



## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WEIMARANER



### THE WEIMARANER ASSOCIATION

The Weimaraner is an intelligent and demanding creature. Ownership of the breed is not something which should be undertaken lightly. This guide has been written by the Weimaraner Association [WA] to explain why the breed is the way it is, and to give you some understanding of how to cope.

First something about the WA itself. The first Weimaraners were brought into the UK in 1952 by British officers who had been serving in Germany. Their sole interest was in the extraordinary working abilities of the breed, an interest shared by those who subsequently came to own Weimaraners. By 1982 there were no more than about 1500 of the breed, but then the population exploded. By 2002 there were more than 21000. In the fifties interests were served by a single breed club. By 1985 it was obvious one Club wasn't enough. New owners needed not only information, help, and the opportunity to get together with like-minded people, but ways to use the talents of their chosen breed. The Association was formed to help meet these various needs.

Its particular focus has always been the Weimaraner as a working gundog. But given the breed's brainpower, any stimulating activity has to be good. So while the WA places considerable emphasis on field work and puts the resources in accordingly, it also fosters and develops subsidiary activities such as working trials, obedience, and agility. It runs breed shows, of course, plus the serious side, holding seminars and judging tutorials. It spends enormous amounts of time helping potential, new and existing owners with all manner of problems. And it's well known for occasional spasms of off-the-wall humour. If you thought your sober-sided dog would never stoop to playing football or running a bun race, then we can prove you wrong.

We are always very keen to welcome all Weimaraner owners to the Association. We're an open, accessible bunch, and we're here for the breed, primarily to help you use and develop your dog's talents in whatever way you want, to enjoy your dog to the utmost. These superb dogs need considerable mental and physical stimulation - and companionship - and that means you.

### COPING .. THE WEIMARANER

The Weimaraner is an all-purpose gundog. He was originally bred to work with a single man with a gun, and to deal not only with game for the pot [rabbit, pheasant and so on] but track and hold at bay much larger game such as boar and deer. He was, and still is in Germany today, expected to defend his master against any form of attack. He was designed as a largish [but not too large - MAXIMUM height at the withers for a dog is 27"] powerful hunting dog, with a strong protective instinct.

The rule for this, as with any other breed, is to understand the dog's origins. However many generations there are between the pup beaming at you enchantingly and the first recognised specimens of the breed some 220 or so years ago, the basics are still there. This is a dog which has been produced to think for itself, to challenge the handler when the dog believes the handler is wrong, to run all day without tiring, to hunt a quarry for miles without giving up, and to defend against far larger creatures. And because he was produced to defend the handler, to the death if need be, he is also prone to extreme devotion.

This is a very difficult combination, especially if you have no interest in doing the work the dog was originally bred for. He will adapt in time to your requirements, but the mixture of extreme stubbornness, the continuous challenging, the low boredom threshold and the need for something to do, the sensitivity [how else would he be able to work for you as he does?], the extreme energy levels, the high-powered scenting ability, and the killing instinct, make the Weimaraner totally unsuitable if you just want an amiable pet.

This is why so many Weimaraner owners find living with an adolescent Weimaraner [especially a male] a huge challenge.

If you however, want to succeed, [and we want you to] here are some basics

### SOME OF THE THINGS THEY DO

- ◆ jump fences of at least 6ft easily
- ◆ dig holes - enormous deep holes if left to it, and very quickly

- ◆ chase – cats and rabbits are favourite
- ◆ catch and kill
- ◆ defend – anybody who comes into your territory, and that means your house, garden, and the area you're in when you're walking him – and defend positively, i.e. he may go for somebody or something without waiting to see if there's an actual threat
- ◆ bark – the Weimaraner has a deep, penetrating bark – and when excited, emit a high, whistling wail quite unlike anything you've ever heard from any other breed
- ◆ destroy the home if left too long on his own, bored, lonely, and not understanding why he is alone
- ◆ challenge you, constantly

#### SOME OF THE THINGS THEY NEED

- ◆ something to occupy an alert and intelligent brain, preferably work, but if not, something interesting and challenging
- ◆ clear instructions, and a clear understanding of the do and don'ts
- ◆ consistency and patience from you
- ◆ free running exercise once they are old enough\*
- ◆ companionship – they don't do well if left alone for long periods, in fact, if you want a house to come home to, don't leave the dog alone all day – and always leave a radio on for companionship and interest if the dog is to be left for any time at all

\*the hips take at least 12 months to form properly, the spinal column at least 18 months

#### SO ANSWER THIS QUESTION - ARE YOU SURE YOU REALLY WANT THIS BREED?

This is a big question and we don't want to sound preachy but you **MUST** ask yourself this question before you go and look at a litter. Most people get a Weimaraner because of its looks. As should be clear by now, what they are actually taking on is a potential canine powerhouse. **IF YOU WANT A WEIMARANER YOU MUST**

BE ABLE TO COPE

LEARN ABOUT THE BREED - learn the breed, become an expert, you'll get more out of it and you'll have a better dog

KNOW **BEFORE** YOU GET THE DOG WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO WITH IT, WHAT SORT OF ACTIVITIES YOU WANT TO ENJOY WITH THE DOG

#### USEFUL BASICS

- ◆ get the pup used to everything when you first get him – noises [the breeder should have done most of this already], the Hoover, what all the equipment in the house is, where he can and can't go
- ◆ absolutely essential to socialise him – he is a Weimaraner and he is definitely man-sharp, i.e. he can attack without warning – so socialise at home, with people coming to visit, and when he is old enough, by going to puppy classes
- ◆ teach him to STOP on command – most people use a long blast on the whistle - useful to prevent chasing, attack etc - a good start is to teach him to sit to food [if you're not going to use him as a qundog] and to blow the whistle as you put his food down for him – this also teaches him to come back to you instantly and it's a lot easier than shouting his name in a public place – you should also make him sit to movement, such as a bird flying out of a hedge
- ◆ his name – always a personal thing, but it's useful to know that he can hear hard sounds [d, z, t etc] easily but soft sounds [l, m, a] much less easily ...

- ◆ use authority and voice, not hand or stick – you can't subdue him with punishment, he will either run away or pay you back
- ◆ do not throw sticks, accidents will result eventually
- ◆ if you want to work him in any way, do not play pulling games [don't do it anyway, it damages the jaw plus when he's fully grown you won't ever win], but teach him to hand over anything he gives you
- ◆ give him something to do, even if this is carting the washing about or fetching the post, he's got a good brain and a need to fill it
- ◆ house training - as a pup he will pee the moment he wakes up and after every meal and if you let him do this indiscriminately he won't know what you want – so DO get a routine established and gently and consistently make the pup understand where he is meant to go – you probably know this but a dog has no concept of "being dirty" in the human sense, it doesn't want to foul its kennel but equally it has to learn your routines and wants, and yelling and nose rubbing is an extremely good way to antagonise and confuse an otherwise well-balanced and intelligent creature – one good trick is to use a word as the pup is emptying himself till he learns that this word means that action, then he will empty himself on command – Guide Dogs use the word "busy"

#### TIPS TO STOP THE NEW PUPPY OWNER GOING COMPLETELY NUTS

Notes by Gillian Burgoin on the things that matter over the first few days. Gillian is one of the doyens of the breed in the UK and has bred some of our most important dogs. Her affix is Ragstone.

**The thing to remember always** - owning a Weimaraner is a commitment but never a chore. this is for life, and not for just the first euphoric, and sometimes frenetic, days.

DON'T arrange collection while young children are at home during school breaks etc – they will be excited and maybe boisterous and you need to be calm and not constantly worrying about what they are up to . A quiet one-to-one is what you and the pup need, with a gradual relaxed introduction to the rest of the family, including other pets.

Start as you mean to go on regarding sleeping arrangements. He has his bed, you have yours. Buy earplugs if necessary – his nightly yelling will only increase if you answer his calls. A ticking clock may help, and make sure he is warm enough.

#### YOU WILL NEED

a sense of humour

endless patience

to keep your temper [DON'T lose it]

a good supply of newspapers

#### HE WILL NEED

a gradual change in diet if you don't intend sticking to what the breeder has been feeding – any change, including water, may upset his tummy for a few days

a consistent approach - essentials – patience, constant vigilance, developing a routine

to learn what you want at the pace he can understand

## YOUR HOME AND SANITY

don't lay that new carpet yet!

do clear away ornaments before the pup does

children's toys and pup's toys should not be interchangeable – this does help children keep their treasures tidily put away – the pup's toys are HIS toys, but DO encourage him to willingly let you take his toys but always give loads of praise when you do and return them to him

don't allow children to tease the pup, with toys or with anything else

check electric plugs and leads, especially those out of immediate sight – an inquisitive pup will find them and can chew them

DO have a routine for feeding times and similar – give yourself breathing time away from the pup

DON'T think that you must be on hand 24 hours a day or he will make your life a misery and will end up being in charge rather than the other way round

## CHOOSING A PUP

Expect to be interviewed thoroughly before you even see a litter – if this doesn't happen, walk away. A good breeder will want to decide whether you are the right person to own a Weimaraner, and whether your personal circumstances will suit. Don't be offended – some questions can be quite searching. And if the breeder won't let you have a puppy, find out what the problems are and sort them. If you don't and get a puppy from a less knowledgeable and discriminating breeder [who is probably only after your money] you WILL end up with problems.

Expect to be put through the Weimaraner mill – some people will only let you in if you can pass an interview with their dogs – this is the experienced person's way of assessing your reaction to a fully grown dog in protection mode.

Interview the breeder – find out what they know, how experienced they are and so on – expect to be able to discuss what you want the dog for and if for field work or whatever, whether they can either give you sound advice or know who you should talk to further. If they can't do any of this, question whether this is the right person to be getting a pup from. If the breeder demands that you do this or that show with the pup, walk away. This will be about the breeder's ambitions not about the pup.

Find out everything you can about how the pup is bred and try to see the sire and any pups he has produced previously.

A good breeder will expect you to visit more than once and spend time with the puppies. Apart from getting to know the pup a little, this will also give you the chance to see how the breeder behaves and treats both bitch and litter. For example – is the kennel clean? Is the bitch happy with the breeder? Are the pups outgoing and confident? Have they been wormed regularly? What is being done to stimulate the pups and teach them about noise and so on?

## COLLECTING THE PUP

You should be given the following with your pup:

- ◆ Kennel Club Registration certificate
- ◆ pup's pedigree, signed by the owner
- ◆ diet sheet and general advice
- ◆ some of the food the pup is used to, enough for 4 – 7 days
- ◆ a receipt for the purchase price, and if an accredited breeder, a sale document
- ◆ advisement of any terms and conditions of sale such as restricted registration for a bitch – and why
- ◆ microchipping documents – and if the pup is docked, appropriate documents for that too
- ◆ any vaccination documents if the pup is old enough to be on a course

Expect the breeder to keep in touch to make sure the pup is OK. A good breeder will be there to help you if possible.

**IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT ONCE YOUR DOG IS GROWN YOU KEEP HIM ON TWO MEALS A DAY FOR LIFE** rather than 1 big meal. This helps his digestion, ensures his stomach does not get over-loaded which can lead to dangerous complications.

**IDEAL BODY WEIGHT** – you should be able to see 1 rib – anymore and the dog is too thin, any less and he is too fat.

**Dog's temperature: 100.9 – 101.7 [38.3 – 38.7]**

## KEY FACTS:

### Brief History of the Weimaraner

The following dates are simply a guide

Origins: opinions vary - the German Weimaraner Club gives 1631 as the first official date, others make claims going back to the 16th Century.

1881 - First "pure-bred" litter.

1896 - Breed officially recognized, Standard laid down.

1897 - First club was formed, in what would become the Republic of Weimar, named "Club for the Pure Breeding of the Silver-grey Weimaraner Vorstehhund"

Little documentation until 1924:

1929 - First arrived in America.

1935 - First documented long-hair litter [Germany], although longhairs were mentioned in 1879.

1952 - First arrived in Britain, imported from Germany. All had been trained and trialed in Germany before being brought to Britain

1953 - First appearance at Crufts [12 shown].

1953 - Weimaraner Club of Great Britain founded, 34 dogs registered.

1954 - First arrived in France.

1955 - First arrived in Holland.

In Britain, Weimaraners have been worked as gundogs since they were first introduced; and trialed from soon after, but until 1961, had to compete against Setters and Pointers, there being no separate Hunt, Point, Retrieve trials until then.

## THE WEIMARANER BREED STANDARD

UK Kennel Club 2015

**General Appearance:** Medium-sized, grey with light eyes. Presents a picture of power, stamina and balance.

**Characteristics:** Hunting ability of paramount concern.

**Temperament:** Fearless, friendly, protective, obedient and alert.

**Head and Skull:** Moderately long, aristocratic; moderate stop, slight median line extending back over forehead. Rather prominent occipital bone. Measurement from top of nose to stop equal to measurement from stop to occipital prominence. Flews moderately deep, enclosing powerful jaw. Foreface straight, and delicate at the nostrils. Skin tightly drawn. Nose grey.

**Eyes:** Medium-sized, round. Shades of amber or blue-grey. Placed far enough apart to indicate good disposition, not too protruding or deeply set. Expression keen, kind and intelligent.

**Ears:** Long, lobular, slightly folded, set high. When drawn alongside jaw, should end approximately 2.5 cms [1 in] from point of nose.

**Mouth:** Jaws strong with a perfect, regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. upper teeth closely overlapping lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Lips and gums of pinkish, flesh colour. Complete dentition highly desirable.

**Neck:** Clean-cut and moderately long.

**Forequarters:** Forelegs straight and strong. Measurement from elbow to ground equal to distance from elbow to top of withers.

**Body:** Length of body from highest point of withers to root of tail should equal the measurement from the highest point of withers to ground. Topline level, with slightly sloping croup. Chest well developed, deep. Shoulders well laid. Ribs well sprung, ribcage extending well back. Abdomen firmly held, moderately tucked-up flank. Brisket should drop to elbow.

**Hindquarters:** Moderately angulated, with well turned stifle. Hocks well let down, turned neither in nor out. Musculature well developed.

**Feet:** Firm, compact. Toes well arched, pads close, thick. Nails short, grey or amber in colour.

**Tail:** Previously customarily docked.

**Docked:** Customarily docked so that remaining tail covers scrotum in dogs and vulva in bitches. Thickness of tail in proportion to body. Should be carried in a manner expressing confidence and sound temperament. In long-haired, tip of tail may be removed.

**Undocked:** Moderately set, thickness in proportion to body. Reaching down to hocks and tapering towards the tip. Carried below level of back when relaxed; may be raised when animated. Not curled over back. Good hair cover.

**Gait/Movement:** Effortless, ground covering, indicating smooth co-ordination. Seen from rear, hind feet parallel to front feet. Seen from side, topline remains strong and level.

**Coat:** Short, smooth and sleek. In long-haired variety, coat from 2.5-5 cms [1-2 ins] long on body, somewhat longer on neck, chest and belly. Tail and back of limbs, feathered.

**Colour:** The only correct colour is grey. Preferably silver grey, shades of mouse or roe grey permissible; blending to lighter shade on head and ears. Dark eel stripe frequently occurs along back. Whole coat gives an appearance of metallic sheen. Small white mark permissible on chest. White spots resulting from injuries not penalised.

#### **ANY OTHER COLOUR HIGHLY UNDESIRABLE**

**Size:** Height at withers: dogs: 61-69 cms [24-27 ins]; bitches: 56-64 cms [22-25 ins].

**Faults:** Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog, and on the dog's ability to perform its traditional work.

**Note:** Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

#### **AN INTERPRETATION OF THE BREED STANDARD**

Over the years, the breed standard has been revised by the Kennel Club, and with each revision go a few of the descriptive phrases or words which might perhaps have given a fuller picture of the Weimaraner. The breed standard as illustrated here falls short of what we expect to find in the perfect Weimaraner.

**Body:** One area of contention is in the proportions of the body. The Weimaraner should be longer in back than other HPR breeds, notably the GSP. A realistic measure could be drawn from the front of the chest to the root of the tail, which would then equal the height from the ground to the top of the withers.

**Breed Type:** This is the most difficult thing to define. Probably it would be agreed that it is made up of three prime factors - head, colour and body proportions. If these three factors are not present in the correct shape, size and colour, then we have not got a Weimaraner, but just another sort of dog.

**Colour:** Colour is fundamental in this breed. The breed standard is quite clear that the colour should be preferably silver grey, with shades of mouse or roe grey being permitted. There is no doubt that the dog was originally selectively bred to isolate the distinctive silver grey coat colour and that it is this, above all else, that distinguishes it from the other HPR breeds - the first and primary point of difference.

We all see colours differently, but preferably silver grey conjures up the colour of old silver coins. Roe or mouse grey cover a wide spectrum of grey colours. The hide of a roe deer, if examined carefully whilst in winter coat, will show the basal hair to be grey in colour where it has not been exposed to the weather, unlike the summer coat which is bright chestnut red, and we assume that when the colour was introduced into the first German standards, it was the winter coat to which they referred, although it is perhaps a pity this was not made clear. Mouse grey, again, could be a problem to identify as there are at least 18 different species of mice! However, the three commonest are the wood mouse, on which the basal portion of the fur is dark slate, the harvest mouse which is tawny orange when adult but duller in the young and usually described as resembling the house mouse, and the house mouse itself which is generally dusky brownish grey, fading into grey on the sides and belly. Colour matching the house mouse with a Weimaraner usually results in a fairly close match, but the closest would seem to be the basal fur of the roe deer. The Standard gives the impression that the shades of grey always blend into a lighter shade on head and ears, but this is not always so. **PLEASE NOTE: any colour other than the above means you are buying a mongrel. A blue or black dog which looks like a Weimaraner is NOT a Weimaraner. Don't be fooled.**

The small white mark allowable on the chest can also be a bone of contention. The only question here is how small is "small" and this could perhaps be described as matchbox size small and a full hand too large? Whichever the size, it is a basic part of Weimaraner colour and should not be discriminated against as this course of action frequently results in exceedingly dark colours being produced.

The head and skull should immediately strike one as aristocratic, not coarse-skulled or similar to a Labrador, neither should it be narrow and snipey, such as to be seen on a Whippet. The foreface should be perfectly straight, not dished nor Roman-nosed, and should equal the length between the stop and the occiput, which should be visible.

The eye colour is generally amber in adult dogs, fading from the blue of very young puppies.

The ears should be soft, with slight curl at the end most noticeable when the ears are hanging forward. They should easily reach within an inch of the end of the nose.

#### **PROBLEMS AND ILLNESSES**

You need to be aware of some of the problems which might occur with this breed [many of these are common to all dogs especially the larger breeds]. This is not meant to be a veterinary encyclopaedia just an indication and it is by no means the full story.

#### **GASTRIC DILATION AND VOLVULUS [BLOAT].**

This is the main fear of all Weimaraner owners. It is a life threatening condition. It must be treated **immediately**. Nobody yet knows what causes it. You need to know as much as possible about it and you must ask your vet to tell you exactly how to recognise the early signs. Common ways used to try to avoid it are:

never feed complete dry foods without pre-soaking

feed at least twice a day

don't feed immediately before or after exercise

don't allow the dog to drink immediately after eating – wait at least 30 minutes

don't let him drink large amounts of water just before, or during, or immediately after exercise – just give enough to reduce his thirst

#### **DISTICHIASIS**

Extra eyelashes growing inwards. Probably an inherited predisposition. Not yet common. Corrective surgery required.

#### **ECTROPIAN**

Lower eyelid turn outwards. Corrective surgery required.

#### **ENTROPIAN**

Lower eyelid turn inwards. Corrective surgery required.

#### **JUVENILE PYODERMA**

Pustula skin condition. Seen in puppies and young adults. Needs treatment – usually antibiotics and steroids.

#### **AUTO IMMUNE DISEASE**

Seen in many breeds in young pups. Careful care and veterinary treatment should get the dog through it but it can be painful for the dog and difficult for the owner.

## **SYRINGOMYELIA**

Chronic progressive disease affecting the spinal cord. Dog lacks co-ordination and bunny hops rather than flowing across the ground. There is no treatment yet.

## **PANCREATIC INSUFFICIENCY**

Lack of enzymes normally produced by the pancreas. Dog does not thrive or put on weight. Medication is required.

## **HIP DYSPLASIA**

This is rife in many of the larger breeds. It can broadly be described as "ill fitting hip joints". It is first seen in the way the dog moves, hopping rather than striding out. It is a painful condition but can be managed. In general terms, the earlier you see it, the better the management – the dog is kept thin until all the muscles are formed and the dog can cope better. Many dogs are now X-rayed and the hips are "scored" that is, the condition of the joints measured – the higher the score the worse the formation of the hips. Ideally your breeder will have had stock X-rayed and can show you records of scores because this is an inherited condition. It is not life threatening, some cases can be operated on, some can be managed. Also be aware that HD can result from the wrong diet and too much exercise too early – or wrong handling – never, for example, pull a pup out from under the sofa by its limbs, and always pick it up by putting one arm at the front of the pup and the other round the back of the hind legs.

### **NOTE:**

dogs with high hip scores **MUST NOT BE BRED FROM** – scores under 8 per hip are acceptable, but check out what the averages are for this breed

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### ***How big will the dog grow?***

Dogs – between 24 -27 inches at the shoulder [61 -69cms]. Bitches: 22 – 25 inches [56 -64cms]. On average they should weigh between 24 – 30 kgs.

### ***How long do they live?***

The average is 8 – 10 years but many reach 14 or 15 with the right care.

### ***How much exercise do they need?***

A working Weimaraner can work a full 9 hour day, so unless this is your thing, be aware that you can rarely tire a fully grown adult. The minimum is a good steady run for an hour a day, but this will only build the muscles unless the dog is using its brain at the same time – that is, hunting. Free running exercise on interesting ground [that is, has scent of game on it] is the best.

Pups should only be allowed to run free and for about 15 – 20 minutes maximum until they are about 6 – 8 months old. Any lead work should be kept to an absolute minimum to avoid damaging the skeleton.

### ***Is it a good idea to get 2 pups at once?***

NO. Repeat. NO. Unless you are extremely experienced and you have a good reason for running 2 on at once, then the quickest way to ruin your life and the lives of 2 dogs is to have 2 pups at the same time. And if you think this is to give each company, then don't get a Weimaraner at all because that's YOUR job.

### ***Are they good with other pets?***

Opinions vary .. generally, if handled with care and the introductions made slowly and managed properly, you will get a good result. They tend to be fine with other dogs IF introduced slowly and properly but you may have a problem with cats, rabbits and birds.

### ***Are they good with children?***

Comment above applies here. Be careful. Teach the child and the pup. Don't let the one pull at the dog or tease it or haul it about and don't let the other knock the child over or play too roughly. Both can hurt each other unintentionally. But once the dog has learned what to do it will adopt the child and look after it. In families, children and dogs can become inseparable.

### ***Are they good guard dogs?***

If that's what you want, get another breed. A protective Weimaraner is dangerous and does not stop to command.

### ***Are they noisy?***

Broadly, yes. especially if bored or left alone [particularly for long periods – basically – don't] or telling you there's something about that shouldn't be – but this can be anything from the dustman to an unfamiliar sound.

### ***Should I get a dog or a bitch?***

Depends on which you prefer and what your circumstances are. A dog is larger, heavier, and spends the first 2 years of its life trying to be dominant.. He can also object to the relationship between man and woman and impose his will on the female human if you let him. A bitch learns more quickly and so can be more demanding. She also has 2 seasons a year so expect both mood swings and mess. She will also experience mood swings for up to 9 weeks after her season. Also be aware that if you get a bitch, you must justify your choice to the breeder. If you can't a good breeder won't let you have one.

### ***Does a dog need to mate bitches to be happy?***

**ABSOLUTELY NOT.** And don't do this unless you want to live with a changed animal who's only interested in bitches.

### ***Does a bitch need to have a litter?***

**ABSOLUTELY NOT..**

### ***Are they easy to train?***

They learn very quickly and they enjoy all types of work. But because of their temperament, brains, and disposition, they need a lot of time and patience and knowledge. And if you want to do gundog work then be aware that it will take up to 2 years to produce the dog to the right standard, but once you've got there, you will probably have one of the best dogs in the field.

## **THE GUNDOG FACTOR**

The Weimaraner is, above all, a working gundog. His characteristics are those needed for the job that he does. The breed standard says: "his hunting ability is of paramount concern and any fault of body or mind which detracts from this ability should be penalised. Temperament should be keen, fearless and friendly, protective and obedient".

If this is your first Weimaraner then you must be aware that you now have an HPR – that is, one of the various breeds which make up a group of working dogs whose function is described as HUNT, POINT and RETRIEVE [if you know all about this, skip the next bit!]

This means that:

the dog will quarter the ground at right angles to the wind searching for the scent of game  
it will point any game scent it finds  
then make the game it has found move or fly so that the game can be shot  
then retrieve the shot game to hand

These functions come built-in. If you want to develop them, start early. Otherwise the pup will decide what it is you want and adapt accordingly, choosing [as intelligent people always do] to give you as little as possible because this is easiest. A rigid obedience programme will inhibit the dog's ability to cover the ground for example. This is why you need to decide whether the dog's true work is what you want and ideally decide before you get the pup.

What many people find is that they have brought up a pet which gets away with quite a lot, but one day it will scent something which wakes all its instincts up and it will go, quite probably at full gallop. So whether or not you have any interest in the work the dog was bred for, you do need to find out how to manage its instincts.

Either way, this is something most people need help with. At the very least we would recommend that people find out about the work and make the decision accordingly. Even if you only want a good companion, forewarned is forearmed! The Association runs teaching courses on both field and other work and organises more advanced facilities. Please get in touch with us and we will give you the contacts you need.

*Written and published by The Weimaraner Association 2015, original version published 2004*

The Weimaraner Association is run by people who have specialist experience of this superb breed.. They welcome the new generation of Weimaraner owners and their families