

SO YOU THINK YOU WANT TO GET A TOLLER.....

If you've gotten this far, you're probably doing some pretty serious research about acquiring a Toller. As with any dog, pure-bred or mixed, a huge commitment and responsibility is laid at your feet when you make the decision to bring one of these four legged creatures into your home. Your decision should not be based on a whim, a notion that a puppy would make a good Christmas present, or something that would be good to teach the kids responsibility. Hundreds of thousands of our canine friends end up in shelters each year because owners didn't take the time to consider the consequences of owning a dog. Dogs also end up in shelters because people may not realize the difference in owning one breed of dog over another. Each breed has its own distinct characteristics that may or may not make them compatible with your family and lifestyle. Since you have made it this far, we hope your intention is to give careful consideration of the distinct characteristics of our breed and that you are serious about finding the right breed for yourself, your family, and your lifestyle.

Things to Consider.....

- Do you have the time to train a puppy?
- Do you have the time to housebreak a puppy?
- If you work, can you arrange for the feeding and exercise needs of your puppy while you are away?
- Are you prepared to forego other activities in order to tend to the pup's needs?
- Can you afford the necessary vaccinations and visits to the veterinarian?
- Do you have a safe place to keep the dog when you are not at home?
- Do you have the time to provide sufficient daily exercise routines for a Toller?
- Do you have enough room, both inside and outside, to meet the exercise needs of a Toller?
- Will the Toller temperament and personality fit in with your family and lifestyle?
- Do you have time to spend taking care of a Toller's attention needs?

Do NOT bring a Toller into your life if you are not prepared to...

- Spend quality time with the dog
- Make personal sacrifices in order to see to the dog's needs
- Feed, groom and house it properly
- Be forgiving if it goes to the bathroom where it should not
- Deal with dog hair
- Deal with nipping, barking and sometimes high energy
- Take it to training classes
- Treat the dog as a four-legged member of your family
- Accept the responsibilities of dog ownership

Finding a Breeder

As a puppy buyer, you should carefully research breeders and their dogs. Tollers continue to be a rare breed and thus far there is a greater demand for Tollers than the number produced each year. Sometimes people get pups within a very short time, but often times

they have to wait a long time. Keep in mind that it may be better to wait for a pup until you feel you and the breeder have a good connection and feel they will be there for you and your needs.

What is a Responsible Breeder?

The responsible breeder is much like the head of a family. Responsibility is felt toward the breed itself, toward the dogs bred, the dogs hoped to be bred, and additionally to all the people who have dogs of his/her breeding. The responsible breeder spends astounding amounts of time and money on matters he/she thinks are for the best interests of the breed including doing the genetic tests and health clearances available.

It is this awareness of responsibility, combined with a sense of continuity and desire to improve the breed that marks the difference between the true breeder and mere puppy-raisers. The puppy-raisers and the dog dealers are motivated by the desire to make money. They are truly in the dog business, selling puppies like over-the-counter commodities to anyone who can pay the price.

Responsible breeders:

- Do not breed to make money as their primary objective.
- Do not breed to show their kids the marvels of reproduction and birth.
- Do not breed their dog just to produce some cute puppies.
- Do not breed unless they are convinced that their knowledge, experience, and devotion to the breed will result in a mating that will produce an exceptional litter of puppies, with qualities that are as near as possible to the ideal for the breed.
- **DO** breed to preserve and to enhance the characteristics that make the breed unique.

The buyer who purchases his/her dog from a responsible breeder is fortunate. The responsible breeder insists on direct contact with those who buy his/her dogs, and sells only after the most careful screening of a would-be purchaser in order to ascertain the mutual suitability of dog and buyer. While often not fully appreciated until after the dog is bought, this screening by the breeder is the greatest protection a dog purchaser can have. Though the cost of properly caring for the dogs may cause the responsible breeder sleepless nights and untold worries, he/she will never let a single puppy or older dog leave for a home that is not as good as or better than the one he/she is providing. Even when the dog is sold, the breeder's help and advice do not end, but continue throughout the dog's life.

While you may never wish to work a Toller in hunting or field activities, it is important to remember that this is part of what made our breed and the responsible breeder should have evidence that working ability is still in their lines.

Some questions to ask breeders....

- What are you striving for in your breeding program?
- How do you plan your litters and rate the pups?
- What are the AKC registered names and titles of the sire and the dam?
- What is the temperament of the sire and dam?

- Will I be able to meet one or both of the parents?
- What health checks have been done and what were the results on the dam and sire?
Will you give me copies of the results?
- Do you belong to the NSDTRC (USA) or other dog clubs?
- Do you participate in events and/or hunt with your dog?
- Are the pups handled daily and socialized?
- Are you going to keep a pup? If not, why not?
- When can I visit my new puppy?
- Are you willing to ship the puppy to me?
- What veterinary care will the puppy have had when I take it home?
- What paperwork will I receive with my puppy?
- Are you willing to answer my questions after I take the dog home?
- Will you assist me if I cannot keep the dog?

Things a responsible breeder may want to know....

- Where you heard about Tollers;
- Why you want a Toller, as opposed to another breed or a mixed breed;
- Your prior experience with dogs/Tollers, especially training them, and whether you've ever raised a puppy before and if so, what breed;
- How many people live in your home, especially children and their ages;
- About your lifestyle and how the dog will fit into it, especially during the next 2 years, and whether someone is home during the day;
- The particular characteristics you want in your puppy/dog, including personality and gender and why;
- If there are other pets in the house;
- A description of where the puppy will live, sleep and stay when you are away;
- What kind of dwelling you live in, if you have a fenced yard and if not, where the dog will exercise;
- A description of the activity level/exercise requirements you expect from your dog and how you plan to exercise your puppy;
- If you are willing to attend basic obedience training classes with your puppy;
- Whether you intend to spay/neuter or breed your dog;
- Whether you are interested in showing your dog;
- If you are willing to register your Toller with the AKC on a Limited Registration or a Full Registration;
- If you are willing to co-own with the breeder until show qualities are or are not obvious;
- Whether you are interested in training and participating in companion or performance events with your Toller;
- Your current veterinarian's name and phone number.

Puppy Prices

Prices for Toller puppies vary. A higher price does not necessarily equate with better quality. Many responsible breeders are working to keep prices reasonable in an effort to discourage puppy mill breeders. However, remember that the responsible breeder puts a great deal of time and effort into each breeding. They have expenses far beyond the usual

veterinary care, housing and feeding expenses of having a pet. What may seem expensive rarely covers the costs the responsible breeder has put into each breeding.

SO YOU STILL THINK YOU WANT TO GET A TOLLER...

Be an informed buyer. Understand the commitment you will be making, and don't forget to ask the breeder of any litter you consider about the goals of their breeding program; ask why they paired the parents of this litter and about titles the parents have earned. Make sure that both parents have been x-rayed for hip dysplasia and eyes checked for progressive retinal atrophy and cleared of other major inherited eye diseases. When you acquire a puppy from a responsible breeder, you also acquire support throughout the lifetime of your puppy. Please, avoid purchasing a puppy from a breeder with whom you do not have good rapport, and avoid puppy mill and pet store purchases.

Additional Information

Publications:

"The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever" (ISBN: 0931866731) by Alison Strang and Gail MacMillan. Hardcover: 288 pages; Publisher: Alpine Pubns; (December 1996) Order form can be downloaded from the NSDTRC (USA) website listed below.

Video [DVD]:

"Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever," produced by the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club (USA); Order form can be downloaded from the NSDTRC (USA) website listed below.

Toller General Information [CD]

A powerpoint presentation produced by the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club (USA) touching on all aspects of the breed and includes a visual presentation of the Standard. This CD can be purchased from Merchandising on the club's website.

Websites:

Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club (USA): www.nsdtrc-usa.org
American Kennel Club: www.akc.org

Membership - NSDTRC (USA):

Contact the Membership Chair; Membership@nsdtrc-usa.org Application can be downloaded from the club website listed above.