

Bearded Collie Breed Standard

Last updated February 2014

A Breed Standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. From time to time certain conditions or exaggerations may be considered to have the potential to affect dogs in some breeds adversely, and judges and breeders are requested to refer to the Breed Watch section of the Kennel Club website <http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/services/public/breed/watch> for details of any such current issues. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as undesirable or highly undesirable it is strongly recommended that it should not be rewarded in the show ring.

General Appearance

Lean active dog, longer than it is high in an approximate proportion of 5 to 4, measured from point of chest to point of buttock. Bitches may be slightly longer. Though strongly made, should show plenty of daylight under body and should not look too heavy. Bright, enquiring expression is a distinctive feature.

Characteristics

Alert, lively, self-confident and active.

Temperament

Steady, intelligent working dog, with no signs of nervousness or aggression.

Head and Skull

Head in proportion to size. Skull broad, flat and square, distance between stop and occiput being equal to width between orifices of ears. Muzzle strong and equal in length to distance between stop and occiput. Whole effect being that of a dog with strength of muzzle and plenty of brain room. Moderate stop. Nose large and square, generally black but normally following coat colour in blues and browns. Nose and lips of solid colour without spots or patches. Pigmentation of lips and eye rims follows nose colour.

Eyes

Toning with coat colour, set widely apart and large, soft and affectionate, not protruding. Eyebrows arched up and forward but not so long as to obscure eyes.

Ears

Of medium size and drooping. When alert, ears lift at base, level with, but not above, top of skull, increasing apparent breadth of skull.

Mouth

Teeth large and white. Jaws strong with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite preferred, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Level bite tolerated but undesirable.

Neck

Moderate length, muscular and slightly arched.

Forequarters

Shoulders sloping well back. Legs straight and vertical with good bone, covered with shaggy hair all round. Pasterns flexible without weakness.

Body

Length of back comes from length of ribcage and not that of loin. Back level and ribs well sprung but not barrelled. Loin strong and chest deep, giving plenty of heart and lung room.

Hindquarters

Well muscled with good second thighs, well bent stifles and low hocks. Lower leg falls at right angle to ground and, in normal stance, is just behind a line vertically below point of buttocks.

Feet

Oval with soles well padded. Toes arched and close together, well covered with hair, including between pads.

Tail

Set low, without kink or twist, and long enough for end of bone to reach at least point of hock. Carried low with an upward swirl at tip whilst standing or walking, may be extended at speed. Never carried over back. Covered with abundant hair.

Gait/Movement

Supple, smooth and long-reaching, covering ground with minimum of effort.

Coat

Double with soft, furry, and close undercoat. Outer coat flat, harsh, strong and shaggy, free from woolliness and curl, though slight wave permissible. Length and density of hair sufficient to provide a protective coat and to enhance shape of dog, but not enough to obscure natural lines of body. Coat must not be trimmed in any way. Bridge of nose sparsely covered with hair slightly longer on side just to cover lips. From cheeks, lower lips and under chin, coat increases in length towards chest, forming typical beard.

Colour

Slate grey, reddish-fawn, black, blue, all shades of grey, brown and sandy with or without white markings. Never merle/dapple. When white occurs it appears on foreface, as a blaze on skull, on tip of tail, on chest, legs and feet and, if round the collar, roots of white hair should not extend behind shoulder. White should not appear above hocks on outside of hindlegs. Slight tan markings are acceptable on eyebrows, inside ears, on cheeks, under root of tail and on legs where white joins main colour.

Size

Ideal height: dogs: 53-56 cms (21-22 ins); bitches: 51-53 cms (20-21 ins). Overall quality and proportions should be considered before size but excessive variations from the ideal height should be discouraged.

Faults

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

Note

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.