

HEALTH REPORT FROM THE MEETING OF THE JHG HELD ON SUNDAY 22nd November 2015

NEW CHAIRMAN

The JHG are delighted to say that they now have a new Chairman, who will be attending his first meeting of the JHG in 2016. This is:

Dr David Shearer BVetMed CertSAD PhD CBiol MRSB MRCVS

His qualifications are expanded below:

B.VetMed (Univeristy of London 1984

M.R.C.V.S. (1984)

Certificate in Small Animal Dermatology (CertSAD) (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, 1990)

PhD (University of Bristol, 1995)

CBiol MRSB (Royal Society of Biology (previously The Institute of Biology) 1998)

RCVS Advanced Practitioner in Small Animal Dermatology (2015)

Mr Shearer was working at the Animal Health Trust until recently.

Mr Shearer does in fact own a Welsh Springer Spaniel, he has had these for many years and this is his third. They are always just pets, he has no interest in Showing or breeding.

GLAUCOMA

The following Report has been received by the JHG re the Glaucoma Study:

'James Oliver at the AHT is investigating the prevalence of goniodysgenesis (also known as pectinate ligament dysplasia) and the genetic basis of primary (inherited) glaucoma (a painful and blinding eye disease) in multiple breeds of dog including the Welsh Springer Spaniel. In the Welsh Springer Spaniel, primary glaucoma is associated with a structural abnormality within the eye termed goniodysgenesis which can be screened for by examination. James has examined 227 Welsh Springer Spaniels for this abnormality. Sixty-five of these dogs were being examined a second time after previously being found to be free from goniodysgenesis by Beverley Cottrell. Prevalence of goniodysgenesis in the 227 dogs was 36% and 53% of the 65 dogs examined a second time showed progression of goniodysgenesis. An assessment of possible variability between James and Beverley was performed in 49 dogs and showed a 96% agreement between the examiners. DNA has been collected from all dogs examined. James has compared the DNA of 92 Welsh Springer Spaniels. These comprised 24 with normal eyes, 40 with goniodysgenesis and 28 with primary glaucoma. Initial examinations did not reveal any statistically significant differences between the DNA of dogs with normal eyes and those with goniodysgenesis and/or primary glaucoma. However, when we combined the results of this study with those of a similar study in the Flatcoated Retriever, we found a significant difference in the DNA on a single chromosome. We are now investigating the region of this chromosome in detail for mutations which might be associated with primary glaucoma.'

The JHG found it very encouraging the both Beverley Cottrell and James Oliver came to the same result. Out of 49 dogs only two were different and they were both borderline.

HIP DYSPLASIA

The Joint Health Group strongly encourage all owners who have their dogs' hips x-rayed with a view to scoring, should submit all plates to the BVA for official results, regardless of the potential outcome, for the overall benefit of the breed.

FITTING

Three dogs have been reported as Fitting, confirmation has been received from the owners and their Veterinary Surgeons in all cases:

HELGEN SOMERSET ((Glenbrows Manifesto x Highclare Electra at Helgen)

JUBILEE BLUEBELL (Trannon Ifan x Spring Bluebell)

These dogs will appear in the WSSC Year Book 2016 and may also be published in Clubs' Newsletters.

BREED HEALTH CO-ORDINATOR

A Report was sent to the Breed Health Co-ordinator, regarding genetic analysis of the Kennel Club Records for our breed, which was circulated to the Delegates of the JHG, this culminated in the following comment from the Kennel Club.

“As with most breeds, the rate of inbreeding was at its highest in this breed in the 1980s and 1990s. Since the mid 1990s the rate of inbreeding has decreased implying a slowdown in the rate of loss of genetic diversity (possibly through the use of imported animals). However, it appears genetic variation continues to be steadily lost from the population.

There appears to be extensive use of popular dogs as sires in this breed.

It should be noted that, while animals imported from overseas may appear completely unrelated, this is not always the case. Often the pedigree available to the Kennel Club is limited in the number of generations, hampering the ability to detect true, albeit distant, relationships.

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