

Verifying pedigrees....

Because wolfdogs are mixed-breeds and are not recognized by the American Kennel Club (AKC), extra caution and care should be taken in verifying any wolfdog's pedigree. Great care should also be taken in verifying the wolf percentage represented on said pedigrees. This can be done by contacting knowledgeable wolfdog owners and breeders and by contacting the only remaining wolfdog registry: Lupine AWAREness. Their website is located at www.lupineawareness.org.

Many wolfdog lines can be traced back five or ten or more generations. Those who claim to have den-robbed animals or descendants of den-robbed animals elicit raised eyebrows in legitimate wolfdog circles. Not only do such animals tend to be wild and unmanageable, but they conveniently allow breeders to avoid the pedigree issue. In other words, den-robbed animals conveniently tend to lack the paper trail necessary to verify information in a pedigree. And more importantly, these claims are almost always bogus.

Additionally, breeders who claim their white wolfdogs are Arctics are generally misguided. There are very few Arctics in captivity (and none are born white). Likewise, those who claim to have Mexican wolves are also misguided. Other than in zoos, there are no Mexican wolves in private ownership.

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Florida Lupine Association

Looking for a Wolfdog Breeder?

The Florida Lupine Association (FLA) is often asked to refer breeders. While FLA is not a breeder's club and does not refer specific breeders, we are concerned that buyers purchase their animals only from responsible breeders. To that end, FLA has provided a few guidelines within this brochure that any responsible, ethical wolfdog breeder should abide by.

The best way to ensure that you are dealing with a responsible wolfdog breeder is to ask other wolfdog owners for recommendations and referrals. Word of mouth is an excellent way of verifying that a breeder is ethical, legitimate, and responsible. Also, use this brochure to cross-check information you obtain from a breeder.

Prior to buying a puppy, research wolfdogs and determine if this is the type of canine for you. Like many breeds of dog, they may be inappropriate companion animals for some owners, but appropriate for others. Although they are not Labradors, they are also not the wild animals that some maintain. A wolfdog is merely a dog with more recent wolf inheritance than is typically found in most other dogs.

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What to look for...

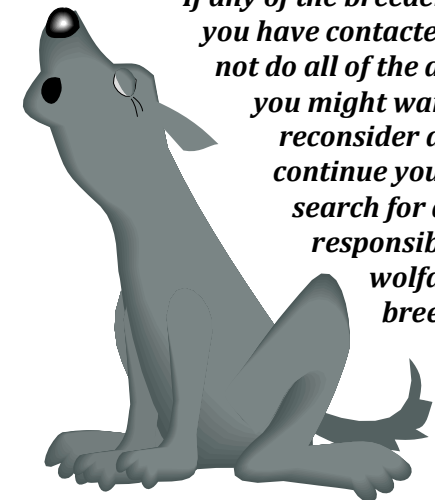
Regardless of what breed of dog you choose as a companion, there are certain qualities that ethical and responsible breeders possess that unethical and irresponsible breeders do not. Know what characteristics to look for in a wolfdog BEFORE acquiring one as a companion.

There are countless unethical backyard breeders who successfully pawn off their Malamute, Husky or German Shepherd mix puppies as wolfdog pups to the unknowledgeable and unsuspecting public. If you know what you are looking for, this very common con will be less likely to happen to you. If you are not well-versed in what a wolfdog adult or pup looks like, go to the FLA phenotyping pamphlet we produced for the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission (www.floralupine.org/publications/PDF/FWC_Pheno_Pamphlet_2011.pdf) or contact a knowledgeable wolfdog owner.

The following is what to expect of ethical and responsible wolfdog breeders. They should

- ◆ answer any and all questions you have about wolfdogs and the particular line you are considering for purchase.

- ◆ screen you as a prospective wolfdog owner, presenting you with a questionnaire or application before the purchase and a sales contract at the time of purchase, if you are approved.
- ◆ ensure that their buyers have adequate facilities to house and maintain a wolfdog and that you are knowledgeable of wolfdogs' needs, care, and behavior.
- ◆ provide you with a contract mandating that, at any time during the duration of the animal's life, the breeder will take the animal back or find it a new home if the buyer can no longer care for it.
- ◆ have a clean, sanitary breeding facility/kennel. (NOTE: You should verify this yourself by going to the breeder's facility.)
- ◆ ensure that the pup's parents are not aggressive or improperly socialized by allowing you to interact with the parents. (Note: When looking at younger pups, use common sense on interacting with the mother; many canine moms can be quite protective of their younger pups with strangers.)
- ◆ breed animals that will reflect positively on wolfdogs; will NOT breed aggressive, predatory-type wolfdogs (e.g., aggressive wolfdogs, wolfdogs mixed with aggressive dog types). Most responsible wolfdog breeders use the following dog breeds in their lines: Siberian Husky, Malamute, and German Shepherd.
- ◆ ensure that both the dam and the sire are free of any genetic disorders by allowing you to view their medical records and/or speak to their veterinarian.
- ◆ never espouse any of the uneducated myths surrounding wolfdog ownership: that rabies vaccines will kill wolfdogs; that wolfdogs are excellent guard/protection dogs; that they have (and you can have) a pure or very high content wolf in the state of Florida without needing a Class II permit issued by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission. These are clues that the breeder is uneducated, unethical, and irresponsible.



If any of the breeders you have contacted do not do all of the above, you might want to reconsider and continue your search for a responsible wolfdog breeder.