

Breed

Written by Chantal Corbeil

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The Portuguese Water Dog gets its name from the work it originally carried out alongside fishermen in Portugal retrieving nets from the water and carrying messages from one ship to the other. The lion trim had a specific purpose then, which was to keep their bottom lighter to aid in swimming.

Since they regularly worked long hours, these dogs naturally developed impressive physical aptitudes and a loyal companionship with humans.

Even though we no longer need Portuguese Water Dogs for this purpose, they have nevertheless kept these precious characteristics that serve in various ways. One has only to see the joy and energy they radiate in an agility course, rally or water trial, or even in water rescue. However, even if this dog is in its element in the thick of the action, it adapts just as well to the tranquillity and comfort of home—let's just say it understands the concept, "there's a time for everything"!

The Portuguese Water Dog is one of the few dogs that do not shed (to my great joy!), making

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many people who are allergic to dogs able to tolerate their presence. Their coat can either be wavy or curly in texture.

Bitches measure between 16.5 and 20.5 inches and weigh between 35 and 50 lbs. Dogs measure between 19.5 and 22.5 inches and weigh between 42 and 60 lbs.

Grooming

Caring for a long coat, whether curly or wavy, requires at least 10 minutes of brushing every day (unless your dog had the irresistible urge to take a dip in a puddle and then roll around in the sand!). However, many people prefer the "retriever" clip, which is short and requires less consistent brushings. For more information on clips, visit the Portuguese Water Dog Club of America (PWDCA) site.