

Breed presentation from UK



THERE IS ONE BREED CLUB for the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier in the UK with a membership of 900± families around the world. Activities are held for both pet owners and those who enjoy showing dogs from fun days and shows to occasional grooming workshops, training and health seminars, etc. There are regular Judges training seminars as well. We have several publications besides our Bulletin and Yearbook. Our much acclaimed web site is: www.wheaten.org.uk

IN 2007, 324 PUPPIES WERE REGISTERED with the Kennel Club. There were 10 imports - 8 from Ireland and 2 from Sweden. With the relaxation of the UK's quarantine regulations, some breeders are using European stud dogs. A ten year average for puppies born is 303 - the numbers born per year have remained relatively stable. Not all Wheatens born in the UK are registered with the Kennel Club.

THE CLUB KEEPS A PUPPY WAITING LIST. Prospective owners who have had our information leaflet on the Wheaten and have visited an experienced owner to meet a Wheaten, can send in a form registering their interest in Wheaten ownership, either for a puppy or an older dog. A breeder who has been a Club member for at least a year can request names from the Puppy List. They then do not need to advertise their puppies. There are various commercial websites where litters can be advertised, including one run by the Kennel Club. Whilst there can be no guarantees, prospective owners are advised to buy puppies through the Club system rather than newspaper & website adverts, as they can be assured that they are buying from responsible breeders.

THE KENNEL CLUB will not normally register puppies from a bitch after her eighth birthday nor from a mating before the bitch is one year old. Only a maximum of 6 litters may be registered. Our Club suggests that a bitch should be 2 years old before she has puppies or at least have had her third season. Mating of a bitch on consecutive seasons is discouraged.

THE SCWT CLUB OF GB RECOMMENDS EYE TESTING, hip scoring and blood testing (for normal kidney function) of both sire and dam. It is also recommended that puppies are blood and eye tested before going to their new owners. We don't appear to have any eye or hip problems, but it is Club policy to continue monitoring the situation.

IN THE 1980S RENAL DYSPLASIA (PNP) was identified as an inheritable breed problem. With the help of Liverpool and Glasgow Veterinary schools, recommendations for blood testing of breeding adults and of litters were drawn up. The names of the parents of Wheatens proven by post mortem to have died of RD are published in the Club Bulletin & Yearbook. Although the mode of inheritance was

not known, in order to control RD we were advised to treat it as a recessive gene and producers of RD, their close relatives & progeny were withdrawn from further breeding. With the co-operation of most breeders, cases of RD are relatively rare.

ALTHOUGH ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF WHEATENS in the UK have been confirmed as affected by protein losing problems to date (fewer than a dozen), there is concern here about the possibility of an increase in the number of cases. Names of Wheatens proven to have died of PLE/PLN and those of Wheatens considered by the experts to have sufficient veterinary evidence that they are suffering from PLE/PLN are published annually.

A RESEARCH PROJECT is taking place at the Royal Veterinary College to identify an early laboratory test for PLE. Confirming PLE at present requires a biopsy or endoscopy: both are invasive and are only done when the disease is suspected: i.e. symptoms have developed. The pANCA (perinuclear anti-neutrophilic cytoplasmic antibody) test uses a small blood sample. The theory is that a positive pANCA test may be an indicator of future problems in the gut such as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and/or PLE. (Positive pANCA results can also occur for other reasons.) Blood samples are also tested for albumin level since a below-normal value can be an indicator of kidney problems and thus be of concern.

189 WHEATENS, aged from 2 upwards were tested last year. 39 Wheatens were pANCA positive: however just one of these had a low albumin level. The project will continue over the next 18+ months monitoring Wheatens whose owners have volunteered their dogs (with both negative and positive pANCA results) to continue to be tested. If any pANCA positive Wheatens develop signs of IBD or PLE, this may help confirm a link between pANCA results and the later development of protein losing disease. The identification of a non-invasive test as an early indicator of PLE would be of great benefit to Wheatens everywhere as management by diet and medication would give a reasonable quality of, and hopefully prolong, life. However, as with any research project, it will be some considerable time before an answer is known.

AS A RESULT of the Club's continued focus on health matters, Wheatens in the UK have a comparatively low incidence of the above problems.

A PUREBRED DOG Health Survey was conducted by the Kennel Club/British Small Animal Veterinary Association. The two main causes of death for Wheatens were cancer and old age and the two most common problems involved skin and ears. The report can be seen on the Kennel Club's website: www.thekennelclub.org.uk/item/570 and click on Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier.

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