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Tazi (Sight Hounds): A Lesser Known Canine Germplasm

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Abstract

Since last many decades there has been a raging desire to keep western breeds of dogs as pets. This sentiment has led to utter neglect of Indian breeds of dogs. Recently three Indian dogs' germplasm have been recognized as breeds viz., Rajapalayam, Mudhal Hound and Chippiparai. India is home to many sight hound type breeds of dogs, these dogs are acclimatized to tropical climate of Indian subcontinent. They need a good amount of exercise and require less grooming. These breeds of dog have amazing sight that helps them to chase away rabbits or any other small animals.

Introduction

A pet owner moving with his pet, either a German shepherd, Dalmatian, Labrador retriever, Pug or Lhasa Apso is a common sight. Most of the pet dogs that we see occupying our neighborhood home are pedigreed dogs. They are of either of American or English pedigree. In the struggle to be 'modern' and 'forward-thinking' the only ones who suffer are the poor Indian dogs.

Indian Dog Breeds are found everywhere in the country, from a village to the busiest streets of Indian cities, most popular Indian dog breed is known as Pariah Dog, found all over Continent. Our Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' radio addresses on Sunday, urged people of the country to adopt dogs of Indian breeds.

Tazi – The Indian Dog Breed

Sighthound (gaze hounds) are hounds that hunt primarily by sight and speed, rather than by scent and endurance some example of sighthound breeds are Afghan hound, Greyhound, Saluki and Irish Wolfhound. The Tazy or Tazi dog is available in two varieties. The two are the same breed and are only different in regards to the area where they are locally bred and a slight difference when it comes to their height. The two varieties are: The Kazakh Tazi and the Turkmenian Tazi. India is also proud owner of sight hounds like Chippiparai, Mudhol Hound, Rampur Greyhounds, lesser known canine germplasm is "Tazi or "Taji" as it is locally called.

Synonyms: Taji.

Origin: India. Though first discovered in India it is quite difficult to find an original Tazi, as this breed now predominantly resides in Russia.

Purpose: It is bred to hunt down wolves, wildcats, foxes etc. in long distance chase across desert and grasslands.

Temperament: They are playful, loyal and affectionate. They also like to run with the owner and please the owner.

Endurance: It is known for athletic strong built, energy and



Figure 1: A “Tazi” Breed of dog

alertness. The Tazi is a remarkably hardy dog, tolerant of both the bitter cold and the burning heat of the desert. This dog is also known to run at speeds of about 18-20 miles per hour.

Appearance: As Compared to the Russian Tazi dogs, Indian Tazis are shorter in height, sturdier and have comparatively less fur. Not much information is available about the body measurements of this dog.

Conclusion

Due to our negligence and apathy we are left with very few Indian breeds of dog however off late there has been a growing awareness towards Indian dog breeds. Formation of dog society and recognition of few dog breeds is a step in the direction. Initiatives like organizing dog shows and state chapters and molecular level studies to confirm the lineage needs to be taken up.

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