

The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier

A BUYER'S GUIDE



*The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier
Club of America, Inc.*

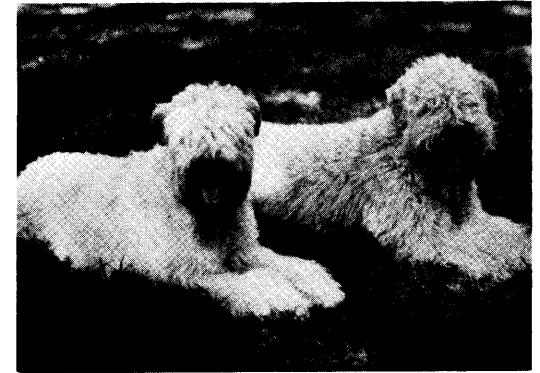
*Member Club
The American Kennel Club, Inc.*

THE SOFT COATED WHEATEN TERRIER

The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier was bred as an all-purpose farm dog and family companion in his native Ireland. The Wheaten shares a common ancestry with the Irish Terrier and the Kerry Blue, but is distinguished by his soft silky coat and merry disposition.

A Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier puppy should not be an impulse purchase. Buying a Wheaten is a commitment for the life of a dog which may live 12 years or more. You owe it to yourself to shop carefully and make sure that you are getting a quality pet who has been bred and raised to insure a sound body and a sound mind. Take time to discuss the characteristics of the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier with different owners and breeders and to see adult Wheatens. Make sure that a Wheaten is the right pet for you and your family.

Wheaten temperament is unique, combining the alert intelligence of the terrier tribe with the steadiness of the working dog. A quick, lively affectionate dog, the Wheaten retains his puppy exuberance and medium to high energy level all his life. Eminently adaptable, he can enjoy life in the city or the country, just as long as he is close to his "people" and receives ample daily exercise.



All children should be supervised when a dog is present. Wheatens do well with considerate, well behaved children. Because Wheaten exuberance and activity may overwhelm small children and since Wheatens require a great deal of time and attention, many breeders urge parents of infants and pre-schoolers to wait until children are older to get a Wheaten.

Most Wheatens will bark an alarm when strangers approach, but generally they are quieter than the smaller terriers. They must be carefully fenced or walked on a lead since they will wander if not fenced. Wheatens will chase squirrels, rabbits, cars, etc. and should never be allowed to run loose in an unfenced area. Wheatens can and do leap straight up off the floor. They jump up on people and it is difficult to correct this trait. They are inveterate leashpullers.

The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America, Inc. was founded on March 17, 1962. SCWTCA became a member club of The American Kennel Club in 1983 and is the recognized parent club for the breed. Its purpose is to preserve and protect the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier and to guard against the commercial exploitation of the breed. The club holds AKC approved shows, produces a quarterly magazine and other educational material and supports health research. The Rescue Committee occasionally has carefully screened Wheatens available for placement.

Information regarding the club and its activities may be obtained from the Corresponding Secretary, Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America, Inc. whose name and address are on file with The American Kennel Club, 51 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010. The AKC can also provide a listing of local Wheaten clubs.

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The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier is not everyone's perfect pet. He does have special requirements if he is to achieve his potential. He must know that he is a dog, and therefore below the human family in the "pecking" order. Wheatens generally want to be leaders and can be stubborn and headstrong. They need consistent, firm discipline but are sensitive to harsh treatment. They must be trained to be submissive without breaking their high spirits. They are quite trainable but it takes more work, time and dedication than with many other breeds.

The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier is a "high-maintenance" breed; it takes considerable frequent grooming to keep his beautiful coat clean and free of mats. While shedding is minimal, this should not be interpreted to mean "hypo-allergenic". The coat needs to be combed out thoroughly at least every other day. That beautiful coat attracts mud, snow, ice, leaves and anything else that can be caught in it. Some trimming is necessary to keep his coat within bounds and to preserve his terrier image; nails and ears need weekly attention.

Many people have found, however, that the care and effort that must be devoted to a Wheaten is a small price to pay for a companion that is sensitive to its owner's moods and personality, is a constant source of interest and fun and has the knack of charming everyone that meets him. The Wheaten's minimal shedding, optimum size and unflagging high spirits may make it the right dog for you.

Health Issues in the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier

The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier is basically a healthy dog who, given proper care and nourishment, will live a long and active life. All breeds, however, are susceptible to inherited disease and the Wheaten is no exception. Veterinary research has identified two genetically transmitted conditions which seem to have a higher than normal incidence in Wheatens; protein-losing nephropathy and protein-losing enteropathy. Also, renal dysplasia has been a serious problem among Wheatens in other countries, and there have been some cases of the disease in the United States. The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America, Inc. is sponsoring research into these conditions. For further information, we urge you to read the SCWTCA Health Report which can be ordered, at no charge, using the coupon on the inside back cover.

How do puppy buyers determine if they are getting a quality puppy? Where does a quality pet come from?

An excellent way to evaluate the quality of the puppy is to evaluate the source. The usual options are:

Pet Shop, Dealer or Commercial Kennel - These outlets rely heavily on impulse buying, which is a poor way to choose an addition to your family. Pups are bred and raised as a cash crop to become merchandise sold for a high profit. This high profit is possible because little has been put into the care of these pups or their mother. The purpose of a commercial breeder is to breed dogs for profit. Little or no attention is paid to the temperament and appearance of the dogs used as breeding stock, which are frequently highly inbred. The pedigree of one Wheaten bred by a known dealer showed that the parents were brother and sister and their parents were father and daughter. Commercial sources rarely accept responsibility for the puppy after it is sold.

Backyard or Casual Breeder - Usually this is the person who owns a Wheaten and thinks it would be "fun" to have puppies or that it would be a great experience for the children. Perhaps it's an effort to recoup the original cost of the dog. Usually these breeders know little of the breed's history or standard and still less about grooming and care. They are not aware of breed concerns. Like commercial breeders, casual backyard breeders make little or no investment in the health of their breeding stock. Breeding stock may not be certified by a veterinary ophthalmologist (ACVO) nor certified clear of hip dysplasia (OFA certification). Their goal is to produce pups and, when the "fun" is over, sell them quickly. The backyard breeder's responsibility to the puppy also ends when the puppy is sold.

Quality Hobby Breeder - The very best choice for a quality pup. Breeding a quality puppy is a serious labor of love, dedication and responsibility. The quality puppy is the result of the breeder's love of dogs, a dedication to the breed and a responsibility to the dogs the breeder has produced for as long as they live. The quality puppy comes from a breeder who acknowledges responsibility for every puppy produced. A quality



pet starts with a careful breeding program in which the characteristics and temperaments of the puppy's ancestors are known to the breeder. Animals being bred undergo careful evaluation and medical screening. A quality

breeder tries to produce a pet who is as close as possible to the breed standard (the blueprint of what a Wheaten should be). Once the puppies are born, the quality pet is the result of careful socialization and human bonding by the breeder. A well socialized, "people-oriented" pup is the result of positive contact with humans from the first days of its life. Since puppies learn a tremendous amount from their mother, the temperament and socialization of the dam is of primary importance to the personality of the pup. A quality puppy comes from a quality breeder.

How does a puppy buyer identify a quality breeder?

Deal directly with the breeder, not with a middleman, a broker or a pet store.

A quality breeder will only sell directly to the new owner and does not deal through middlemen or brokers. A quality breeder will not allow the resale of his puppies through a third party.

A quality breeder will be happy to show you the mother of the litter. Occasionally a breeder may have a puppy from a bitch that he has bred and sold or from a stud dog he owns, in which case the mother may not be present.

A quality breeder breeds only the best dogs. This is why most dogs used in his breeding program are Champions - a Champion is not merely a "show dog" but, most importantly, a dog who has proven itself to be an outstanding example of the breed in temperament and structure and is worthy to be bred.

A quality breeder breeds only Wheatens whose hips have been x-rayed and certified clear of crippling hip dysplasia by the OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for Animals). Each dog certified clear by the OFA is given a certification number (preliminary evaluation is given to dogs under two years). The OFA certification numbers of the sire and dam appear on the AKC application for individual registration (blue slip). The OFA numbers or a copy of the preliminary OFA evaluation of the parents will be provided by a quality breeder.

The quality breeder will be able to supply you with a CERF (Canine Eye Registry Foundation) or a Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America Eye Registry certification number for both parents indicating that the eyes have been examined and are clear of any genetic defects. These eye exams must be done every two years until the age of 6 by a Board certified Veterinary Ophthalmologist (ACVO). The CERF certification numbers of the sire and dam also appear on the blue slip.

A quality breeder is concerned about the future of the breed and the future of the puppies he breeds. A quality breeder will ask many questions about you and your lifestyle to determine if a Wheaten is a suitable pet for you and will ask to meet you in person, when at all practical, before making a commitment on a pup.



A quality breeder will only sell puppies under a contract limiting their use for breeding by means of AKC Limited Registration, co-ownership contracts and/or spay/neuter agreements.

A quality breeder will require, as a condition of sale, that all animals that are not part of a responsible breeding program be spayed or neutered.

A quality breeder will make sure that you are aware of the pros and cons of Wheaten ownership as well as the grooming requirements of the Wheaten. He will provide written material about the needs and development of the puppy.

A quality breeder is available to help with any questions or problems that may arise.

A quality breeder is a member of the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America and/or a local Wheaten Club. The Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America is a member club of The American Kennel Club and is dedicated to the protection and well being of the breed. Members of the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America have agreed to abide by its Code of Ethics.

Quality breeders acknowledge responsibility for every puppy they produce for the life of the dog and stand behind every dog they breed.

Quality Wheaten breeders are hobby breeders who may have one or two litters a year so you may have to wait for your puppy. **A QUALITY PUPPY IS WORTH THE WAIT.**

BUYER BEWARE

The best rule of thumb is: **MEET THE BREEDER, SEE THE MOTHER, AND SEE THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE PUPPY HAS BEEN RAISED.**

Beware of claims that the "hips have been checked", "Wheatens don't have a problem with hip dysplasia" or "my lines are clear of hip dysplasia." Demand an OFA certification number or copy of the preliminary OFA evaluation (animals under two years) on both sire and dam.

Beware of the seller who is unaware of the need for regular eye examinations of breeding stock and cannot provide current eye registry numbers.

Beware of the term "champion lines". The presence of a few Champions in the pedigree means little; every Wheaten bred in the United States has at least one or two Champions in his family tree.

Beware of claims of "home raised" or "privately bred" pups unless you can see for yourself where the pups were born and raised.

Beware of the seller who claims to be selling a litter for a "friend" or "relative". Commercial breeders frequently send "litter lots" on consignment to middlemen who, in turn, sell the pups from their homes.

Beware of anyone selling Wheatens who will only identify himself on a first name basis.

Beware of the seller who is unwilling to give the registered names and AKC numbers of the sire and dam of the litter.

Beware of the seller who is unwilling to provide the name and address of the breeder of the puppies or will provide them only when you buy the puppy.

Beware of the seller who does not have a copy of the puppy's pedigree for your inspection prior to buying the puppy.

Beware of claims such as "uncompromisingly clear of inherited diseases" or "proven clear" or "guaranteed clear" of inherited diseases since there is no way to prove these claims.

Beware of "guarantees" - most genetic problems do not appear until a dog is over two years old. The best guarantee of a healthy dog is a careful, well-planned breeding program.

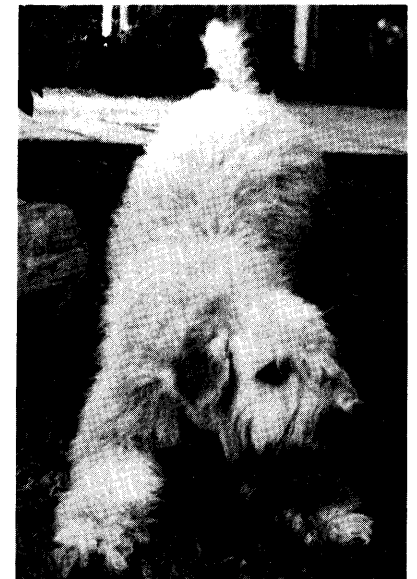
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a kennel?

Traditionally, a kennel is an area where dogs are kept and bred. A hobby breeder who owns two Wheatens is a kennel. A kennel may also be an establishment in which several hundred breeding dogs are kept to supply pups for commercial sale. Many pet stores call themselves "kennels" although the puppies for sale are from commercial establishments which breed puppies for resale. Some kennels are large scale retailers who breed their own stock for retail sales. The best rule of thumb in determining what kind of "kennel" you are dealing with is to see the mother of the pups and see the conditions under which the pups have been raised.

What does a pedigree mean?

A dog's pedigree lists his ancestors, usually five generations. A pedigree is important since it shows the relationships between the dogs in a puppy's background and their accomplishments. A Ch. in front of a dog's name indicates that the dog is an AKC Champion and has proven itself to be an outstanding example of the breed. CD, CDX and UD following a dog's name indicate an Obedience Title: Companion Dog, Companion Dog Excellent and Utility Dog. ROM following a dog's name means Register of Merit Top Producer, an award given by the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of America to males producing 15 or more Champion offspring or bitches producing 8 or more Champion offspring. Breeders use a kennel name and the registered names of the dogs they breed include that name. Thus, a pedigree can show who bred the dogs listed in it. In planning a litter, a quality breeder carefully evaluates the characteristics and pedigrees of the dogs being bred.



What does AKC registration mean?

AKC (The American Kennel Club) registerable means that the puppy is a pure bred dog who is eligible for registration with The American Kennel Club. The American Kennel Club is a registration body and does not sell puppies or license, endorse or register breeders. **AKC REGISTRATION IS NOT AN INDICATION OF THE QUALITY OF THE PUPPY OR THE BREEDER OR THE SELLER.**

CAUTION: Read registration documents carefully and make sure the registration is with THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB. AKC registration is your guarantee of a pure bred puppy.

In order for a puppy to be eligible for AKC registration, the sire (father) and the dam (mother) must both be AKC registered with an unlimited registration. The owner or lessee of the dam is the breeder of record. The owner of the sire, the owner of the dam and the breeder must be in good standing with the AKC in order to register a litter. A conviction for cruelty to animals or failure to keep proper records of animals owned and bred may result in loss of AKC privileges which entitle an individual to register dogs which he has bred. This can lead to the revocation of the registration of dogs he has bred.

After a litter is born (whelped), a "Litter Registration" is applied for from the AKC by the breeder. This application contains the signatures of the owners of both the sire and the dam and indicates the number of pups in the litter and their sexes. The litter is then given a litter number and a blue application for individual registration is issued for each pup in the litter. This "blue slip" gives the litter number, date of birth, names and AKC registration numbers of the sire and dam as well as their OFA and CERF numbers. It also has the name and address of the breeder. It is sent to the breeder. A puppy cannot be AKC registered without a "blue slip". Litters must be registered within six months from date of birth.

The "blue slip" or individual registration application is then sent to the AKC (with the Individual Dog Registration fee) and the pup becomes "AKC registered". Normal processing time is two weeks. Dogs must be registered within one year of the date of issue of the "blue slip".

Only the name of the sire and dam are given on registration forms. If a pedigree has not been provided by the breeder or seller, one can be obtained from the AKC for a fee.

What are "papers"?

The most important "paper" is the application for AKC registration or "blue slip". According to AKC policy, there should not be a price differential between a dog "with papers" or "without papers." The "blue slip" gives the puppy's date of birth, names, AKC registration numbers and OFA and CERF numbers of the sire and dam, and the name and address of the breeder. This information should also be on the bill of sale. If a puppy is sold without the "blue slip", the contract/bill of sale should clearly state how and in whose name the puppy will be registered and how the registration will be transferred to the new owner. Many ethical breeders withhold "blue slips", or register the dog in their own names until the conditions of the

contract have been met. Others use AKC's Limited Registration. A breeder may designate a dog as only eligible for limited registration by checking the limited registration box and signing the limited registration line on the "blue slip". In some cases the breeder will list himself on the "blue slip" as co-owner. All terms of sale should be in writing.

In addition, the buyer should receive a four-generation pedigree and a complete medical record, including vaccinations and dates. The medical record should give the name and address of the examining veterinarian.

What is Limited Registration?

When a breeder receives the "blue slips" for a litter, the breeder has the option to register the pup with "Limited Registration". Limited registration means that the pup is a pure bred AKC registered dog. However, no offspring of the dog may be registered with the AKC. A Limited Registration may be changed to an unlimited registration **ONLY BY THE BREEDER**. This allows a breeder to ensure that only the best stock is bred. A dog with a Limited Registration may not be shown at a dog show in conformation but may be shown in obedience trials.

Why not a pet shop Wheatens?

Wheatens in pet shops come from commercial dog breeders and brokers. The most accurate way to identify a commercial breeder is by a US Dept. of Agriculture license. **USDA LICENSING IS NOT AN ENDORSEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF THE PUPPY OR THE BREEDER.** Under the Animal Welfare Act administered by the USDA, anyone owning more than three female dogs used for breeding and selling puppies to the wholesale trade (for resale) or buying and selling dogs for resale, **MUST** be licensed as a "Pet Dealer". Dealer's facilities are subject to USDA inspection (hence the claim by pet stores that their stock comes from "USDA inspected kennels"). Licensed "Pet Dealers" may also, by law, sell puppies and adult dogs to research facilities for use in experimentation. The requirements of the Animal Welfare Act are minimal, frequently less than those required for livestock on farms. Inspections are infrequent and violations common. There are no requirements for socialization with humans. As Robert Baker, the Chief Inspector of the Humane Society of the US says "When people buy a puppy from a pet store, they are sentencing a breeding animal to a lifetime of misery in a puppy mill."