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**Latest edition written and compiled by Kitty Korth for the ABdFC**

*With many thanks to: Arden Shaw, Charlene Berstler and Sally Terroux for their articles. Lyn St Clair artwork, courtesy of and sole property of Kathleen Kane.*

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**Special thanks to [Lyn St. Clair](#) , the artist of the lovely Bouvier artwork found throughout the ABdFC's *The Beginner's Guide to the Bouvier des Flandres* and Kathleen Kane for allowing the ABdFC use of this artwork for publication of the ABdFC's *The***

***Beginner's Guide to the Bouvier des Flandres***

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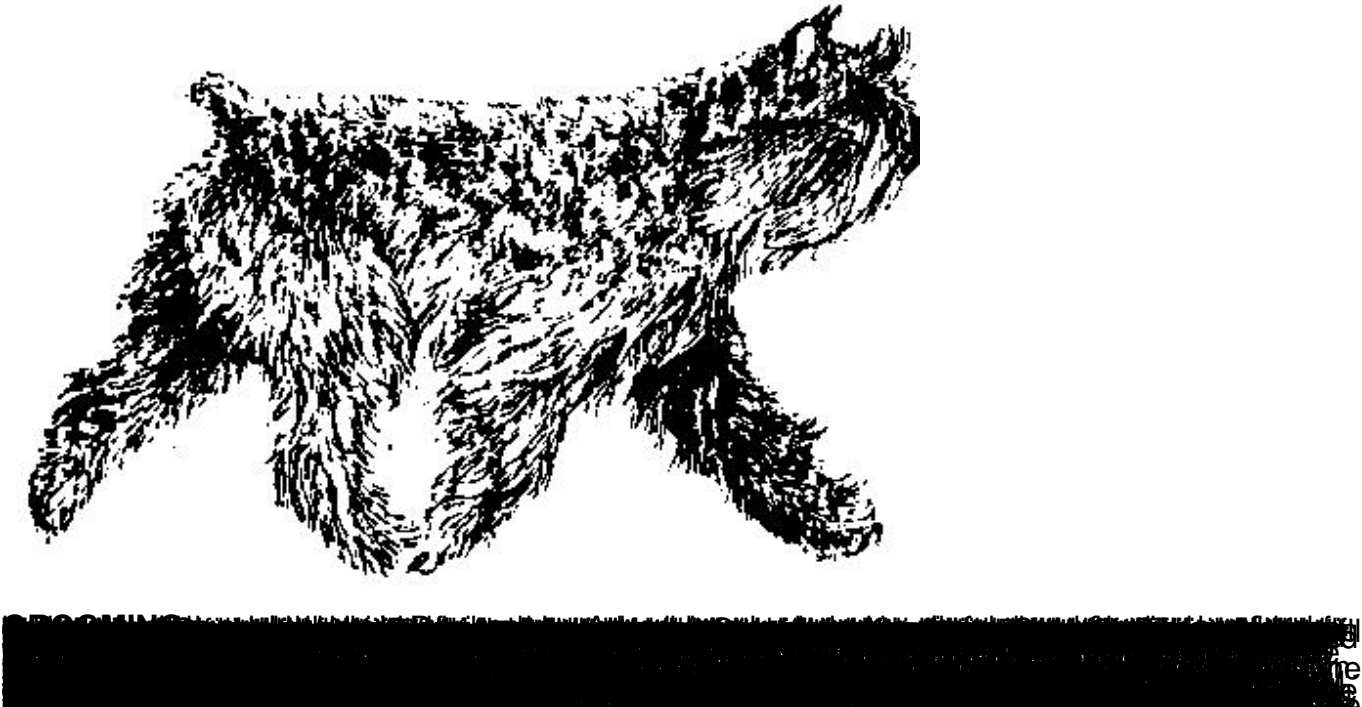
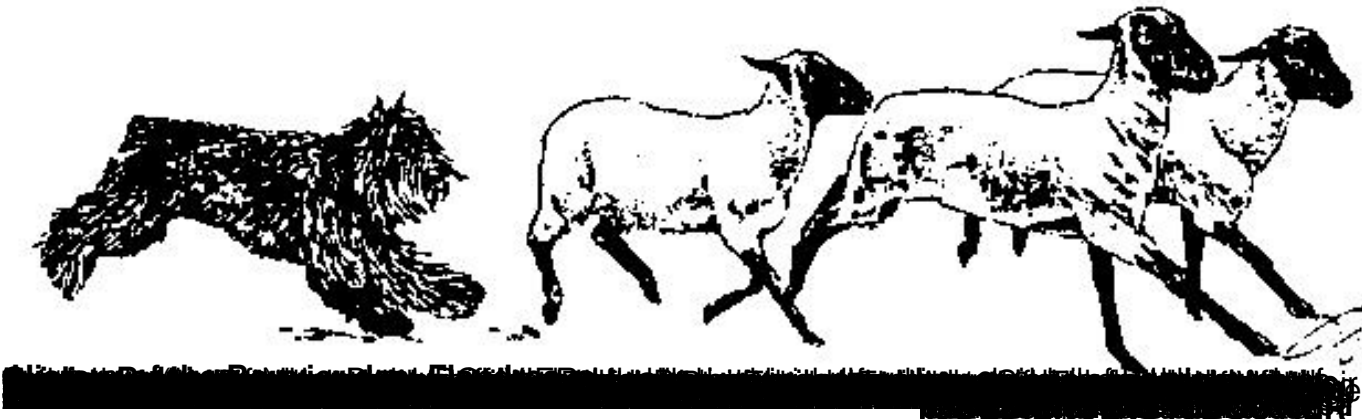
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# Beginner's Guide to the Bouvier

Last Updated Friday, 14 April 2017 21:11

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Name	Vaccination	Symptoms	Treatment	Notes
Canine Distemper	Yes: at 8, 15 & 16 wks of age (with 8 months of age)	Fever, cough, runny nose, diarrhea, eye inflammation	Supportive care, antibiotics, anti-nausea, anti-diarrheal	Can be fatal; highly contagious.

Hepatitis	Yes:
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same as above

Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite	Fasting, fluids	Supportive care, antibiotics
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Can be fatal; viral disease; affects liver, intestinal tract, and eyes.

Leptospirosis	Yes:
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same as above

Fever (high), thirst, vomiting.

Can cause skin spots.

Antibiotics, fluids & spinal vaccines, pain medication.

Can be fatal; bacteria related disease affecting liver, gastrointestinal tract and kidneys.



same as above

Vomiting, diarrhea	Fluid & antibiotic	Diarrhea, colic, pale gums, depression, no appetite.
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Can be serious for puppies; call veterinarian immediately; highly contagious.

Coronavirus	Yes:
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same as above



Vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, depression	Flies & antiparasitic	Antibiotics, canine vaccines.
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Can be serious for puppies; call veterinarian immediately; highly contagious.

Rabies	Yes; At 16 weeks	Very aggressive, bloody nose, biting	Required by counties to be given	Required by counties to be given; fines for animal owners
Bordetella	Yes	Dry hacking cough, coughing spells	Antibiotics, fluids, kennel hygiene	Antibiotics, fluids, kennel hygiene; give vaccine
Gastric Torsion	No	Stomach is swollen & painful	Surgery	Emergency case, often fatal
Giardia	No	Diarrhea, often frequent	Medication	Single cell intestinal parasite, sometimes spread by feces
Coccidia	No	Diarrhea	Medication	Single cell intestinal parasite, many species, often spread by feces
Tapeworms	No	Increase in appetite, diarrhea	Medication	Segments of tapeworm may pass out of the anus
Roundworms	No	Vomiting, diarrhea, weakness	Medication	Puppies often coughing & sneezing, worms deprive nutrients
Hookworms	No	Bloody diarrhea, weakness	Medication	Common in warm, moist territories, severe in puppies
Heartworms	No	No symptoms until late	Medication for prevention	Prevention through vaccination, loss of appetite, weakness

## **WHAT ABOUT A RESCUE DOG?**

**By Charlene Berstler**

Many individuals would rather not buy a puppy because of house-breaking, chewing, etc., but are interested in an older dog. What about rescue?

**DON'T get a rescue dog if:**

\*You don't have the interest in providing extra large doses of love and attention.

\*You are too specific about color, age, sex, previous training (or lack of), etc. Rescue may never be able to place a dog with you that meets all your specifics.

Rescue makes every attempt to provide the new owner with a sound, healthy dog. Special

emphasis is placed on temperament and health. Some dogs have been physically abused and need extra patience to learn that you aren't going to hurt them. Some dogs have been left uncared for and need severe haircuts to clean up their coat and let it grow as it should. Some dogs have other special needs. Some dogs just need a new home and have little or no problems.

**ALL rescue dogs:**

\*Must not be left tied out.

\*Must have regular veterinary care.

\* If not trained, should be worked in obedience to enable them to be good citizens in your environment.

\* Must be returned to Rescue if they cannot be kept.

Rescue participation can be heart-wrenching, however, it is always very rewarding. Finding a large dog who is matted to the point you have to really know the breed to see what he is, who is afraid of your hand even when you are holding a treat, who doesn't have the vaguest idea

what a lead is, and one who is severely underweight can make you want to cry ... BUT when he looks at you with those big wonderful brown eyes, wags his tail, and gives you a big Bouvier kiss, you know how minor the things are that you see as wrong. With love, care, and time you and this dog will become great friends and he will never feel unloved again (and you won't either)! Experience shows that once you win a rescue dog's trust, they are exceedingly loyal pets who bond very tightly with their new owners. Adopting a rescue dog takes a special person, because these are very special Bouviers.

## HOW TO READ A PEDIGREE

A PEDIGREE (the family tree of a dog) follows a universally used format and contains a great deal of information. It usually reflects at least three generations, but may cover as many as

there are room for on the page. The basic format is:

**GRAND SIRE**

(gran

**SIRE** (father of the dog)

**GRAND DAM** (grandmother of the dog on the father's side)

**THE DOG**

**GRAND SIRE** (grandfather of the dog on the mother's side)

**DAM** (mother of the dog)

**GRAND DAM** (grandmother of the dog on the mother's side)

Only titles issued by the American Kennel Club will appear on their official pedigrees. However, most breeders prepare their own to give purchasers a more complete picture of the dog's heritage. The pedigree may contain additional information, such as birth (whelping) dates, country of origin, registration numbers, colors, titles earned/awarded.

The variety of titles that may accompany a dog's name can look like alphabet soup to the untrained eye. Some are intended to precede a dog's name, some follow it. Here are what the letters mean:

**BIS** - Best in Show. Awarded to a dog judged best of all participating dogs at an all breed show.



**BISS** - Best in Specialty Show. Awarded to the dog judged best of all participating dogs at a show of one breed.

**BPIS** - Best Puppy In Show (Canada). An award to a dog less than one year old judged best of all participating puppies in a specific show.

**CD** - Companion Dog. A title given a dog that successfully completes Novice Obedience by obtaining three passing scores (170 out of a possible 200) at three AKC or CKC licensed dog shows.

**CDX** - Companion Dog Excellent. An advanced obedience title given successfully Qualifying in Open Obedience class three times at AKC or CKC licensed dog shows.

**OTCH** - Obedience Trial Champion. A title a dog earns by winning the number of first places and points in competition as specified by current obedience regulations at AKC/CKC dog shows.

**CGT** - Canine Good Citizen Tested. Successfully passed the test to evaluate temperament and behavior sanctioned by the American Kennel Club.

**CH** - Champion. A title awarded to a dog that has acquired the minimum number of points (15 - US-, 10 - Canada) to attain championship level by defeating specific numbers of dogs under at least three different judges at licensed AKC or CKC shows. (This title may be preceded by Amer. CH or Dutch CH, etc. indicating in which country the title was obtained.)

**CQN** - Certificate of Natural Qualities. Awarded by the International Canine Federation.

(Europe, exc. England) Title awarded for completion of a breed working test as a prerequisite for a conformation championship.

**HIC** or **HCT** - Herding Instinct Certified or Herding Capability Tested. Title offered by The

American Herding Breed Association certifying the presence of natural instinct to herd livestock.

**HT** - Herding Tested. A title carried by demonstrating the ability to herd livestock on a prescribed course at two AKC licensed Herding Tests. **PT** - Pretrial Tested. A more advanced herding test title. **HS** -

Herding Started

-.

**HI**

- Herding Intermediate.

**HX**

- Herding Excellent.

**HC**

- Herding Champion. More advanced herding titles earned on progressively more intricate

courses at AKC licensed Herding Trials.

**KNVP** - abbrev. for Royal Dutch Police Dog Assoc. (Holland). The dog holds the Dutch Police Trial Certificate. ('Met lof' means 'with honors')

**OFA** - Certified to have dysplasia-free hips, after two years of age, by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals.

**ROM** or **POM** - Register of Merit or Producer of Merit. Award offered by a breed club to dogs and bitches who produce a certain number of titled offspring.

**SchH** - abbrv. for Schutzhund. (Germany) Title for German Protection Dog in levels I, II and III.

FH indicates advanced Schutzhund tracking title. Neither the Dutch or American Kennel Clubs recognize these titles. In Belgium and France the designation is IPO I through III. In America, there are breed working organizations which sanction these title events.

**TT** - Temperament Tested. Successfully passed the test to evaluate temperament balance, given by a representative of the American Temperament Test Society.

**TDI** - Therapy Dog. A title given by Therapy Dog International to dogs who pass a temperament (CGC) test and do work in situations that provide therapy to humans.

**TD** - Tracking Dog. A title earned by a dog passing an AKC or CKC tracking test. **TDX** -

Tracking Dog Excellent. A title earned by a dog that has passed advance requirements on an

AKC or CKC tracking course.

**UD** - Utility Dog. An advanced title a dog earns by winning certain minimum scores in Utility

Obedience classes at a specific number of AKC or CKC licensed obedience trials. When

combined with the TD or the TDX, the designation would be UDT or UDTX.

**WDX** - Working Dog Excellent. A title awarded for weight-pulling proficiencies. **WRB** - Well

Rounded Bouvier. Award offered by a breed club for obtaining a certain number and variety of

titles.

## **Selecting Your Bouvier Puppy**

**by Arden Shaw**

Choosing a puppy of any particular breed requires a combination of instinct, skill and breed knowledge. If possible, consult with someone with experience with Bouviers -- not just owning one or two, but trainers and handlers as well as breeders. For the sake of your family and in the best interest of your future family member, **NEVER** let this be an impulse or emotional



decision.

Let's assume that you have done your research into known characteristics of the breed, understand the Bouvier's size, grooming and exercise needs, strengths and bad habits and have decided that this is absolutely the right breed for you. And you have researched different breeders. (Referrals are made from dog clubs, veterinarians, professional dog groomers, and other Bouvier owners.)

Picking a breeder is as important as picking your puppy. A dedicated breeder will be well recommended by others, not hesitate to answer your questions, be most willing to share information. This is someone you may need to stay in touch with for some time to come.

Re-examine your reasons for wanting a Bouvier – Family companionship? Obedience competition? Herding and farm work? Schutzhund or police work? Therapy work? Search and rescue? Conformation showing? Several of the above? Consider asking the breeder you visit if an expert in your field can accompany you to visit the litter.

No matter how you and your Bouvier plan to spend your life together, make yourself a checklist of priorities. What characteristics are most and least important to you? If color and price are more important than temperament and trainability, you may want to reconsider this purchase altogether.

There are those who will say that working instinct is most important. To some, it is. But you will have to decide. Most Bouvier lovers enjoy them for their natural instincts as family companions and protectors, not what they can be taught to do. Whether exhibited in the show ring or trained in a working skill, a Bouvier still spends the majority of its life being a family member. So, good social skills and house manners are critical.

In addition to having done your homework, let us also assume that the Bouvier litter you are selecting from is: 1) **HEALTHY** (supported by the breeder's written guarantee of good health and freedom from hip dysplasia and the fact that there may be many aged relatives still around), and 2) **STRUCTURALLY SOUND** (breeders who breed for working or show quality Bouviers and can support this by introducing their titled dogs and by producing pedigrees rich in accomplished relatives, not just a champion or two), and 3) **MENTALLY WELL BALANCED** (neither too shy or extremely aggressive, and intelligent). Bigger is not always better or healthier. Most breeders aim for balance in size and longevity and freedom from hereditary

diseases.

Please keep in mind that there are **NO** perfect puppies or dogs (just as there are no **PERFECT** owners). What you should try to achieve is the best match of puppy personality to owner wants and family lifestyle.

Experts agree that temperament is at least 50 percent influenced by genetics and those first critical weeks with the dam, the balance is affected by environment and training, i.e., life after the breeder. Meet one or both of the parents and as many other relatives as possible.

Most litters will contain one or more assertive, vocal puppies; one who seems happiest playing by himself or responding to the assertiveness of others but is never the instigator; and many in between.

In addition to scrupulous journal-keeping from birth to the time they go home, many breeders will aptitude/temperament test the litter at about seven weeks. This gives additional insight into placement in the proper homes based on puppy character and family lifestyle.

A puppy who rarely makes eye contact may not make the best obedience dog; in fact, an extremely shy pup may be difficult to train, if at all.

A puppy who cannot calm himself after being stressed may have behavior problems later on, or may be destructive. A shy, quiet puppy will most likely not fit in with an active, boisterous family. If withdrawn or fearful as a pup, he may become a fearful, even biting, adult. A puppy who needs less sleep than his littermates, is always exploring and getting into things, may be extremely intelligent and need a busy, working life (e.g., daily running, flyball, serious obedience, herding, etc.). It is necessary to channel this puppy's excess energy and wonderful curiosity or he will simply be a pest!

If selecting for conformation, study basic good structure and movement for the breed. One book that well illustrates this is Rachel Page Elliott's *Dogsteps*. Familiarize yourself with the breed Standard of the American Kennel Club. Ask the breeder to critique the puppy's parents and grandparents. (A mistake commonly made in breeding is to look ONLY at the parents; every dog is the reflection of an entire genetic pool in a line, not simply the phenotype (looks of two parents.) Consider their strengths AND their weaknesses and what is apparent in the

puppies at this age. (Remember, no perfect dogs.) Puppies are commonly evaluated at eight weeks, just prior to going to their new homes. It is helpful if the puppies are trimmed. Neck, back and rear should be clipped short enough to see the outline and movement.

Evaluate head shape and proportion, jaw composition, bite (front, side occlusion, detention), length of neck and shoulder layback, coat density, length of leg elements, parallel hocks when standing, tailset, angulation in the rear, and width of hips compared to shoulder, spring of ribs and coupling (length of loin), and natural easy movement. Other than bites, the correctness of these attributes will usually carry through into adulthood. Carriage and self-confidence are extremely important to the success of the show dog. Look for these as well in the potential show pup.

Areas that vary more dramatically as the puppy grows up are: jaw width, coat texture, forechest, topline, stifle bend, some rear angulation and true movement, and side movement. If a dog toes out as a puppy, this could correct when the chest drops and fully matures. Beware of one which is a little too perfect in front as a youngster; he may toe in when the chest develops.

Color may change more than anything. The lightest puppy in the litter can turn to a black by two or three, and the eight-week-old black puppy may turn out to be a silver! So it's not wise to let color be too high of a priority in choosing your Bouvier.

There will be some variance by familial lines in individual attributes and the rates at which change occurs. Here again, the breeder can be a wealth of information.



One note about puppy assessments ... any evaluation of puppies is only good for the day on which it is done. Puppies change rapidly and at any given day the quality of one may appear better or worse than a littermate. The older the puppy, e.g., six months, twelve months, etc., the more accurate an evaluation can be made.

The selection of the correct puppy is an art. There may not even be the right puppy for you in a particular litter. The experienced breeder or other knowledgeable breed enthusiast can best advise you. A concerned breeder may select your puppy for you or suggest you wait for another litter. Don't be offended. Both you and the puppy you eventually adopt will have happier years together if the "match" is a good one! Your patience and scrutiny will be well rewarded!

**[THE STANDARD OF THE BOUVIER DES FLANDRES](#)**

**[ABdFC CODE OF ETHICS](#)**

## **SUGGESTED REFERENCE MATERIALS**

[The Illustrated Bouvier](#)

[The AKC Breed Standard](#)

## **MAGAZINES**

Pure-Bred Dogs/American Kennel Gazette

(919) 233-9780 - 24 hour subscription line

Dirty Beard Quarterly-ABdFC

## ***BOOKS***

The Art of Raising a Puppy-The Monks of New Skete

Bouvier des Flandres-by Claire McLean

Bouvier des Flandres, the Dogs of Flanders Field-by Jim Engel

Dog Steps-by Rachel Page Elliott

Don't Shoot the Dog-by Karen Prior

Everyday Dog-by Nancy Johnson

Mother Knows Best-by Carol Benjamin

Second Hand Dog-by Carol Benjamin

***TAPES***

Sirius Puppy Training Video-by Ian Dunbar

Training the Companion Dog-by Ian Dunbar

AKC breed tape of the Bouvier

[GENERAL EDUCATION PAGES](#)



