

HEALTH CARE IN THE BGV CLUB

Grands and Petits Bassets Griffon Vendéens have a common origin from long established, rustic stock, bred for work. Overall they are healthy hounds with few troubles. However this is not to say they do not exist. Over the years, BGV owners worldwide have reported incidences of both minor and more significant health problems.



Here in the UK seizing is known in both Grands and Petits. The Club has worked closely with the AHT for 12yrs now and, with recent advances in DNA testing, continued provision of cheek swabs or blood samples from the small number of affected hounds and their family units is helping research to establish the mode of inheritance and whether any particular individual carries the genes responsible.

BGVs have few eye problems, however one condition is known to occur in both breeds - Persistent Pupillary Membranes (PPM). Pupillary membranes - a normal, neonatal structure - usually disappear by the time the puppy is about 8 weeks old. If they persist they are "non-progressive" and often disappear later in life. Of greater concern is Primary Open Angle Glaucoma (POAG), detected in PBGVs. Stemming from an early case in an imported PBGV discovered to be blind age 4yrs, for more than 13yrs the Club has promoted and subsidised regular eye testing of gonioscopy and tonography, to aid early identification of any problems. This is supported by comprehensive recording of associated pedigrees. Since 2007 the committee has made available to Club members a booklet, updated regularly, containing results of eye tested BGVs.

Importantly, with dogs and semen moving freely across borders, the Club is not working in isolation. At our instigation, last April Gavin Robertson and I met in Orlando with delegates from other countries, to collaborate with those who, like us in the UK, already have sound research programmes in place.

These projects, complemented by regular health talks, aid informed decisions on only breeding from stock that, at the time of mating, breeders sincerely believe to be sound, healthy and of good temperament.

Linda Skerritt
Secretary, BGV Club