibetan Terriers, Italian Greyhounds and gerbils, putting paid to the idea that they aren't safe with small animals.

We believe that because of their ancient lineage and association with people (Salukis are arguably one of the oldest domesticated breeds), they have a special affinity with



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Salukis have a special affinity with children and women - a relationship probably inherited from the days when, historically, it was the Bedouin women's responsibility to feed and look after them. It is quite common for a Saluki to choose one human as 'theirs' regardless of who feeds them



Photo by Daniela VanDerLicht

children and women - a relationship probably inherited from the days when, historically, it was the Bedouin women's responsibility to feed and look after them. It is quite common for a Saluki to choose one human as 'theirs' regardless of who feeds them.

Late maturers, Salukis are usually not bred from until after the age of three. Litters can average from four to six. They come in all colours - from red or cream, to black and silver, or even black-fringed fawn. The Kennel Club breed standard states "any colour or combination of colours permissible, other than brindle."

Grooming is a major part of rearing. While the puppies' eyes are still closed, snipping the ends of toenails with cuticle nippers accustoms them to the practice, and will ensure that they will stand for nail cutting as adults. We touch and stroke the puppies each day, an enjoyable time for all of us, and we familiarise ourselves with each aspect of their bodies as they grow. Should anything appear that shouldn't - we know.

Salukis shed only lightly and have little 'doggie odour'. They like to be clean and wash their own faces, grooming themselves very much like cats. The feathered types need their ear fringes and tails combed regularly.

Incredibly quiet in the house, we are fond of saying, "Salukis have two speeds - flat out and flat out!"

Lead training begins at an early age in the household environment. After completing the vaccination programme, the puppies are

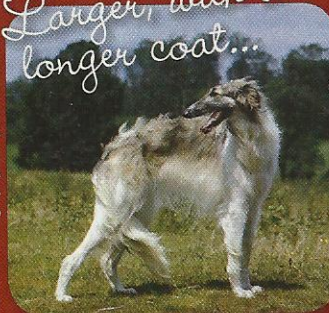
gradually introduced to the great outdoors, hopefully well mannered, calm and manageable. Ringcraft classes are excellent for socialising them, but because they are sighthounds and easily flooded with too much information, we take things slowly. All training must be patient, slow and gentle - no Saluki responds to harsh treatment or loud words.

As a long-legged breed, it is advisable that young Salukis run and play only with their contemporaries. In preparation for racing or lure chasing, Salukis should not be allowed to 'work' before the age of 16 months. Pups don't know when to stop and will do their best to keep up with the adults - and extensive and permanent tendon, muscle and bone injury can occur as a result.

Our Salukis go everywhere with us and as long they have a bed on which to lie down, they're comfortable - even in busy pubs. With time and patience, a Saluki can be trained to obedience and agility, but never to the standard of a collie. In obedience, after the third perfect response, Salukis will lie down, cross their paws and watch the others as though to say, "I've done it perfectly! What more do you want?" That is the charm of the Saluki.

To quote Saluki breed enthusiast Virginia M Burch, "Anyone with the personality to live with a Saluki, once having one, must always have one. It takes a special person to be able to live up to the Saluki standard of humans. If you qualify, the relationship is the greatest in the world of dog and man." ■

Larger, with a longer coat...

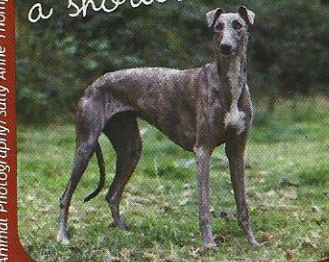


Borzoi



Deerhound

Similar size, with a shorter coat...



Greyhound



Ibizan Hound



Sloughi

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Saluki Fido Facts

**Justine
Hankins**
looks at the
history of
the Saluki



"Saluki! The Gazelle Hound! The very name suggests the distance without end of yellow sands, stretching away into the mist of the horizon." So begins the entry on Salukis in *The Practical Dog Book* of 1930. This rather poetic introduction gives us a flavour of the highly romanticised way this elegant sighthound is often described. The breed's air of grace and nobility, coupled with its exotic and ancient origins, has added a touch of oriental mystique to this swift hunter.

The novelist, horticulturalist

and dog lover Vita Sackville-West remarked on the fact that "this most romantic of dogs" caught the popular imagination to such an extent when it was first exhibited in this country that some exhibitors "added an Eastern glamour to the proceedings by appearing in full native dress."

The Saluki's precise origins are open to speculation, but there is widespread agreement that the Saluki is one of the oldest purebred dogs in the world, possibly even pre-dating Ancient Egypt. As Clifford Hubbard wisely suggested, "It would be hazardous to attempt to identify

the crude carvings of primitive man with particular breeds of dog," but there are some very early representations of dogs that look so remarkably like today's Saluki that we can be reasonably confident that there really is a family connection. In his book, *Hounds of the World*, David Alderton describes an ivory figure of a dog's head "clearly resembling the Saluki" that dates back nearly 7,000 years and is one of the oldest known representations of a domesticated dog.

It is hard to say exactly where in the world the Saluki first emerged.

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The Salukis featured on these pages are Jazirat Raven, owned by Andrea Ireson; Timaru Mazzika of Jazirat owned by Ken and Diana Allan; Anasazi Malt Whiskey, Anasazi Early Dusk, Abu Baqr's Gazal Galiya, and Firuza Huxley, owned by Clair Chryssolor. See page 62 for details of breeds needed to attend future photo sessions.

Studio Photography: Tim Rose at www.timrosephotography.co.uk

Alternative breeds:
©Animal Photography

Model dogs



The breed's name has variously been linked with a long vanished town of Saluk in Yemen or the Seleucid empire, which was ruled by a Greek dynasty in what is now Syria and Iraq. There are numerous images of Saluki-type dogs from Ancient Egypt, but similar dogs were also found in Arabia, Persia, North Africa, Greece and even China. This was an era of

conquest and empire and even in these early times there was a great deal of trade between the countries around the Mediterranean and the Arabian peninsula, so it is perfectly plausible that the dogs travelled widely and local variations emerged.

Wherever they found themselves, Salukis were highly prized as hunting dogs, not least by the nomadic Bedouin people, who call the dog El Hor - which means 'noble one'. The pedigrees of these dogs were not written down, but that doesn't mean they weren't bred with great care, and knowledge of breeding was passed on down the generations.

Salukis were used to hunt gazelle and other animals and often worked alongside falcons. Islamic culture has not generally had a high opinion of dogs, regarding them as unclean. But the Saluki - which can be translated as 'hound' - was regarded as distinct from other dogs. The Arabic word for dog - kelb - is perhaps more accurately translated into English as 'cur', an altogether more lowly creature than the one we now regard as our best friend.

Europeans may have first encountered the Saluki during the crusades in the 12th century, when Christian armies attempted to conquer the Holy Land, and some of these dogs may have found their way back to Europe. However, the introduction of the Saluki to modern Britain is credited to Florence Amherst, who acquired two puppies from Egyptian Bedouins in 1895.

In the early years, the breed was sometimes known as the Persian Greyhound, but Florence Amherst calls it "the Slughy, Tazi or Gazelle Hound" in her extensive chapter on 'oriental Greyhounds' in the 1907 *New Book of the Dog*.

This is where things get confusing. The Slughy, of course, is a different - albeit related - breed, which has only recently received official recognition in this country. 'Slughy' is a name used by Florence to cover four different types of closely related dogs, which, she says, are known as the Shami, Yamani, Omani and the Nejdi. "The Shami," she explains, "has silky hair on its ears, and long feathery hair on its tail." The feathered type of 'Slughy' she describes "has been kept

throughout Persia from the earliest times" and is clearly today's Saluki. Florence credits the Bedouin tribes, whose "life remains the same as in a bygone age", with maintaining the standard of these dogs and ensuring that "these beautiful dogs of today are the same as those of thousands of years ago."

Florence's efforts to carry on this tradition took some while to take off. Several decades after she first imported Salukis, she teamed up with Brigadier-General Frederick Lance and his wife, who had served in Egypt, to promote and develop the breed. Their cause was helped by the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922, sparking mass fascination with all things from Egypt and the Middle East, which was dubbed Tutmania. A breed club was established in 1923 and the Saluki was swiftly recognised by the Kennel Club and became a fashionable addition to the show ring.

Importing dogs from their homelands was not, however, a matter of a simple transaction; "for great have been the difficulties to persuade Arab owners to sell their dogs at all", according to one writer in the late 1920s; "the importation of Salukis has always been a romantic adventure and often has taken much tact and persuasive power." You can just picture those intrepid British colonialists sitting cross-legged in desert tents, sipping tea and trying to cajole Arab owners into parting with their treasured hounds.

The Saluki's popularity began to wane, however, as the British empire retreated from the lands that had nurtured the breed for so many centuries and the Second World War brought breeding and showing of all dogs to a virtual standstill. The Saluki has never been amongst the most popular breeds as a family pet, but this strikingly beautiful hound has many admirers across the world and is still used as a working dog in Arabia. Arabian Saluki Beauty Contests (or dog shows, to you and me) are held regularly in the United Arab Emirates and traditional hunting traditions continue to this day.

Florence Amherst described the Saluki as "the pride of his fortunate possessor" - a sentiment, I'm sure, every Saluki owner will understand. ■

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Saluki Fido Facts

Geneticist **Dr David Sargan** performs a health MOT on the Saluki

Salukis are a healthy breed with an average life expectancy of 12 years in the Kennel Club health survey and some dogs living to be 16 years. As with all breeds, there are a still few health issues to be aware of. Fortunately, skeletal problems aren't one of these issues. Like their relatives, the Greyhounds, Salukis have excellent hips and few skeletal problems.

Heart and blood

One area of some concern is that Salukis are prone to a number of types of heart disease. Sudden deaths in the breed have caused concern and a connection with heart disease has been suggested. However, investigations over more than 20 years have failed to ascertain this or any other reason.

The most common cardiac problem in the Saluki is degeneration of the mitral valve that separates the left atrium and left ventricle. At a minimum this causes a heart murmur, but it can develop to cause inefficient heart function. (Note that the Saluki may be trained for racing. The effects of training on the heart can also cause an increase in heart murmurs, but without health effects. An expert can typically distinguish these murmurs from those caused by the mitral valve.)

A few dogs also suffer from dilated cardiomyopathy, in which the heart becomes rather enlarged, with thinner walls and ineffective pumping. This tends to be a disease of older dogs.

Autoimmune thrombocytopenia, which has been seen in Salukis, is a disease in which the dog's immune system destroys its own platelets. Because of their role in clotting, the loss of platelets makes the dog prone to excessive bleeding from wounds or bruises. Rarely, Salukis have been found to have directly inherited mutations in blood serum clotting factors: most commonly Von Willebrand's disease.

The Saluki breed club is highly active in dealing with breed health issues. The Animal Health Trust is maintaining a Saluki database, which will enable them to undertake research into problems that may be encountered in the future. So far, no hereditary diseases with known DNA-based tests have been identified in the breed



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Skin and coat

Salukis are somewhat susceptible to dermatitis (skin inflammation and soreness) especially in connection with mite infestations.

Cancers

The Saluki does not have an abnormally high rate of cancer, but the most common cancers are lymphomas and haemangiosarcomas. The latter are tumours of those cells that differentiate into veins and are particularly dangerous tumours, usually of the spleen and heart. Their intimate association with blood vessels means that if a tumour ruptures, it can cause catastrophic internal bleeding and rapid death.

Hypothyroidism

Autoimmune hypothyroidism (lymphocytic thyroiditis) is a progressive disease with rather non-specific signs until tests for thyroxine are performed. Energy levels are gradually reduced, and this may be accompanied by symmetrical hair loss. Other signs of hypothyroidism include a slow heart rate, lethargy, mental dullness, intolerance to cold, infertility, constipation, and weight gain.

Drug sensitivity

Certain drugs, including a number of older intravenous anaesthetics (such as thiopental) should not be used on Salukis, as they may have adverse reactions to them. Pre-operative stress should be kept to a minimum in these dogs, as it appears to aggravate the problem. Fortunately, there are excellent

modern substitutes, such as propofol. Your vet should be aware of this problem.

Eyes and ears

Deafness and a number of inherited eye diseases have been recorded in the breed. The most common of these is an early-onset cataract, but ceroid lipofuscinosis (ceroidal retinal degeneration, the progressive loss of night vision with neurological signs) is also reasonably well known in the breed. Rarely, neuronal degenerations with ataxia, tremors, visual defects and behavioral abnormalities have been seen.

Conclusion

As with all dogs, despite the good general health in the breed, it is important, when purchasing, to see the pups with their mother, and to ensure that both parents have not had any of the problems referred to above. The Saluki breed club is highly active in dealing with breed health issues. The Animal Health Trust (AHT) is maintaining a Saluki database, which will enable them to undertake research into problems that may be encountered in the future. So far, no hereditary diseases with known DNA-based tests have been identified in the breed.

The breed club has asked me to state that, "As in all breeds, occasionally health problems will occur and the club is duty bound to initiate investigation and advise members. Openness and willingness to be honest about health issues are the only ways to secure the health of the Saluki." ■

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