

Results of the 2009 Health Survey

Report by Betty Judge - Breed Health Co-ordinator

All members of the Breed Club were sent a Health Survey Form in January 2009 to complete and return and we have received a total of 103 forms back predominately from Pet Owners, which is very good and is a great assistance in monitoring the overall health of the breed. Sadly it was not a good year for the health of the Podengo, with my Stud Dog Javardo de Viamonte de Plushcourt, who was imported in 2003, being diagnosed with Epilepsy, and subsequently put to sleep to save any further suffering. He had not been used at Stud for some considerable time, this being a blow for the breed in the U.K. as he sired several litters before this appeared, and some of his descendants have also been diagnosed with this problem. Then there were far too many offspring of one of my other Stud Dogs, Esquilo da Casa Da Torre de Plushcourt, who were diagnosed with Femoral Head Necrosis, thus my withdrawing him from Stud immediately and he was then castrated and re-homed in a Pet home. This I was able to do as I keep records of all my dog's offspring as far as possible.

When beginning a new breed from another country, with no knowledge of what is behind the dogs and bloodlines it is not an easy position to be in, but now we are starting to be able to detect certain conditions in some lines, and also lines that have been completely clear of what could be inherited problems.

Temperaments gave great cause for concern during 2009 when a Podengo at a Championship Show decided to bite the Judge, and this was then reported to the Kennel Club, the outcome of which we are still awaiting. Whilst we have had one or two Podengos previously that have been snappy on the table, this was by far the worst incident. This episode has put a dark cloud over the Podengo breed especially so early in its

List of all reported health issues in the Podengo that have appeared in the UK up to the end of 2009

- Femoral Head Necrosis (Legge Perthes)
- Dislocating Patella (Patella Luxation)
- Unspecified hind leg lameness
- Epilepsy
- Seizures
- Brain Tumour
- False pregnancy
- Cryptorchidism
- Hydrocephalus
- Inguinal Hernias
- Hypothyroidism
- Unspecified Allergy
- Corneal Ulcer
- Cherry Eye
- Distichiasis
- Ear Infections
- Aural Haematoma
- Retention of Baby Canine Teeth
- Tartar on teeth
- Overshot Jaw
- Undershot Jaw
- Trauma
- Nervousness
- Timidness
- Aggression

Whilst the list appears long, the majority of these conditions are commonly found in virtually every canine breed. Obviously the ones which are of greater concern are those that appear to be inherited.

development in the UK. Temperaments are of the utmost importance when planning your litter, it is not a pleasure for anyone, particularly for pet owners, to have to cope with a situation where dogs have unreliable temperaments. I have discovered some consistently unsound temperaments in certain Podengo lines and would never introduce them, or more importantly, continue with them if this was the case with my breeding plans. Close breeding does not appear to help temperaments. I was also perturbed to encounter dogs in the Show ring which were obviously hopping on their hind legs and moving very oddly. Showing these dogs does not help the breed, and I would urge their owners to cease showing them, and not to breed from them either, as the Kennel Club's directive to Judges is not to award dogs with obvious health problems and also to report these dogs to the Kennel Club.

However it is not all doom and gloom, as the majority of Podengos are very healthy, sound in temperament and unrelated to these identified problem bloodlines here in the UK. It is of the utmost importance that breeders of Podengos in the future ensure that they consider breeding only from proven healthy stock, and dogs that have not already proved to cause health issues. The Club will continue to closely monitor the health of the Podengo, but would ask all Podengo owners to continue to complete and send a report of the health of their Podengos every year and be truthful in your replies to the questions, because hiding things will not help the breed. This is important so that we have a good base of information to work upon both now and for the future.

Anyone wishing to give or have further information on any bloodlines can speak to me in full confidence at any time.

Listed opposite are all the reported health issues that have appeared in the UK up to the end of 2009.