



## LABRADOR RETRIEVER CLUB OF VICTORIA

### SO YOU WANT TO BREED YOUR LABRADOR?

To prepare your dog or bitch for a breeding career, the following initial steps must be taken:

1. Your Labrador dog or bitch must be registered on the main register (blue registration certificate) with the Victorian Canine Association.
2. If it is a male, he must have two normal testicles descended into the scrotum.
3. He or she will need to be x-rayed at or after 12 months of age, under full anaesthetic to assess his or her hip and elbow status. He or she must be micro-chipped for positive identification.
4. The x-rays will have to be scored by an A.N.K.C. approved veterinary radiologist and a certificate issued.
5. He or she will need to have an eye examination by a veterinary ophthalmologist and be given a clear eye certificate that will need to be renewed annually. The eye certificate has to be current when the puppies go to their new homes. i.e. 8 weeks after the litter is born.
6. Transfer registration of your dog or bitch. If you breed your bitch, you will need to register a kennel prefix with the Victorian Canine Association prior to registering your litter.

The approximate cost of the above procedures will be in the vicinity of \$400.00 to \$500.00.

Note: A list of Veterinary Ophthalmologists and Approved ANKC Veterinary Radiologists is printed in the Labrador Retriever Club of Victoria's newsletter.

#### Explanation of Certificates.

**The lower the score, the better the hips and elbows.** The breed average for Hip Dysplasia is currently approximately 12 (i.e. right hip 6, left hip 6, or right hip 5, left hip 7 etc.) Evenness of score is more desirable, 0:0 being the best score. Elbow x-rays are graded 0, 1, 2 and 3, the best grade being 0. It is not recommended to breed from dogs with scores of Grade 2 or higher.

With the eye certificate, all the ticks should be in the negative or not affected column. To be current, it should have been issued within the past 12 months. Also now available is a DNA test to determine the genetic status of your dog regarding Progressive Retinal Atrophy (Optigen).

References:

Joint Problems:

<http://www.vetmed.usdavis.edu/iewg/iewg/html>

<http://www.labbies.com/dysplasa.htm>

Progressive Retinal Atrophy:

<http://www.optigen.com>

When all the preceding information is available, the decision becomes **to breed or not to breed.**

When assessing all aspects of what you now know about your dog or bitch you may need the input of an experienced person in the breed to help you recognise the strengths and weaknesses of your Labrador.

What are the qualities of my dog or bitch?

Is the breeding of my dog or bitch likely to improve the future of the breed?

Are the hip scores within the breed average?

If they are above does that mean I shouldn't breed with my dog or bitch?

#### The Stud Dog

If you offer your male Labrador at stud you will need to:

- a. Be aware of the mechanics of mating.  
References:  
Labrador Retrievers Today by Carole Good pub. Ringpress Books Ltd.  
Dogs & How To Breed Them by Hilary Harmar pub. John Gifford Ltd
- b. Be able to provide secure accommodation for a bitch in season to stay for up to two weeks whilst she reaches ovulation and becomes ready for your dog to mate.
- c. Advertise your Labrador so that people searching for a suitable stud dog know that he is available.
- d. Provide copies of hips and elbow certificates and a clear eye certificate that will be current when the puppies go, also preferably an Optigen test result.

### **The Brood Bitch**

If you decide to breed your Labrador bitch you will need to:

- a. Be aware of her cycle when exactly she comes in season that is when she starts bleeding from the vulva.
- b. Search for a suitable stud dog for your bitch before she comes into season This should not be done at the last minute as it is important that the dog you use compliments your bitch as much as possible both physically and temperamentally and that the score sheets are also compatible. The most suitable dog may not live close by and it may be necessary to travel some distance to use the right dog.
- c. Provide a secure pen for your bitch when she is in season and an appropriate area for a whelping box and puppy run.
- d. Understand that the gestation period (from mating to whelping) in the dog is 63 days. Puppies can arrive from 58 days and occasionally they arrive late. It is important to have good veterinary care available. Your vet must be aware that your bitch has been mated, her due date and you need to ask if your own vet will be available outside of hours should you need him or her. There are emergency clinics operating 24 hours should your vet not be available. It is important to be aware that should the whelping not proceed normally then an emergency caesarean may be necessary. This procedure could cost in excess of \$1000.00.
- e. Research and understand the mechanics of whelping so that you can be of assistance to your vet if and when necessary and can judge should vet intervention be necessary.

Reference:

Labrador Retrievers Today by Carole Good pub. Ringpress Books Ltd.

Dogs & How To Breed Them by Hilary Harmar pub. John Gifford Ltd

<http://www.labbies.com/whelp.htm>

Nutrition-

[http://www.labbies.com.Canine\\_Nutrition\\_ss.htm](http://www.labbies.com.Canine_Nutrition_ss.htm)

<http://www.labbies.com.nutri.htm>