Buhund-owners are now invited to participate in a health survey on the Norwegian buhund (2010). The health survey is web-based and is available at www.buhund.no. Using a password (available at the Norwegian Buhundklubb), dog owners can log in and respond to the survey. The survey is anonymous and is administered by the Norwegian College of Veterinary Medicine, which is responsible for the registration and processing of the data collected. The Breeding Council of the buhund clubs such get access to valuable health information. There is both a medical and a behavioral part in the survey, providing good information of the health of the Norwegian buhund.

DNA test - Collection of material
The collecting of material for the development of genetic test for cataracts in the Norwegian buhund started at "the Buhund National Day" 2009. Until now, fall 2010, more than 170 dogs' eyes are checked and more have donated blood. This is dogs from Norway, Sweden and Denmark. We're now close to a sufficient basis for starting the analysis and the search for the mutations behind cataract.

The blood samples are frozen and stored in the biobank of the Norwegian Veterinary College. The samples are preserved also for testing any other diseases or problems that we can possibly meet in the future.

Buhund owners today have a special responsibility taking care of the breed, which actually is an important national heritage. If you have a buhund and want to help preserving the breed healthy in the future, please contact us to know precisely how you can contribute.

You are also welcome to contact us if you want to know more about these wonderful dogs. Maybe it is just a buhund you have been looking for as your next buddy!

www.buhund.no
The Norwegian Buhund - a national heritage

The Norwegian Buhund is one of 7 Norwegian dog breeds. It has its origin back to the first settlements in Norway. In earlier days it was common as a farmer's dog. The buhund has both shepherd, hunting and security features, and it is an excellent all-round dog. The breed, however, experienced a major setback with import of other European breeds in the 1900ies. Even today we have a challenge keeping up the buhund population. In Norway we find about 1000 individuals and about 700-800 in Denmark and Sweden. We also have several dogs in Finland, UK and USA. Annually there are registered about 70-80 puppies in Norway by the Norwegian Kennel Club (NKK). The Buhund is an energetic, agile family and working dog with healthy anatomic qualities. It is a medium-sized Spitz breed, with colors black and wheaten, that may vary from pale to reddish yellow. In addition to the traditional tasks such as herding and hunting, the buhund is excellent for activities such as agility, tracking, searching and obedience. In the UK, it is actually used as a service and drug dog.

The buhund is a healthy dog, but we have so few dogs left that it is extremely important to keep a good overview of the state of health, in order to engage in healthy and efficient breeding programs. It is our responsibility to preserve the dog healthy and fit so that our descendants can enjoy its wonderful temperament and characteristics.

The Buhund Project was initiated summer 2009, and is a collaboration between the Norwegian College of Veterinary Medicine, the Norwegian Buhundklubb and the Buhund clubs in the Nordic countries. Buhund-owners and breeders in other countries like England and USA will also be invited to contribute. Professor of genetics, Frode Lingaaas, and veterinarian/eye-examiner Ernst-Otto Ropstad are our partners at the Norwegian School of Veterinary Science. In addition, veterinarians in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and especially buhund-owners and breeders contribute actively to ensure that the project will succeed.

The Buhund project has two main intentions:

1. Obtain a better overview of the state of health on the Norwegian Buhund.

With only few individuals in a breed there are challenges concerning healthy and rational breeding. It is therefore important to know as much as possible about the problems and diseases in the breed. A health survey is a valuable tool in our efforts to preserve the buhund breed healthy. With buhund-owners actively contributing with information, we will get a good basis for breeding in the years to come.


As one of few known problems concerning the Norwegian buhund, we find two types of cataracts. Cataract is a disease in the eye’s lens that changes the lens material so that the lens will appear grayish, and also prevent light getting through to the retina as intended, resulting that the dog gradually may lose its eyesight to various extent.

The first type of cataract, hereditary genetic cataract, is a type of cataract that to a greater or lesser extent will affect the dog’s eyesight. Different parts of the lens are affected, and the dog may lose its eyesight partly of completely. Previous studies (Bjerkås / Haaland, 1995) estimates that about 10% of the buhunds have these lens changes. The second type of cataract, Pulverulent Nuclear Cataract (PNK) is often called “Buhundkatarakt”, because it is so common in the breed. In the study referred to above approximately 50% of the dogs were affected. By this kind of cataract the lens will partly look like “cotton candy”, but it is assumed to have little impact on the dog’s eyesight.

Today eye-screening is the only way of detecting cataracts in the buhund. We recommend eye-examination for breeding female dogs before each litter, for male dogs annually as long as they are used for breeding, and other dogs at 1, 4 and 7 years of age. It is very important to eye-examine regularly because cataracts can develop - that is, a dog who is healthy by 1 year of age, may have developed cataracts at 4-5 years of age.

As part of the Buhund project there will be eye-examinations and blood samples collected from a larger number of buhunds. This material will be the basis for a scientific research project which purpose it is to find the mutation that causes the disease. On the basis of this a genetic test for cataract in the buhund will be developed. If we succeed, we can determine if a dog is carrier of the cataract gene or not using a blood test early in the dog’s life. Then we will have a much better basis for the planning of future breeding.