



Ohio is Getting a State Dog, Well Maybe

By Nancy Secrist, *Easdale: the best pet care*

What do the dapper tuxedo-wearing Boston Terriers of Massachusetts and the hardy, wavy coated Chesapeake Bay Retrievers of Maryland have in common? Well, it's the same thing they have in common with hunting dogs such as the Plott Hounds of Appalachia and the kinky coated American Water Spaniel of Wisconsin. Okay, what if I add in the Alaskan Malamute and Chinook sled dogs?

One common factor links each and every one of these dog breeds, they are designated state dogs! Of the 193 dogs recognized by the American Kennel Club, only 12 have special significance to their state and have been elevated to being official state dogs.

Naturally, the state dog of Alaska is the powerful sled pulling breed of Alaskan Malamutes. They have the best claim of all on American origins as their ancestors were helpers and companions to the Mahlemut tribe of the Inupiat two to three thousand years ago. Likewise, a more recent breed, New Hampshire's Chinook sled dogs were made famous during Admiral Byrd's first Antarctic expedition in 1928.

In Virginia, the American foxhound is mostly a rural breed as they are known for their musical baying whenever they get excited about something. Meanwhile, Plott Hounds are the state dog of North Carolina, still popular there and actively hunting. If you have ever seen a Catahoula Leopard Dog from Louisiana, you wouldn't forget it! Their often mismatched or blue eyes are eerie and the unusual spotted pattern make them even more distinctive. Texas has a herding dog, the Blue Lacey, which made a bid in 2008 to become Texas A&M's mascot, the traditional collie. It didn't work out, but there might be another challenge in the future!

Did you know that only 13 states have designated a state dog? In March, 2018, Rep. Jeffery Rezabek (Rep) introduced a bill to name the Labrador Retriever as the state dog of Ohio. I don't know what the status of that bill is at the moment, but is that the best choice? True, Labradors are the most popular dog in the US; in fact, for 28 years straight but that's not special to Ohio. They are a British dog, so why Ohio? I would put forth the Clumber Spaniel. It was due to the efforts of Ohioans that the breed survived World War II and

continues to this day. They are unusual and unique in appearance. True they are British in origin too, but Ohio has been central to the breed for many decades. Clumbers are rare and uncommon yet one of them topped the 1996 Westminster Kennel Club in New York for Best In Show, and that's not easy for a spaniel!

Ohio has never designated an official dog but we need to think about that. What sort of dog do you think it should be?

Seeing Stars and Stripes?



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