

Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever

"Yes he is cute and quite calm now sitting beside me at this event. But boy you should see him at home, in the field or playing with the kids! I love this breed, but I know that it is not the dog for everyone.

Some of the reasons "I chose Tollers" after many months of research and fell in love with this breed is because it is not a couch potato. I was looking for a dog with high intelligence; one that would be a companion, but would also think for itself. I was looking for a dog that could keep up with all my activities and still have lots of get up and go at the end of the day. I was looking for a dog that would challenge me and my training abilities. What I got was just that!

This may not be what others or you are looking for. You should consider the whole breed ... not just one dog you see in a situation where they may not be themselves - have been trained to be calm and responsive. Young Tollers do have high energy, which has to be channeled in constructive ways OR you will not achieve the calm dog you see sitting here with me! You'll see this breed can be mischievous, wild, or even "take over the household" ... not a loving companion.

This breed has more simple zest and joy for life than most. It wholly involves itself in everything it does whether stealing from the counter, breaking ice to get the bird, or curling up on the couch. Everything is done 100%!

"You can be a Toller Owner OR you can be Owned by a Toller. This breed is NOT just a dog .. they are a Life--style"

People who are looking for a small version of a Golden or Lab in ob/field or hunting work will find a major difference in the personalities of this breed. Tollers have a "spark." They are ardent observers of life and as young dogs are easily distracted. While they learn quickly, they also bore quickly. Training sessions must be kept short and light, fun and challenging.

Puppy selection from a litter is usually still up to the breeder. Some will allow potential owners to come and select an individual puppy. Other breeders listen and learn from the owner what they want and expect from their Toller puppy; study their pups and during the eight weeks of early life select the individual puppy for each home.



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The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever has broken free of the constraints of the hunting technique for which it's named. Today the Toller is multifaceted. You get the ideal dog ... a retriever, a hunter, a loyal watchdog, a competition dog and a wonderful loving pet all rolled into one!

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Top 10 Reasons to NOT get a Toller

10. **Shedding and Mess**
Tollers do blow their coat seasonally, and they are dogs who like to swim and roll and wallow. They are not a dog for the fastidious or the allergic.
9. **Prey Drive**
If you don't want your cat chased, this may not be the dog for you. The chasing will be all in fun, but it is likely to happen.
8. **Not Guard Dogs**
Tollers are generally wary of strangers and will not stand up to them. They will not guard you or your house.
7. **The "Scream!"**
Tollers have a penetrating scream which they produce to indicate excitement and eagerness. To the uninitiated, this can sound like the dog is being fed into a wood chipper; it is high pitched, frantic and loud.
6. **Drive**
Tollers are a hunting breed, and are bred to be working dogs. They have a fanatical drive to work, and will retrieve until your arm is ready to fall off.
5. **Not everyone's best friend**
Most Tollers will greet strangers, but generally reserve true enthusiasm for their family and special people.
4. **Did you say no?**
Tollers are generally too smart to engage in out and out dominance battles. Instead they sense power vacuums, and exploit them. If you are unable to be firm (kind, but firm) about the rules of your household, and to enforce them consistently, you will find that the ruler of your house has four legs and is red.
3. **Sensitive**
Tollers are physically and emotionally sensitive. You have to be careful with how much pressure you apply in training.
2. **Smart**
This is a dog with brains to spare. They need to be challenged and engaged by their work, or they get bored and stop paying attention. Keeping all that intelligence focused and busy is a big challenge. All Toller owners must be willing to do basic obedience training. Most are involved in advanced training activities: hunting/field, agility, flyball, tracking, etc.
1. **High Maintenance**
The Toller is an energetic dog, and needs plenty of physical exercise and mental stimulation. A bored Toller with excess energy will find another outlet for their drive, and the results are often destructive. If you don't have time to give this breed at least an hour of exercise a day, every day, with plenty of swimming and fetching, look elsewhere.

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Top 10 Reasons to get a Toller

10. **Red Coat**

The perfect dog for red-head enthusiasts! Their natural drip-dry coat, is low maintenance. Rinse them off and they are ready to go.

9. **Easily Motivated**

Food, toys, anything that moves can be used to engage the Toller. Many are eager to please. All are goal oriented.

8. **Watchdog**

Keen watch-dog abilities - their bark may be more than enough to scare away a burglar. Then thankfully, they are not barking at other times.

7. **Communicators**

Tollers will let you know what they want. There is no ambiguity. They have the ability to communicate in many ways with us humans - with their eyes, vocalizations, and body language.

6. **Natural hunter**

Tollers were bred to hunt and most are born with a good nose and the instinct to find and retrieve birds. Some Tollers also have the instinct to toll naturally - dance on the shore like a fox and lure in waterfowl. Once trained, the Toller can be a great asset to your hunting party.

5. **Sporting Companion**

Tollers love to work with people that love to work with them. They

will be your best friend in the field, agility ring, obedience ring, etc.

4. **Joie de Vivre**

World's best mood-lifter! Tollers are exploding with life and enthusiasm. If you have a Toller to toss a toy at you, and then do a flying pounce and come bouncing back for another toss, you just have to share their joy.

3. **Health**

Tollers are generally healthy dogs. There are tests that can be done for the known health problems. Because the community is so small, most Toller breeders work hard with each other to breed healthy puppies.

2. **Versatile**

The Toller is happy to be wherever their people are - whether that is in the conformation ring, hunting, watching a movie, etc. They are able to go from couch potato to bounding retriever in mere seconds. They like new experiences and are easy to take traveling.

1. **Highly Intelligent**

Tollers learn wicked fast and they remember things that are important to them. They will never cease to amaze you. When your Toller looks into your eyes, you can see their intelligence and you know they love you (or maybe they are hungry, or want outside, or you've hidden the ball again.....). There is never a dull moment with a Toller.

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The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club (USA) holds the belief that sporting breed dogs, such as the Toller, should demonstrate the basic instincts and traits necessary to adequately execute the tasks for which they were bred. The founding board of directors and membership established a precedent, that to be awarded a club championship title, a Toller must show that it still has these basic skills.

In the late 1980's the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club (USA) instituted its own test designed to evaluate the innate working abilities of the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever (Toller). The name of this test was the Natural Instinct Test. The purpose of the test was to establish that a dog possessed retrieving instincts; "to reveal the presence or absence of innate ability, not the strength of that ability or the dog's trainability." The test was later renamed the Basic Retrieving and Tolling (BRT) Test in order to clarify that some training was required, although the purpose of the test remained the same. Most of the entrants would be young dogs with very little training.

While the BRT satisfies the field test requirement for obtaining a club championship title, the BRT is in itself not a breed title.

After the BRT program was placed in operation, the NSDTRC (USA) elected to create a further program which included a title. This was the initial Working Certificate program. This program has now evolved into a three-step program with the titles of Working Certificate (WC), Working Certificate Intermediate (WCI), and Working Certificate Excellent (WCX) awarded to the dogs that successfully complete the requirements at the respective levels.

What makes all of these tests unique is that each level - from the basic BRT thru the WCX - includes "Tolling." In the field the tolling dog runs, jumps, and plays along the shoreline in full view of a flock of ducks rafting in the center of the lake. Aided by the hunter (either in a natural blind or a man-made one) the dog appears and disappears as small sticks or a ball is thrown out into the open. The dog's playful actions arouse the curiosity of the ducks swimming offshore and they are lured within gunshot range. The Toller is subsequently sent out to retrieve the dead or wounded birds shot by the hunter.

Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia, Canada is considered the place of origin of the purebred dog officially known as the Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever.

There is no authentic record of the development of the Toller, but present day thinking is that the basic stock was the red decoy dog, probably brought to Nova Scotia with the early settlers from Europe. Crosses with other breeds: possibly spaniel and setter-type dogs; retriever-type dogs; and farm collie, produced today's Toller. Originally known as the Little River Duck Dog after the District of Yarmouth County, or as a Yarmouth Toller, the Toller has bred true for generations and was granted official breed status by the Canadian Kennel Club in 1945, when fifteen were registered.

For a number of years Tollers were seldom seen outside of Nova Scotia, but today they are spread all across Canada, the United States, as well as Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

A few Tollers were introduced into the United States in the 1960's, but it wasn't until the late 1970's and early 1980's that serious breeders became interested. The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever Club (USA) was formed in October 1984, to promote the interest of the Toller, and to safeguard its future in the United States.

HISTORY OF THE NOVA SCOTIA DUCK TOLLING RETRIEVER



The NSDTRC (USA) realizes that this requirement cannot be carried over to the American Kennel Club's Championship, however, it feels strongly that all Tollers should have these innate working abilities, and encourages all Tollers to prove them by passing an approved field test.

Today's Toller is multi-faceted. You get the ideal dog ... a retriever, a hunter, a loyal watchdog, a competition dog and a wonderful loving pet all rolled into one!

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"Tolling" is a Middle English word meaning to "lure or decoy game"

To the hunter, this means to draw the waterfowl within range by using the playful action of a tolling dog, much as a fox will lure ducks within range. The curiosity of the waterfowl as they watch the appearance and disappearance of the red dog's playful actions along a shore line causes them to swim in close to shore to more closely observe the dog.

The Toller becomes a living decoy. Decoy dogs were used in Europe to lure ducks into nets, and as hunting companions since the 17th century, and in eastern North America from Chesapeake Bay to the Maritimes.

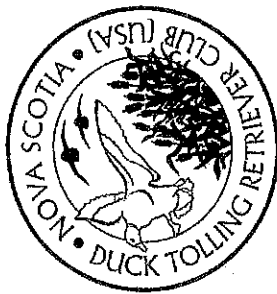


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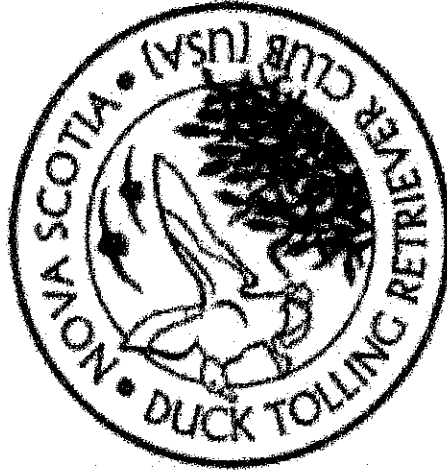



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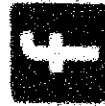
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Developed in the early 19th century to toll, lure, and retrieve waterfowl. The playful action of the Toller retrieving a stick or a ball along the shoreline arouses the curiosity of the ducks offshore. They are lured within gunshot range, and the dog is sent out to retrieve the dead or wounded birds.

This medium sized, powerful, compact, balanced dog is the smallest of the retriever breeds. The Toller's attitude and bearing suggest strength with a high degree of agility. He is alert, determined, and quick, with a keen desire to work and please.