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NORWEGIAN GENETIC
RESOURCE CENTRE

NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY

Norwegian national heritage



NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY



Norwegian Buhund



Photo: Terje Lindstrøm

BREED ORIGIN AND HISTORY | The Norwegian Buhund is considered to be a direct descendant of the dogs used by the first settlers in Norway. Remains of spitz-type dogs have been found in the oldest archaeological sites. The breed's name is derived from the old Norwegian term "bu", which refers to such concepts as "farm", "hut" and "livestock", thus indicating the Buhund's original use as a farm and herding dog. It was used for herding cattle and small livestock, but also reindeer and pigs. In many areas of the country, every farm had its Buhund. The dogs often lived in the barn, and herded the animals when they were put to pasture in the daytime.

In the early 1900s, the Norwegian Buhund population rapidly declined, partially due to the import of foreign breeds that outcompeted the Buhund. Fortunately, the situation was taken seriously and a considerable effort was made to save this unique breed. Systematic registration, controlled breeding and participation at shows held by the Norwegian Kennel Club resulted in the breed's increasing popularity and formed the basis for the modern-day Buhund.

In the 1920s, Buhund shows were commonly held in connection with the state-run goat and sheep shows. These shows were surely important for the increasing interest in the Norwegian Buhund – as there were especially many active breeders in the

"sheep county" Rogaland in south-western Norway. In recent years, about 100-150 Norwegian Buhund puppies have been registered annually by the Norwegian Kennel Club. The Norwegian Buhund is thus a small-numbered breed, and preferably its numbers should increase in order to ensure sound and effective breeding efforts.

APPEARANCE | The Norwegian Buhund is a typical spitz dog, slightly below medium size. The Buhund is squarely built and has a dense, flat-lying coat. The ears are pointed and erect and their shape and size should harmonize with the head shape. The tail is carried firmly curled over the back. The Buhund is either wheaten or black. The wheaten variant can range from rather light to yellowish-red, with or without dark-tipped hairs. Clean and bright colour is preferred. The black variant should preferably be self-coloured, but white as a blaze, chest spot or collar and on the paws is acceptable. Eyes should be as dark as possible and harmonize with the overall appearance. Height at the withers is 43-47 cm for males and 41-45 cm for bitches. The weight should be in proportion to the dog's size.

UTILIZATION | The Norwegian Buhund was traditionally a herding dog, and is often preferably used to herd sheep, especially in large sheep drives. The breed is also used somewhat for hunting, e.g. in elk hunting. Due to its excellent learning abilities, the



Photo: Terje Lindstrøm



Photo: Terje Lindstrøm



Photo: Yvonne Nilsen

Buhund is now also being used for other purposes. Increasing numbers of Buhunds are distinguishing themselves at such disciplines as obedience and agility. In England, they are also being used as guide dogs and drug detection dogs – which says a lot about the breed's versatility and potential.

A Norwegian Buhund is a good, friendly family dog, and is usually good-natured and loyal. The Buhund is very active and needs a lot of exercise and stimulation. If not provided with sufficient daily challenges and activities, the Buhund will let you know – which is probably why the myth of a "yappy dog" arose. However, a satisfied Buhund is often a calm and devoted dog. (Source: Den norske hundeboka, Ulvund tekst & forlag)

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE NORWEGIAN BUHUND | The most important way of securing the future of the Norwegian Buhund is to further develop and maintain a large and viable breed population. Anyone already considering getting a smaller spitz dog can contribute to

this by choosing a Norwegian Buhund.

A canine semen bank has been established for all Norwegian dog breeds. The semen bank is being jointly developed by the various breed clubs, the Norwegian Kennel Club and the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre. The aim is to deposit semen from ten dogs of each of the seven native Norwegian breeds (in addition to the Norwegian Buhund, these are the Norwegian Elkhound Grey, the Norwegian Elkhound Black, the Norwegian Lundehund, the Halden Hound, the Hygen Hound and the Norwegian Hound). Preferably, the semen shall be stored for ten years and can be used, for example, in case of a sudden crisis within a specific breed or if there is a need for "old" genetic material in breeding.

If you are interested in more information about the Norwegian Buhund, please contact Norsk Buhund Klubb, c/o Norwegian Kennel Club, PO Box 163 Bryn, 0611 Oslo, Norway (phone: +47 21 60 09 00) or the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre, 1431 Ås, Norway (phone: +47 64 94 90 55).



Photo: Terje Lindstrøm

NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY



Norwegian Elkhound Black



Photo: Pål Asbjørn Kullerud

BREED ORIGIN AND HISTORY | The Norwegian Elkhound¹ Black is an old breed that developed from local spitz breeds in the areas along both sides of the Norwegian-Swedish border. It has existed as a separate breed since the mid-1800s.

The Black Norwegian Elkhound is a typical spitz-type dog and the smallest of the elkhounds. It is a calm, devoted dog that forms close bonds with family members. The breed has a fearless appearance and is mentally strong. These used to be highly valued traits in connection with close game encounters and bear hunting.

The Black Elkhound has proven to be especially suited as a leashed tracking dog. Through systematic selection the breed has become a specialist at this form of hunting.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Black Norwegian Elkhound was quite common, especially in the eastern, inland valleys of Norway. The breed was used for elk and bear hunting. After 1900, most elkhound breeding in Scandinavia focused on the Grey Norwegian Elkhound, while the Black Elkhound was increasingly neglected.

By the mid 1950s, the Black Elkhound population had dwindled considerably and the breed was close to extinction. However,

a few committed persons started breeding the best of the remaining dogs. This led to a gradual increase in numbers, and presently, between 90 and 150 Black Elkhound puppies are registered by the Norwegian Kennel Club each year. So after many years in obscurity, there is now a viable population of Black Elkhounds in Norway, even if the breed still is the Grey Elkhound's "little brother".

APPEARANCE | The Black Norwegian Elkhound is a typical spitz-type dog and the smallest of the elkhounds. It has a well-balanced, squarely-built body, erect and pointed ears, a tail that is firmly curled over the back, and a shiny black, short-haired coat. Some white markings on the chest and toes are acceptable. Black Elkhounds have a proud posture and are very muscular and athletic.

Height at the withers is 46-49 cm for males and 43-46 cm for bitches.

UTILIZATION | The breed is generally very good-natured, but can also be quite headstrong if permitted. Black Elkhounds can bark quite a bit, especially when kept in a kennel or on a leash. Black Elkhounds are often said to have a more stubborn nature than the Grey Elkhound, but this is mainly a matter of how they are trained and



Photo: Aite Helland

treated. Black Elkhounds love to exercise and are easy to train. Regular walks out in nature while the dog is still a puppy provide the foundation for a great outdoor and hunting companion later on. A Black Elkhound rarely runs off if it has the chance, but naturally there are individual variations. The breed is mainly used as a leashed tracking dog, primarily for elk hunting.

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE NORWEGIAN ELKHOUND BLACK | The most important way of securing the future of the Black Norwegian Elkhound is to further develop and maintain a large and viable breed population. Anyone already considering getting an elkhound can thus contribute to this by choosing a Black Norwegian Elkhound.

A canine semen bank has been established for all Norwegian dog breeds. The semen bank is being jointly developed by the various breed clubs, the Norwegian

Kennel Club and the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre. The aim is to deposit semen from ten dogs of each of the seven native Norwegian breeds (in addition to the Norwegian Elkhound Black, these are the Norwegian Buhund, the Norwegian Elkhound Grey, the Norwegian Lundehund, the Halden Hound, the Hygen Hound and the Norwegian Hound). Preferably, the semen shall be stored for ten years and can be used, for example, in case of a sudden crisis within a specific breed or if there is a need for "old" genetic material in breeding.

If you are interested in more information about the Black Norwegian Elkhound, please contact Norske Elghundklubbens Forbund, c/o Norwegian Kennel Club, PO Box 163 Bryn, 0611 Oslo, Norway, (phone: +47 21 60 09 00, website: www.elghundforbundet.no) or the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre, 1431 Ås, Norway (phone: +47 64 94 90 55).



Photo: Steinar Moen

¹Elk (Norwegian elg) = *Alces alces*, "moose" in North America.

NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY



Norwegian Elkhound Grey



Photo: Steinar Moen

BREED ORIGIN AND HISTORY | The type of dog represented by the Norwegian Elkhound¹ Grey can be traced back several millennia. It is an exceptionally versatile dog, and a highly cooperative hunting dog, especially for elk and bear hunting.

Norway formulated the first breed standard for the Grey Norwegian Elkhound in 1905, and thus got a head start on Sweden with regard to developing the breed. Since then, varying breed characteristics have been emphasised throughout the years. Today, it can be said that a uniform type has been developed.

The Grey Norwegian Elkhound has been the flagship of the native Norwegian dog breeds, and to this day the Grey Elkhound adorns the logo of the Norwegian Kennel Club. There is presently extensive cooperation between Norway, Sweden and Finland regarding the breed's conformation and hunting abilities. Furthermore, the Grey Norwegian Elkhound is also a popular breed in the USA.

In recent years, the Grey Norwegian Elkhound has become a natural part of family life – a fact that is reflected by the temperament of today's dogs. The Grey Elkhound is a sociable dog that is loyal to family members and extremely cooperative,

a trait that is clearly seen when hunting out in the woods. Fortunately, the myth that a good hunting dog should be fierce no longer prevails, and today's Grey Norwegian Elkhound is just like any other dog in its daily surroundings.

The Grey Norwegian Elkhound is the most popular elkhound breed in Norway. Its population has seemingly increased in step with the growing elk population, from 30 registered puppies per year in the 1920s, a few hundred in the 1930s to more than 700 by the 1950s. It is now the most popular international elkhound breed, with about 1000 registered puppies per year, and is found on five continents – the majority in Norway, Sweden, Finland and the USA.

APPEARANCE | The Grey Norwegian Elkhound has a proud posture, and should be lightly built without being slender. The breed should not be too heavy, and above all, must be squarely built.

The breed standard has changed very little since the first one was published. The standards are still the same, as can be seen in today's breeding goal: "specific emphasis on a dark mask, small ears, squarely-built, strong body, high-set tail that is firmly curled over the centre line, thick, grey coat with no sooty colours, well angulated and effortless



Photo: Vibeke Brath

movements". For males, the ideal size at the withers is 52 cm, for bitches 49 cm.

UTILIZATION | The Grey Norwegian Elkhound is highly esteemed as a big game dog, especially for elk hunting. The breed was earlier, and still is, used for bear hunting.

In Norway, Grey Elkhounds are used both as leashed and off-leash tracking dogs. The introduction of hunting trials significantly affected the selection of breeding dogs. The requirement for breeding dogs in Norway is having won a first prize (graded) at a hunting trial for males and a prize at a hunting trial for bitches.

To become a hunting champion, a dog must have achieved 3 first prizes (graded) at trials, of which one must be a two-day test. On such tests, the dog must at least win a prize one day and win a first prize the other.



Photo: Ellen Krogstad

In addition, the dog must have won a first prize at two shows.

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE NORWEGIAN ELKHOUND GREY | The Grey Norwegian Elkhound population is large and viable, so that the breed is not threatened like the other native Norwegian dog breeds. Nevertheless, it is important to make sure that the breed remains popular. Anyone already considering getting an elkhound can thus contribute to this by choosing a Grey Norwegian Elkhound.

A canine semen bank has been established for all Norwegian dog breeds. The semen bank is being jointly developed by the various breed clubs, the Norwegian Kennel Club and the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre. The aim is to deposit semen from ten dogs of each of the seven native Norwegian breeds (in addition to the Norwegian Elkhound Grey, these are the Norwegian Buhund, the Norwegian Elkhound Black, the Norwegian Lundehund, the Halden Hound, the Hygen Hound and the Norwegian Hound). Preferably, the semen shall be stored for ten years and can be used, for example, in case of a sudden crisis within a specific breed or if there is a need for "old" genetic material in breeding.

If you are interested in more information about the Grey Norwegian Elkhound, please contact Norske Elghundklubbens Forbund, c/o Norwegian Kennel Club, PO Box 163 Bryn, 0611 Oslo, Norway (phone: +47 21 60 09 00, website: www.elghundforbundet.no) or the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre, 1431 As, Norway (phone: +47 64 94 90 55).

¹Elk (Norwegian elg) = *Alces alces*, "moose" in North America.

NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY



Norwegian Lundehund



Photo: Steinar Moen

BREED ORIGIN AND HISTORY | The Norwegian Lundehund is an ancient dog breed that was used to hunt seabirds along most of the Norwegian coast. The breed name is a combination of the Norwegian words "lunde" (puffin, *Fratercula arctica*) and "hund", dog. Although the breed's exact age is not known, there are descriptions of the use of dogs for puffin hunting that are more than 400 years old.

The Lundehund was an important part of the livelihood of Norway's coastal communities. The dogs were able to enter narrow passageways on the steep cliffs and screes and retrieve the birds alive. Puffin meat was used as food, while the bird's feathers and down were used in pillows and blankets or exported.

In the 1850s, the use of nets to catch puffins was introduced. In addition, many fishing communities along the northern Norwegian coast were generally depopulated. As a result of these developments there was no longer much need for the Lundehund, and the breed's numbers dwindled.

However, in Måstad on the isolated island of Værøy, the local population of Lundehund and the hunting traditions linked to these dogs had been maintained. In the

years between the two World Wars, a few dogs were sent from Måstad to Mr. and Mrs. Christie in south-eastern Norway. The couple bred the dogs and the breed's numbers increased. During the Second World War, canine distemper nearly wiped out the entire Lundehund population on Værøy, but the breed was rescued by dogs sent north by the Christie's. Thereafter, canine distemper also hit the south-eastern part of Norway, and by the late 1950s the population of Lundehund in the region was almost wiped out. But Eleanor Christie did not give up, and in 1960 she received five dogs from the Måstad population. This time she involved additional breeders, and the Norwegian Lundehund was again saved from extinction.

APPEARANCE | The Norwegian Lundehund is a small spitz-type dog, standing 32 - 38 cm at the withers. Males are clearly heavier than bitches. Their body shape is rectangular, the dog thus being slightly longer than it is tall. The coat is usually brown with white markings. The hairs are of medium length, with a dark, smooth overcoat.

UNUSUAL ANATOMICAL CHARACTERISTICS | Due to a series of unusual anatomical characteristics, the



Photo: Gunn Tove Ormset

Norwegian Lundehund is of specific interest for breed conservation work. One of its anatomical peculiarities is that it has six toes on all feet. The front paws have five triple-jointed toes and one double-jointed toe. The extra toes all have well-developed muscles and are thus fully functional. The ears can be sealed by folding them forwards or backwards to protect the inner ear against dirt when the dog is crawling inside of narrow passageways. The dog's extraordinary agility is enabled by its unique shoulder and neck joints: whereas the forelegs can be moved sideways at a 90 degree angle, the head can be bent backwards along the dog's own spine. (Source: *Den norske hundeboka, Ulvund tekst & forlag*).

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE NORWEGIAN LUNDEHUND | The most important way of securing the future of the Norwegian Lundehund is to further develop and maintain a large and viable breed population. Anyone already considering getting a small companion dog can contribute to this by choosing a Norwegian Lundehund.

A canine semen bank has been established for all Norwegian dog breeds. The semen bank is being jointly developed by the various breed clubs, the Norwegian Kennel Club and the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre. The aim is to deposit semen from ten dogs of each of the seven native Norwegian breeds (in addition to the Norwegian Lundehund, these are the Norwegian Buhund, the Norwegian Elkhound Grey, the Norwegian Elkhound Black, the Halden Hound, the Hygen Hound and the Norwegian Hound). Preferably, the semen shall be stored for ten years and can be used, for example, in case of a sudden crisis within a specific breed or if there is a need for "old" genetic material in breeding.

If you are interested in more information about the Norwegian Lundehund, please contact Norsk Lundehund Klubb, c/o Norwegian Kennel Club, PO Box 163 Bryn, 0611 Oslo, Norway (phone: +47 21 60 09 00, website: <http://lundehund.no>) or the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre, 1431 Ås, Norway (phone: +47 64 94 90 55).



Photo: Archive

NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY



Halden Hound



Photo: Archive

BREED ORIGIN AND HISTORY | This Norwegian scent hound is named after the area of its origin: the city of Halden in southern Norway, right on the Swedish border. The Halden Hound was created there in the latter half of the 19th century by crossing foxhounds from England, Beagles and local scent hounds.

Early on, these breeding efforts gave a rather uniform type of scent hound, thus providing the basis for a new breed. However, there were always problems linked to the narrow breeding basis. An outbreak of canine parvovirus in 1931 and the Second World War nearly wiped out the Halden Hound, but a few committed individuals started breeding the dog again after the war. In 1952, the Halden Hound was approved as a separate breed. Thereupon, interest in the breed grew and numerous champions were made up. However, the breed's popularity started to dwindle from the mid-1950s, and has thus never been large in numbers.

Even though the breeding population always has been small, no considerable extent of hereditary diseases (such as HD) has ever been recorded in the breed.

In recent years, the number of Halden Hound puppies registered by the Norwe-

gian Kennel Club varied between 7 and 21 per year. This figure is considered to be threateningly low, and must be increased considerably if a viable future shall be ensured for the breed.

APPEARANCE | The Halden Hound is a medium-sized, rectangular dog, strongly built, but should not appear heavy. The head is medium-sized and the skull slightly domed. The occiput and stop are not very pronounced. Ears are medium high set and hanging. Rather long and strong neck. The tail extends approximately to the hock joint and is carried low. A dense undercoat is covered by a short, straight overcoat. Coat colour is usually white with black patches and tan shadings on head and legs. The desired height at the withers is 52-60 cm for males, 50-58 for bitches.

UTILIZATION | The Halden Hound is a good hunting dog with a strong hunting desire and a friendly nature. The breed is characterised by strong nerves and by being especially sociable and trusting. Many Halden Hounds have done very well in hunting trials. They can thus be characterised as an excellent combination of a hunting and companion dog. Due to its good temperament and open nature, the breed is also easy to train.



Photo: Archive

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE HALDEN HOUND | The demand for puppies has been somewhat low in recent years, and the supply of puppies has not even always been sufficient to meet the demand. At times, there has also been a lack of buyers for the few available puppies. Considerable amounts of patience and commitment are thus needed if you are interested in getting a puppy of such a rare breed. Luckily for the breed, those that are lucky enough to secure a Halden Hound puppy are hopefully aware of their responsibility for helping to increase the breed's numbers.

The most important way of securing the future of the Halden Hound is to further develop and maintain a large and viable breed population. Anyone already considering getting a scent hound can contribute to this by choosing a Halden Hound.

A canine semen bank has been established for all Norwegian dog breeds. The semen bank is being jointly developed by the various breed clubs, the Norwegian

Kennel Club and the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre. The aim is to deposit semen from ten dogs of each of the seven native Norwegian breeds (in addition to the Halden Hound, these are the Norwegian Buhund, the Norwegian Elkhound Grey, the Norwegian Elkhound Black, the Norwegian Lundehund, the Hygen Hound and the Norwegian Hound). Preferably, the semen shall be stored for ten years and can be used, for example, in case of a sudden crisis within a specific breed or if there is a need for "old" genetic material in breeding.

If you are interested in more information about the Halden Hound, please contact Norske Harehundklubbens Forbund, c/o Norwegian Kennel Club, PO Box 163 Bryn, 0611 Oslo, Norway (phone: +47 21 60 09 00, website: www.nhkf.net) or the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre, 1431 Ås, Norway (phone: +47 64 94 90 55).

Website for the Norwegian Halden Hound Club:
www.haldenstøverklubben.no



Photo: Archive

NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY



Hygen Hound



Photo: Steinar Moen

BREED ORIGIN AND HISTORY | The Hygen Hound is named after the procurator Hans Fredrik Hygen, who began breeding local scent hounds in eastern Norway around 1930. He moved to the region of Romerike in 1839, and included that area's dogs in his breeding programme. Hygen's sons continued his work, especially A. B. Hygen, who in 1902 was one of the founding members of the "Special Club for Norwegian Scent Hounds". He played a central role in the preparation of the breed standard that was published the same year. The year 1902 was also when the Norwegian Hound and the Hygen Hound were defined as two separate breeds.

The years before and after the First World War were difficult times for Norwegian Hound and Hygen Hound breeding. In the period 1925-34, the two breeds were merged by the Norwegian Kennel Club, even though the Scent Hound Club strongly disagreed. Eventually, as increasing numbers of Hygen Hound were being bred prior to the Second World War, the two breeds were separated again. Hygen Hound breeding was doing well, and by the end of the war the breed was in good shape. The dogs had good hunting abilities, although some breeding lines were troubled with aggressive dogs.

In the 1970s there was some infusion of Norwegian Hound blood. Also, an effort was made to locate additional breeding males. Between 1993 and 1996, there were four new infusions of Norwegian Hound. In 2000 and 2002, permission was given for two litters with Finnish Hound, and in 2006 for a litter with Hamilton Hound. These measures have helped to enlarge the breeding basis of the Hygen Hound.

In recent years, the number of Hygen Hound puppies registered by the Norwegian Kennel Club varied between 27 and 44 per year. This figure is seen as extremely low, and should be increased to secure a viable future for the breed without risking problems due to inbreeding.

APPEARANCE | The Hygen Hound has a lot in common with the Norwegian Hound, both with regard to breed origin and characteristics, however, some important exterior traits are different. The Hygen Hound is somewhat shorter than the Norwegian Hound, and is a medium-sized, strongly-built, but not heavy dog. Head and muzzle are somewhat shorter and broader than the Norwegian Hound's, and the head should be moderately wedge-shaped. The



Photo: Archive

Hygen Hound should not have glass eyes. Ears are hanging and medium-length. The tail extends to the hock joint and is carried slightly curved. Its coat is dense and smooth. All colour combinations are acceptable, but a reddish base colour with white markings is most common.

UTILIZATION | The Hygen Hound is a good scent hound with a friendly nature. The breed is eager to learn, starts to hunt at an early age and has a strong hunting desire. It is suitable as a family dog, as it usually is calm around people and easy to train.

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE HYGEN HOUND | The most important way of securing the future of the Hygen

Hound is to further develop and maintain a large and viable breed population. Anyone already considering getting a scent hound can contribute to this by choosing a Hygen Hound.

A canine semen bank has been established for all Norwegian dog breeds. The semen bank is being jointly developed by the various breed clubs, the Norwegian Kennel Club and the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre. The aim is to deposit semen from ten dogs of each of the seven native Norwegian breeds (in addition to the Hygen Hound, these are the Norwegian Buhund, the Norwegian Elkhound Grey, the Norwegian Elkhound Black, the Norwegian Lundehund, the Halden Hound and the Norwegian Hound). Preferably, the semen shall be stored for ten years and can be used, for example, in case of a sudden crisis within a specific breed or if there is a need for "old" genetic material in breeding.

If you are interested in more information about the Hygen Hound, please contact Norske Harehundklubbens Forbund, c/o Norwegian Kennel Club, PO Box 163 Bryn, 0611 Oslo, Norway (phone: +47 21 60 09 00, website: www.nhkf.net) or the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre, 1431 Ås, Norway (phone: +47 64 94 90 55).



Photo: Archive

NATIVE DOG BREEDS OF NORWAY



Norwegian Hound (Dunker)



Photo: Steinar Moen

BREED ORIGIN AND HISTORY | The Norwegian Hound (Dunker in Norwegian) is named after the Norwegian captain Wilhelm Conrad Dunker, who created the breed by crossing several scent hound breeds in the first half of the 19th century. The "Special Club for Norwegian Hare Hounds" was founded in 1902. In the same year, the hare hounds were split into two main groups, which are known today as the Norwegian Hound and the Hygen Hound. The Norwegian Hound group was large and included local hare hound populations from all over the country. The breeding base was thus broad and heterogeneous. One characteristic trait of the Norwegian Hound has always been the blue-marbled (dappled) coat colour and walleyes, although the breed standard also allows other colours.

During the Second World War there was little demand for Norwegian Hound puppies, making it difficult to maintain systematic breeding of high quality. After the war, interest in the breed increased significantly until the 1970s, after which the breed's popularity again dwindled – presumably due to competition from foreign breeds.

In the 1980s, the Norwegian Hound was a very homogenous breed with excellent hunting abilities. However, due to inbreed-

ing, most dogs were too closely related. In 1987, the breeding committee for the Norwegian Hound therefore applied for permission to crossbreed with other breeds, but the application was denied by the Norwegian Kennel Club. Two years later, though, permission for some crossbreeding was granted. This has given the breed much better genetic variation and health, but maintained its typical and positive characteristics.

In recent years, the number of Norwegian Hound puppies registered by the Norwegian Kennel Club varied between 131 and 180 per year. This figure is so low that it is necessary to increase the breed's numbers in order to enable efficient and healthy breeding in the future.

APPEARANCE | The Norwegian Hound is a medium-sized, distinctly rectangular dog, strongly built, but should not appear heavy. The head should have good length, the skull slightly domed with a prominent occiput and a defined, but not too deep or abrupt stop. Its ears are medium high set and hanging. The iris can be of different colours in blue-marbled (dappled) dogs. Medium-long tail should be carried straight or in a slight upward curve. The coat is



Photo: Steinar Moen

straight, hard, dense and not too short. Coat colour should be black or blue-marbled (dappled) with pale fawn or white markings. Predominant black or white and too warm brown colours are not desirable. Height at the withers for males is 50-55 cm, for bitches 47-53 cm.

UTILIZATION | The Norwegian Hound is considered to be a good scent hound. It cooperates closely and well with its owner in the woods and bays on the trail. Breeding efforts have always aimed at strengthening the best characteristics of the old Norwegian scent hound, which was a hardy and robust dog with an excellent temperament. Today's hunters especially call attention to the breed's strong paws. These tolerate ice and crusty snow much better than the feet of other scent hounds.

The Norwegian Hound is characterised by strong nerves and by being especially sociable and trusting. Many Norwegian Hounds have done very well in hunting trials. They can thus be characterised as an excellent combination of a hunting and companion dog. Due to its good temperament and open nature, the breed is also easy to train.

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE NORWEGIAN HOUND | The most important way of securing the future of the Norwegian Hound is to further develop and maintain a large and viable breed population. Anyone already considering getting a scent hound can contribute to this by choosing a Norwegian Hound.

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the various breed clubs, the Norwegian Kennel Club and the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre. The aim is to deposit semen from ten dogs of each of the seven native Norwegian breeds (in addition to the Norwegian Hound, these are the Norwegian Buhund, the Norwegian Elkhound Grey, the Norwegian Elkhound Black, the Norwegian Lundehund, the Halden Hound and the Hygen Hound). Preferably, the semen shall be stored for ten years and can be used, for example, in case of a sudden crisis within a specific breed or if there is a need for "old" genetic material in breeding.

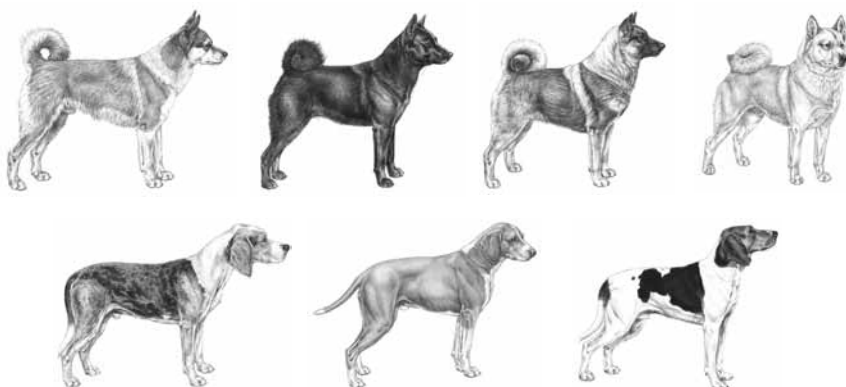
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Photo: Archive

Native dog breeds of Norway

- Norwegian national heritage and pride



Norwegian Kennel Club

- securing the national dog breeds for the future

The Norwegian dog breeds belong to our cultural heritage and it is an important task for The Norwegian Kennel Club to maintain them in a way that safeguards their existence for generations to come.

The work that is devoted to our own breeds takes a special place within the organization. This folder can be seen as being a part of the ambition to put emphasis and focus on our national dog breeds.



Norwegian Kennel Club

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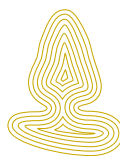
Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre

- the key to sustainable use and conservation of our biological heritage

The Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre is an administrative body under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The Centre coordinates national activities related to genetic resources in farm animals, crops and forest trees.

It is with great pride that the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre together with Norwegian Kennel Club here presents the seven native dog breeds of Norway, all breeds with long traditions in serving farmers in their daily work, mainly as hunting and herding dogs. Today these dogs are kept for multiple purposes such as for instance family dogs, show dogs, agility dogs – and of course the dogs are still used for hunting and herding.

The work on animal genetic resources focuses on the conservation and sustainable use of all native breeds. It is also of great importance to keep a continuous dialog with the Norwegian breeding associations regarding their emphasis on running sustainable breeding programmes. Dog breeding programmes will be regarded as sustainable if inbreeding is avoided, healthy dogs are bred and maintenance of broad phenotypic variation within the breed is secured.



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NORWEGIAN GENETIC
RESOURCE CENTRE

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