

Greyghost Weimaraners

Frequently Asked Questions

Greyghost Kennel is a small breeding kennel in north-central British Columbia. We breed Weimaraners, and only Weimaraners, for health, temperament and conformation. Our dogs are kept happy and busy in a number of activities, including hunting, obedience and agility trials. Our goal is to provide our puppy buyers with versatile dogs that will be loved, loyal and valued family members for many years.

There are concerns about inbreeding and genetic health issues in every breed of dog, and Weimaraners are no exception. Our breeding plan addresses these issues; we keep only the best bitches for breeding and carefully select stud dogs from unrelated but complementary bloodlines to sire our puppies. As part of our program, we have included long-haired Weimaraners, and have been very pleased with the results. The pups are healthy and have great temperaments, and the longer coats are a bonus in our cold climate.

We breed only occasionally, and spend as much time selecting new owners for our pups as we do sires. Matching the puppy's drive and activity level to the new owner's experience, lifestyle and personality ensures a harmonious relationship.

For more information on Weimaraners, check out our website, that of the Weimaraner Assoc. of Canada at www.weims.ca, the Weimaraner Club of America at www.weimclubamerica.org, and/or read one of the excellent breed books which should be available at or through your local library. If you think that a Weimaraner is the dog for you, please feel free to contact us for more information on our puppies and our breeding program.

We can remember all too well the excitement and problems associated with the search for that perfect puppy. These are the ones we are most frequently asked:

When are there going to be puppies available?

A longhaired/shorthaired mixed litter is due early 2011 and available by commitment only.

What do you mean "by commitment only"?

Since longhairs are less well-known and fewer people are looking for them, we need to be sure that people are committed to taking a puppy before we do the breeding. So we won't do the breeding unless we have enough committed people on our waiting list.

Why so long between litters?

We breed only occasional litters, as do most quality small-scale kennels. Our interest is in having - and being able to provide - quality dogs. Generally we have a full waiting list by the time the puppies arrive, and we can start the process of matching puppy and owner profiles as soon as the pups take their first steps.

How long is your waiting list?

As a rule we don't have a waiting list much longer than the size of the litter expected, as this would not be fair to people waiting eagerly for puppies. Most people have to wait a year for a pup. We try to match every qualified puppy buyer up with the right pup, whether this is one of our own or by referral to another good breeder.

How much are the puppies?

They're free. Or, if it makes you feel more comfortable, they're whatever the price of an average shelter adoption is in your neighborhood. When and if we decide that this is a good match and you decide to get a puppy from us, you'll be writing me a cheque for \$1400 but that cheque is actually buying ME, our 20 years of experience breeding Weims and for me to take some very difficult decisions off your hands. You are paying for the right to call me, any time of the day or night, for the life of this dog. You're paying for me to be your training assistant, your vet advocate, and your nutritional consultant. You are paying me a research fee for making an educated and smart decision about which dog to breed to which dog. As well, you are paying me a retainer so that at any time in your dog's life I will take back that dog, no questions asked, no matter the situation."

Isn't this a lot of money for a puppy?

No, it is about average for a purebred pup of any breed. If you are quoted significantly less, you are probably dealing with a puppy mill. The worst of the puppy mills can still present an attractive website and professional looking promotional material. If you aren't sure, ask other breeders in the same area or your closest Weim rescue contact - most of them are happy to share honest information about other breeders.

Can I pay less for a puppy if I just want a pet, and don't want the papers?

No, it is illegal to charge extra for registration papers, and illegal for CKC members to sell unregistered dogs.

When do you require a deposit?

We require a deposit at the time the bitch is bred. If we do not have a puppy for you then your deposit will be refunded.

Do I get to pick my own puppy?

Although we encourage new owners to visit and get to know the puppies, we feel that we are in the best position to evaluate the pups and select the right home for each of them.

Do I have to spay/neuter my puppy?

Yes. Unless it was purchased for show/breeding purposes, there will be a Non-breeding Agreement registered with the CKC. Unregistered and/or unplanned puppies bred from our pups would simply add to the glut of unwanted dogs abandoned and euthanized every year.

Why do you have a Sales Agreement?

The Agreement not only protects both parties, it also protects the dog. It eliminates any misunderstanding by outlining the expectations and commitments on both sides. I have an article called Puppy Contracts Explained that I can send you which explains puppy contracts in more detail.

Do I have to show the dog, or have it shown?

Only a very few of our top pups are sold under breeding/showing contracts, and their owners undertake to show the pups, or have them shown, as specified in those contracts. Otherwise, no, not unless you want to. All owners are encouraged to have fun with their dogs in or out of the show ring. There are a growing number of organized activities that you and your dog can be involved in, and Weimaraners excel at many of them.

What's the best way to find a good breeder?

The best way is a referral from another breeder—either of Weims or another breed. Always choose breeders that are members of their national club – if they are not a member there is usually a reason why. Contact the club's rescue coordinator – they can tell you if there are recommended breeders in your area. Also talk to someone from the local dog club. Word gets around about good and bad breeders of all breeds. If they don't know a breeder themselves they can usually find someone who does. Don't rely on a pretty website – it can be misleading. Talking to someone directly can often give you more information. Remember that you will be dealing with this person for 15 years.

When I'm talking to breeders, what should I ask?

Ask lots of questions – like how many litters have you had this year and in other years? If they are having more than a couple of litters a year, then be cautious because they may be using it as an income source and not considering the best interest of the breed as a whole. If they have a bunch of unsold puppies that they are trying to sell, be careful. Most good breeders try to have some homes lined up for their puppies before they breed and don't breed on spec. How many dogs does the breeder have in their home and what conditions do the dogs live in? Remember, Weims are not kennel dogs. Can you visit the dogs at the breeder's house? How many litters do the females have before they are retired? – 2 times is average. At what age does the breeder start breeding the girls? – health checks can't be done till they are 2yr so you shouldn't breed them before that. What health checks do they get done on their breeding stock?- for Weims, hips and eye checks are the minimum. What kind of contract do they make you sign and can you live with it. Read it carefully – if your only option is to return the dog, are you willing to do that?

What about Blue Weims?

While blue-colored weims are a very striking color, it is not the correct color for the breed. In color genetics "Blue" is a dilute black whereas Weims are a dilute brown. Since black is dominant to brown you can only get a "blue" weim by breeding to a black dog. So, are the blue weims being bred really purebred? Its not really clear. What is clear is that good breeders, that are members of their national clubs, don't breed blues. Ever.

Why should I buy from a breeder that has working titles on their dogs?

Working titles prove that the dog is trainable. The more working titles, the more trainable. Trainability is a trait that is passed on to puppies and they, in turn, will be easier to train. A good breeder will also be able to tell you about how much "drive" the parents have. If you want to do a lot of hunting, agility or obedience then you want a dog with lots of drive. For a companion dog a high-drive dog may have too much energy.

At Greyghost Kennel, we love talking about our dogs, and would be happy to discuss the finer points of our dogs, our policies, our contracts and dog activities. E-mail can be the most convenient way to make contact, or you can reach us by phone in the evening (8-9 pm is a good time) or on weekends. If we don't answer, keep trying - we are probably outside working with the dogs, playing with the dogs, hunting, training, at a dog-show or agility trial.....