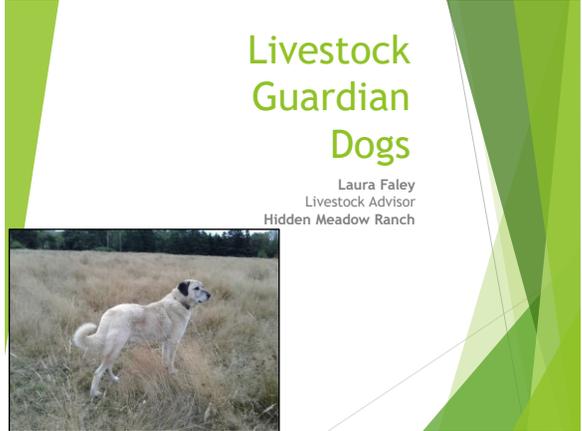




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2

Livestock Guardian Dogs

- ▶ The term Livestock Guardian Dog, or LGD, has two meanings:
 - ▶ It refers to a specific category of breeds of dogs
- AND
- ▶ It refers to a specific job description

3

Define some terms

- ▶ Prey drive
- ▶ Food-motivated
- ▶ Pack order
 - ▶ Dominance
 - ▶ Submissive
 - ▶ Alpha
 - ▶ Leadership

4

- ▶ Obedience
- ▶ Intelligence
 - ▶ Problem-solving
 - ▶ Judgement calls
 - ▶ Adaptability
 - ▶ Trainability

5

They have been selectively bred

- ▶ To bond and live with their stock



6

They have been selectively bred

- ▶ To bond and live with their stock
- ▶ To be hardy and live outdoors in all weather



7

**THIS IS A LIVESTOCK GUARDIAN DOG
HE PREFERS TO SLEEP ON THE SNOW
RATHER THAN IN A HOUSE**



**THIS IS NOT ANIMAL ABUSE!
THIS BREED HAS NEVER BEEN AN INDOOR
PET! IF YOU AREN'T INVITING ALL THE WOLVES INSIDE,
DON'T WORRY ABOUT INVITING HIM IN.**

8



9

If you're hot, they're probably hot too



Furnaces, fires, and radiators can raise the temperature in the house to unbearable levels.

**PLEASE:
Bring your humans OUTSIDE**

10

They have been selectively bred

- ▶ To bond and live with their stock
- ▶ To be hardy and live outdoors in all weather
- ▶ To survive battles with large predators

Komondor



11

12



Sheep comforts dog after it protected their herd from wolves...
Caucasus Mtns, Georgian Shepherd Dog



13

They have been selectively bred

- ▶ To bond and live with their stock
- ▶ To be hardy and live outdoors in all weather
- ▶ To survive battles with large predators
- ▶ To need minimal human interaction



14

What makes a good livestock guardian dog?

- ▶ 6,000 years of natural and intentional selection
- ▶ They are generally large breeds that can intimidate a predator on looks alone.
- ▶ They are highly intelligent and acutely observant.
- ▶ These dogs are vocal often and bark when anything appears suspicious or out of the ordinary.
- ▶ Their barking will accelerate as a threat grows larger.
- ▶ As a last resort, good guardian dogs will engage the predator directly and not back down.

15

Polish Tatra chasing off a Russian brown bear



16



17



18

Physical defining characteristics of a Livestock Guardian Dog:

- A powerful, athletic, & agile build, able to soak up, as well as dish out, a great deal of damage



19

Thick, loose skin (thicker than any other canid) which is difficult to pierce



20

A harsh, all-weather, double coat which protects them from heat, cold, injury, wetness, dirt, & debris



21

A physical morphology which gives them a softer expression, that serves to make them less intimidating in appearance to livestock, but a large size that is more intimidating to predators



22

A naturally calm, submissive demeanor around flighty prey animals



23

Low prey drive



24

An affinity for weak & small animals (including children)



25

A high territorial defense drive that causes them to stand their ground rather than flee from a threat



26

These pictures are of the same puppy, about 4 mos old



27

An instinctive ability to evaluate threat level & respond accordingly



28

The ability to think independently, problem solve, take quick stock of any situation, & make effective decisions at a moment's notice



29

An instinct to conserve their energy so they are always ready to take action



30

A lower metabolism that requires less food for their size



50 lbs @ 4 cups/day

=



110 lbs @ 4 cups/day

31

Turk - Growth in one year



32

Turk - Growth in one year



33

Territory

- ▶ Self-define their territory
- ▶ Perimeter Patrol
- ▶ Pee-marked perimeter
- ▶ 10-60 acres, or more
- ▶ Don't tend to "wander" (i.e., they leave with purpose)

34

They are perpetually curious about what is happening next door.



35

Good Fences make good Neighbors

- ▶ Fences for LGDs must be:
 - to the ground
 - 4-6 feet tall
 - Have no "step-ladders"
 - Predator-tight
 - Have no gaps stock can get through
 - May need electric around top and bottom

36

A good, dog-tight fence

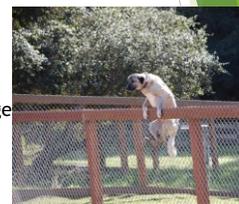


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Good Fences make good Neighbors

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- Predator-tight
- Have no gaps stock can get through
- May need electric!!



38

► Good fences are essential.

- It may be that fixing your fencing is all you need to solve your predation problem.
- In the long run, good fencing is cheaper than a LGD, unless:
 - you have a very large property, or
 - you have a predation problem that fences will not solve.

39

► Good fences are essential.

- If you are experiencing predation because you have “leaky” or make-shift fencing, getting an LGD will NOT make your life more peaceful.

- You will just end up with a “leaking” dog (in other words, a dog who gets out).



40

Selecting a Livestock Guardian Dog

41

Selection Criteria

- BOTH parents must be working LGDs
- BOTH parents must be out with stock
 - If the seller does not trust one of the parents with their stock, you should not trust its offspring with yours
- Calm disposition (unless 6-9 months old)
- Give every appearance of being solid in body and healthy
- No indications of aggression
- PLEASE purchase from a reputable breeder

42

Some Physically defining characteristics

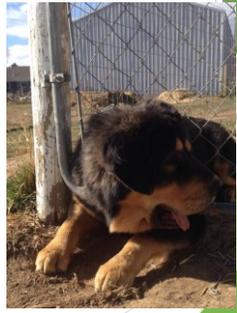
- ▶ Low ear set
= Low prey drive



43

Some Physically defining characteristics

- ▶ Low ear set
- ▶ BIG paws
= BIG dog



44

Some Physically defining characteristics

- ▶ Low ear set
- ▶ BIG paws
- ▶ A curled tail
All LGDs have a curled tail.



45

Common Breeds

Livestock Guardian Dogs

46

“The Great Whites”



47



Great Pyrenees

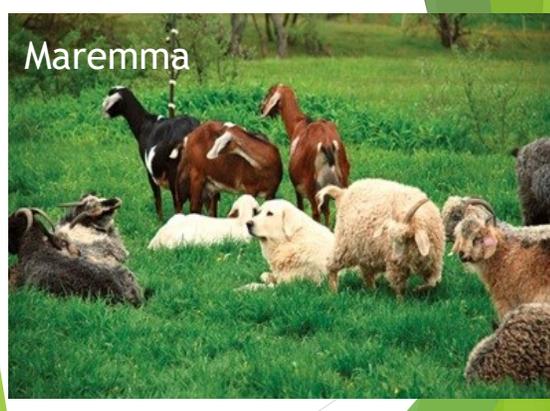
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49



50



51



52



53

Slovak Cuvac (or Cuvasc)



54

Akbash Dog



55

Eastern LGDs



56

Caucasian Ovcharka (Russian SheepDog CAS)



57

Central Asian Ovcharka (Central Asian Sheepdog CAO)



58

Sharplaninac



59

Tibetan Mastiff



60

Tibetan Mastiff w/ new kids



61

Kangal Dog



62

Western LGDs



63

Anatolian Shepherd Dog (ASD)



64

The Komondor



65

66



67

Spanish Mastiff



68

Great Pyrenees Guardian Dog with Alpine Goats



69

Acquiring an LGD

- ❖ Buy a trained LGD
 - \$500-\$2,000
 - 14 months to 2-3 years old
- ❖ Adopt an adult LGD
 - \$500
 - Likely to have some issues
- ❖ Purchase an LGD along with its flock of sheep or goats
- ❖ Buy a puppy (or two)
 - \$250 - \$1,500

70

Crossbred LGDs

Crossed ONLY between LGD breeds!

71

Each of these dogs, apart from size, could be easily mistaken for any crossbred dog. Be very wary of crossbred LGDs!



72

Suspicious coloring



73

Be very wary of crossbred LGDs. Insist upon seeing both parents living and working with stock.

If the breeder does not trust one of the dogs to live with livestock, you should not trust its offspring to live with yours.

74

Choose good genetics

Bad training and bad behavior can be fixed; bad genetics cannot.

- ▶ BOTH parents must be working LGDs
- ▶ BOTH parents must be from only LGD breeds
- ▶ You should see BOTH parents in fields/pens with stock.
 - ▶ If the breeder does not trust one of the dogs to live with livestock, you should not trust its offspring to live with yours.
 - ▶ Ask for references: people who have purchased from previous litters, the siblings of the parents, or the original breeder of both parents.
 - ▶ And, if the breeder wants to sell him at younger than 10 weeks, that is a huge red flag!
- ▶ Unless the parents are at least 5-6 years old, ask for health certification of hips, elbows, eyes, etc.
 - ▶ However, if you are seeing solidly healthy dogs that are at least 5 years old, actively moving and working, their bodies are speaking for themselves.

75

These behaviors should both be instinctive.



76



77

Training LGDs

Great Pyrenees Tricks

 SIT	 DOWN	 SHAKE
 ROLL OVER	 FETCH	 STAY

78

Training LGDs

- **No playing** with the stock = chasing, pouncing, batting with paws, chewing on, etc
- Basic Obedience = "Sit" for food, "Wait" inside the gate, "No" jumping up, Walk nicely on a leash, "Load up" into the vehicle, "Stand" for an exam
- Never permit them outside the fence without a leash
- "Come" can be taught, but it requires trust and persuasion
- House-breaking is easy, BUT becomes unreliable if LGDs are kept inside too much of the time

79

Inappropriate Behavior!



80

LGD Breeds do not make easy pets

- ▶ The LGD body is not designed to be a jogging companion.
- Their leg joints and lungs are designed for short intense bursts of activity, not sustained, repetitive activity
- ▶ In the LGD mind, a walk on a leash is a perimeter patrol.
- ▶ LGDs make excellent hiking companions, if you understand that the dog is along for protection NOT for exercise
- ▶ LGDs bark at night

81



82

Community Challenges and the Right to Farm

Livestock Guardian Dogs bark - a lot.

83

Right to Farm

- ▶ LGDs are considered Livestock rather than "dogs"
- ▶ Therefore municipal ordinances for dog behavior and welfare do not apply to them:
 - ▶ Barking ordinances
 - ▶ Housing ordinances
 - ▶ Leash laws
 - ▶ Animal welfare laws
- ▶ However, this is only true in ag zoning

84

Safety from Barking Ordinances - 5 Conditions

1. Your zoning permits agricultural activity
2. Your agricultural activity is protected by a "Right to Farm" waiver or ordinance
3. You own stock that require protection
4. There are known predators in your area and you have reason to be concerned for the safety of your animals
5. Your dog is a recognized Livestock Guardian breed

85

Although the Right to Farm protects you from legal consequences, it does not prevent you from having unhappy neighbors.

86

Barking can be modified and reduced

- ▶ Over time, and with consistent defense, your LGDs will convince all the predators in the area that this territory is owned and there will then be far fewer challenges (which means less barking)
- ▶ Nighttime barking is an indication of the presence and activity of creatures your neighbors probably don't really want around.
- ▶ Idiot (annoying) barking can be effectively disciplined and essentially eliminated

87

Seven truths about LGDs

▶ Truth #1)

A good LGD should be handled, be socialized, and be able to be redirected from what it perceives to be its work, and is, therefore, never inherently dangerous.

88

Truth #2

- ▶ An LGD is NOT just a big, fuzzy, friendly dog
- ▶ :: a friendly LGD will not necessarily allow you on her property, even if you are a nice person
- ▶ Some breeds are more people-friendly than others

89

Truth #3

- ▶ ONLY dogs from LGD breeds or a mix of LGD breeds will make good LGDs
- ▶ even if raised with livestock from puppyhood
- ▶ LGDs have been selectively bred for a specific function

90

Truth #4

- ▶ Good LGDs need fences. Just because they bond to their stock does not mean they won't leave them to deal with something in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Yes, there weren't any fences in the Old World where these dogs were developed, and the dogs ranged and created a living fence for their stock.
- ▶ **Truth #4a)** Even the very best livestock dogs need a secure fence.
- ▶ **Truth #4b)** Any LGD can easily jump a 4-5 ft fence. Big and low energy does not mean not athletic.

91

Truth #5

- ▶ Although guarding behavior is instinctive, LGDs need training from either their people or an older LGD as to acceptable behavior around the stock
- ▶ (NO playing with, jumping on, or mouthing).
- ▶ AND, no amount of training can train in the instincts to protect and defend livestock.

92

Truth #6

- ▶ LGDs are difficult to "train" because they are very smart. LGDs can excel at Basic Obedience, but they need to see the point.

93

Truth #7

- ▶ An aggressively barking LGD is not frightened and cannot be "calmed" and is unlikely to back down.
- ▶ LGDs are not motivated by fear; they are resource and territory guarding

94

Final recommendations

- ▶ LGDs work best in pairs.
- ▶ Try to start with a trained LGD.
- ▶ LGDs are not like other dogs. Forget everything you thought you knew about training, bonding, and living with dogs. It doesn't count here.
- ▶ ALWAYS give your LGD the benefit of the doubt, even if you find it with blood on its muzzle and a dead animal between its paws.

95



96