

National Black Dog Day

24 October 2021

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Sometimes dogs do have their day! The day for all dogs is 22nd August.

But some dogs need an extra helping hand to be seen. 1st October, is that day- National Black Dog Day.

It's a day to celebrate our black furry woofers, especially those in rescue waiting for their forever homes. In 2004 in the US Colleen Paige, a Pet & Family Lifestyle Expert and Animal Advocate came up with the idea of National Dog Day, which really took off, so in 2011 she [extended this to black dogs](#), in honour of her black dog Sailor who died on 1st October of that year; and she saw how much black dogs were at a huge disadvantage compared to other dogs in rescues waiting for their forever humans.

It hasn't really taken off in the UK yet, and we'd like to make 2022 the year that changes.



From ancient folklore to Sherlock Holmes and Harry Potter, black dogs have been storytelling sensations for thousands of years.

Yes, National Black Dog Day is for real and here's why. Black dogs in rescue are often the last to be adopted, often waiting a very long time for homes. The phenomenon is so well recognised, and even studied, like those presented at the [ISAZ \(International Society for anthrozoology\) in 2013](#) or [Petfinder in 2016](#) who found **it took black dogs took four times as long to find a home.**

There are some 'fashion' fluctuations, as there always is when humans are looking for a dog.

Back in 1998 a study of **1,468 dogs** offered for adoption at a US Humane Society did find that dogs with black fur were a factor in whether they got adopted. However, just ten years later, the general manager of the Los Angeles Animal Services

found that in a 12-month period covering 30,046 dogs, more dogs that were completely or predominantly black were adopted than dogs that were not.

An outlier? (Unusual data collection or score.) Possibly.

It was apparently also the year when their poster dog was a **gorgeous black Lab**, which could have bucked the **trend of black dogs coming last**. We can see with our years of experience how highlighting black dogs does get them noticed, if you do it right.

And we have to get it right as we are a black dog rescue.

The Led
Zeppelin song,
"Black Dog,"
was named
after a black
Labrador that
hung out near
their recording
studio.



In general, black dogs do definitely have a major disadvantage just because how humans see them. It even has a name.

Black Dog Syndrome.

The sad fact is that black dogs in rescue are much more likely to be passed by. They don't get adopted as quickly as their lighter contemporaries and, as a result, their euthanasia rates are also higher. Many of them never find homes and may have to be put to sleep.

Why might this be the case?

Why are we seeing Black Dog Syndrome?

Are there misconceptions about black dogs that are stopping them from being seen as good pets?

There is nothing at all to suggest black dogs are any different to

any other dog yet there does seem to be some misconception that black dogs have a poor temperament and are somehow meaner or more aggressive. Dogs ARE NOT AGGRESSIVE as humans interpret or understand the word, and indeed how they (humans) treat other people when they are angry.

But we put this same human negativity onto dogs. Black cats suffer the same issue.



The stigma of having black fur could have deep roots, founded in all kinds of myths, superstitions and folklore. This belief

that **black dogs represent evil**, bad or foreboding is exploited time and time again in thousands of years of **literature; and more recently film, and television**. Dobermans or Rottweilers are often the growling attack dogs, teeth bared in a snarl, protecting villains or terrorising sleepy secluded areas.

Or could it be that their dark fur somehow translates to human eyes, hearts and minds as less interesting or lacking in character? Do they visually lack that certain ‘something’ or have off-putting facial expressions?

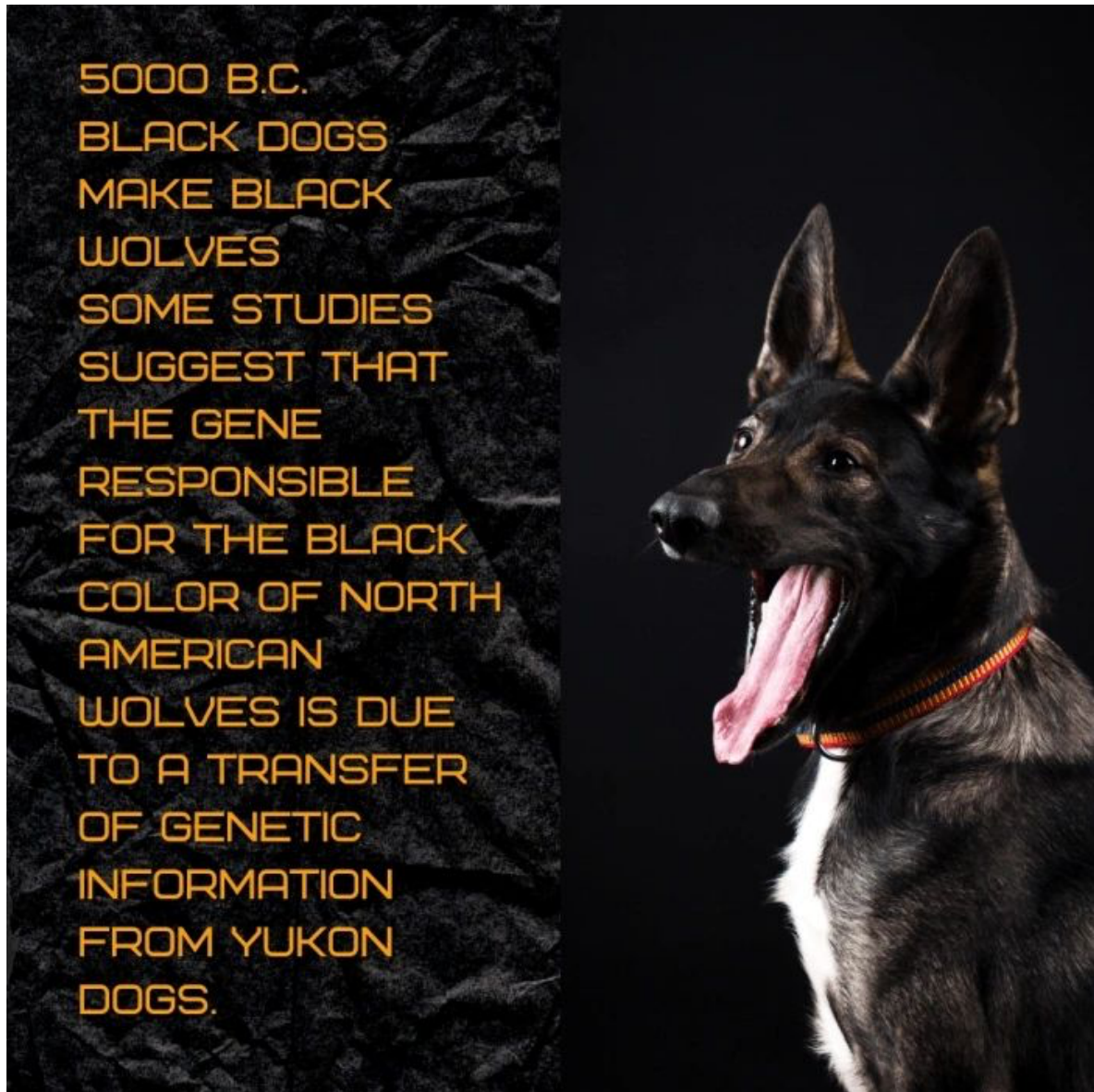
No, but again, humans find them harder to read, and the dog gets the ‘blame’s usual. **Black dogs are of course as normal, loving, unique and wonderful as any dog.**

Perhaps something even more shallow is sadly also true- **black dogs don't photograph very well.**

So even if a potential adopter isn’t superstitious, their faces are dark so it’s often difficult to see their sad little “adopt me” expressions. This can and does hamper their chances of adoption because so many dogs these days are viewed online before being visited. And yes, fashion again can rear its ugly head- In an era of **designer dogs** and breeders handpicking dogs to produce litters with specific, distinctive physical traits, some consider black dogs too dull.

They want their dogs to stand out in a crowd else they are literally ‘worth’ less.

National Black Dog Day helps raise awareness of this situation. Black Dog Syndrome needs to come to an end.



5000 B.C.
BLACK DOGS
MAKE BLACK
WOLVES
SOME STUDIES
SUGGEST THAT
THE GENE
RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE BLACK
COLOR OF NORTH
AMERICAN
WOLVES IS DUE
TO A TRANSFER
OF GENETIC
INFORMATION
FROM YUKON
DOGS.

So don't overlook the black dogs!

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Spread the word!
- We are a black dog rescue. Our page is FULL of black dogs. Share one.
- Donate for one (£1 minimum donation, or sponsor one of our pups for just £3 a month!) lorasluck@gmail.com or the donate options at the bottom of [our website homepage](#)
- Help us get our Dog Friendly Centres up and running by donating (minimum donation £1 lorasland@outlook.com)
- Join our [community page](#), check out what we're doing,

browse our online stores run by our volunteers, buy something for yourself or your pups

- Volunteer a few hours of your time a week to help the pups and the centre. For an application form please email lorasqueries@gmail.com
- And if you're thinking of adopting, [click here](#) and our Facebook pinned post will come to the top to tell you how to do that as well as stacks of hints and tips to help to prepare your application!

They've been our willing companions, no matter how we've treated them, for over 20,000 years.

Time to give something back.

**13,000 B.C.
DOGS BECOME
HUMANS' BEST
FRIENDS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RECORDS
INDICATE THAT
DOGS WERE
BURIED BESIDE
HUMANS ABOUT
14,700 YEARS
AGO –
ALTHOUGH SOME
EXPERTS ARGUE
THAT IT WAS
MORE LIKE 36,000
YEARS AGO.**



Adapted from <https://www.dfordog.co.uk/blog/black-dog-syndrome.html>

Extra reading pages 57-58, and page 97 ff of http://www.isaz.net/conferences/2013%20ISAZ%20Abstract%20Book_FINAL_Revised_9July2013.pdf

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