



Background information on Deerhound Research at Nottingham

Saturday 8th February 2014 saw the first Irish Wolfhound (IWH) and Deerhound owner/breeder research forum at the School of Veterinary Medicine and Science, University of Nottingham. Throughout the day we listened to what owners and breeders wanted for their hounds and there was much discussion about research to try and understand the conditions that were considered to be clinically important in Deerhounds.

The University of Nottingham is already undertaking studies to improve the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of diseases in dogs. Further to discussions with those attending the forum and subsequently your committee, we have been invited to be present at your Deerhound Club Breed Show in Telford. Here we will begin collecting samples from your Deerhounds.

Our Research

Our team of clinicians and vets are experts in finding genes which affect the health of both humans and dogs. We do this by initially taking cheek swabs, which will enable DNA to be extracted so that we can start looking for genes that cause disorders in your breed. So that there is **no cost to you** for this work, we have written grants and have spent many years finding money towards these projects. This type of research needs around £8000 per 200 swabs to buy the swabs and extract the DNA. The research into the genes and disorders costs many hundreds of thousands of pounds more. We require very specific, high quality DNA extraction methods, which is why it costs a little more than some other methods. Our group not only find genes and mutations and publish papers and inform the veterinary world but we also develop new ways of testing for disorders, try to find new information about the disorders, look into the clinical cases to inform the veterinary profession and inform owners.

What will we be doing at the show?

Our team of Nottingham clinicians and scientists will be present on Saturday 5th April to take cheek swabs, answer questions and help with the very short health questionnaire (which is available on the website but we will also have copies on the day). We will also ask you to sign a consent form so that your hounds can be involved in the research projects. Depending on how many questions people ask, we find sampling each hound takes 3-10 minutes. The swabs do not hurt the hounds and of course the hounds stay with you. All information about the dogs and owners is always confidential in our research. We are paying for this so there is **no cost to you or the club** at this point. We would like samples from hounds of all ages, male and female and with any health background.

What happens after the show?

It takes a lot of time to extract the DNA and then look for affected genes and carry out the research but we will not leave you in the dark about the work. At the Nottingham University owner/breeder research day, it was suggested that we could feedback information via your website and newsletter. When we publish a paper, we will also ask for these to be linked to your website and we will write an article for the newsletter/website including a summary of our work and papers as they develop. We are also already planning the 2015 University of Nottingham Deerhound breeder/owner day. We were delighted by the number of people who attended the first day, including committee members and this is also an ideal time to give information/feedback regarding our research. We will also provide a follow up form for you to complete if the health of your Deerhound changes.

Naturally the most important aim of the day is for you to participate in the Show, but we would very much appreciate gathering as many samples as possible and aim to make this a quick and easy process.

We are looking forward to your Breed Show,

The Nottingham Canine Genetics Team