

Pastoral

Belgian Shepherd Dog (Laekenois)

Sheepdogs of this type date back in Belgium to the Middle Ages. Four varieties of the breed exist sharing the same physical attributes and alluded only by coat and colour - Groenendael: black and long coat; Tervueren: long coated and seen in red, fawn or grey, often with a black mask and overlay; Malinois: with a dense, short coat and with the same colourings as the Tervueren; Laekenois: a harsh wiry coat, red/fawn with some black shadings.

It was not until 1891, the first breed club was formed and Professor Adolphe Reul of the Belgian veterinary school examined 117 examples of the breed and classified the varieties which were named according to the area of Belgium where they originated. The Laekenois gained its name from the Château of Laeken – a royal residence of Queen Marie Henriette who favoured the variety.

Their physical attributes equip them to be excellent herding dogs: they are agile, fast and lightly built yet robust, but the breed has shown its versatility as a service dog, widely used by the police and armed forces. They have an appetite for work, being watchful, wary and highly intelligent.

Breed Group	Pastoral
Vulnerable Breed	No
Size	Medium
How much exercise?	More than 2 hours per day
Length of coat	Medium
How much grooming?	More than once a week
Supposedly sheds?	Yes
Town or Country	Either
Type of home	Large House
Minimum garden size	Large
Lifespan	Over 10 Years

Health Information

You may be aware that some breeds of dog and their crosses can be susceptible to inherited disease. Of course you want to be sure that the dog you choose is as healthy as possible, and you would like to know that it has not inherited any undesirable disease-causing genes from its parents. There is some help in that DNA tests for diseases in purebred dogs are available for some conditions in some breeds, but there are not very many such tests just yet! There are also, however, a number of clinical veterinary screening schemes that dog breeders can use to increase the probability of producing healthy puppies.

Details of the various screening schemes, both veterinary and DNA, that are available to breeders in the UK can be found at www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth

Potential dog owners should be aware that, at present, the application of various health screening results to breeding programmes is not always straightforward, and breeders may make choices for various reasons. A responsible breeder though, will always be willing to discuss relevant health issues with you. Breed clubs are often useful sources of breed-specific information.

What Screening is relevant for the Belgian Shepherd Dog (Laekenois)?

Kennel Club Assured Breeders must use the following screening schemes for sires and dams BVA/KC

- BVA/KC Hip Dysplasia Scheme
- Eye testing

The list above is not necessarily comprehensive. Breed clubs and experienced breeders are useful sources of information on health issues in the breed. All breeds have a Breed Health Coordinator.

Breeding Restrictions

The Kennel Club will not accept an application to register a litter when:

- 1) The dam has already whelped 4 litters (as of the 1st January 2012 the limit changed from 6 litters to 4 litters). As of this date the Kennel Club will no longer register any further litters from any bitch which our records show has already whelped 4 litters. Therefore for any litter born on or after the 1st January 2012, the system will automatically check to see how many previous litters the Kennel Club has an account of. Where the number previously recorded is 4 or more, the application will be rejected, or
- 2) The dam has already reached the age of 8 years at the date of whelping, (relief from this restriction may be considered normally provided an application is made prior to the mating, the proposed dam has previously whelped at least one other registered litter, and the application is supported by veterinary evidence as to the suitability of the bitch involved in the proposed whelping), or
- 3) The dam was under one year old at the time of mating, or
- 4) The offspring are the result of any mating between father and daughter, mother and son or brother and sister, save in exceptional circumstances or for scientifically proven welfare reasons, or
- 5) (From 1st January 2012) The dam has already had two litters delivered by caesarean section, save for scientifically proven welfare reasons and this only normally provided the application is made prior to the mating, or
- 6) The dam was not resident at a UK address at the date of whelping.

There are further Kennel Club Rules and Regulations that may prevent a litter from being registered; the full Kennel Club

Rules and Regulations are contained in the Kennel Club Year Book.

Breed Specific Breeding Restrictions

Current Registration Colours

- Reddish Fawn

Belgian Shepherd Dog (Laekenois) Clubs

Name	Telephone
Belgian Shepherd Dog Association Of Great Britain	01159 447145

Belgian Shepherd Dog (Laekenois) Rescue Organisations

Name	Telephone
Belgian Shepherd Dog Association Of Great Britain Rescue Service	01527 545552
Northern Belgian Shepherd Dog Club Rescue	01436 678895
Northern Belgian Shepherd Dog Club Rescue	01482 667080
Northern Belgian Shepherd Dog Club Rescue	01254 703472