



TAMASKAN BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

HOME OF THE AATU TAMASKAN

Companion Dogs

BY REGINA SKARZINSKAS

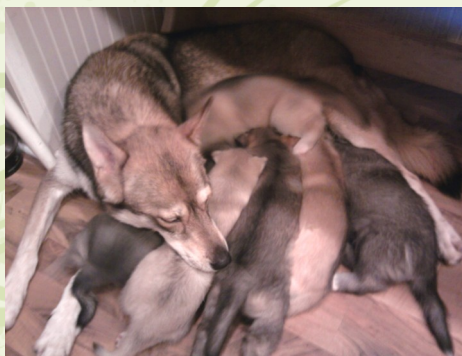
The Aatu Tamaskan is described as a companion dog with the stamina of the working dog group. What exactly is a companion dog and what makes the Aatu a good one are two questions I am often asked.

Though companion dogs are not considered "working dogs," they do have an important job. They were designed to provide company to their human owners. In so doing they bring joy and unconditional love into the lives of their human pack.

What are the characteristics of a good companion dog? The most important is temperament. Traits like aggression, food guarding and a low tolerance for being handled are hard to fix and hard to live with. Good companion dogs are naturally obedient, intelligent and easy to train. While there is a range of variation in exactly how naturally obedient and how easy to train. The general ability is there. Some Aatu Tamaskans may be a bit more stubborn and need an owner who enjoys their spunky nature and likes a challenge.

The activity level of your companion dog should reflect you. Here the background of the Aatu is important in that foundation breeds include working dogs who have the stamina for very active lifestyles and athletic activities. A more laid back, Aatu will still have those capabilities, but may be happy just to hang back with a less active owner.

Finding just the right companion dog is as much an art as a science. A good breeder will ask a lot of questions about you, your lifestyle and your expectations of a puppy in order to help make that perfect match. The Aatu truly can be "man's best friend in wolf's clothing."



Inna with her Litter whelped March 1st, 2011 by Conchur Tamaskan, OR

Volume 2, Issue 2

April 5, 2011



Inside This Issue:

Microchipping your dog 2-3

Separation Anxiety 3-4

Rattlesnake Avoidance Training 5

Membership update 6



Microchipping for Your Dog's Safety

By DANA BETTGER

Imagine you come home from work and are not greeted by your four legged friend. You go looking through the house and yard only to find out your dog has found a way out of the yard and is missing.

You are not alone, millions of dog owners lose their pets each year and tragically few are reunited with their owners. Sadly, many lost dogs end up in shelters, are adopted out to new homes or even euthanized. Many dog owners use collars and name tags which are important, but can tear and fall off. It is important that your dog has identification on them at all times. The best way to ensure that your pet is identified is with an implanted microchip. Implanted microchips, when combined with visible ID tags on a pet's collar, have proved to be the most reliable system for the recovery of lost or stray companion animals (ASPCA).

How it Works

What is a microchip you may wonder? A microchip is about the size of a grain of rice. It is a miniature computer chip or transponder and can store an identification number which transmits that identification number through radio waves to a scanner (Petplace).

The Microchip is compatible with living tissue and is designed to last for the dogs life. They do not need to be charged or replaced. Your veterinarian will use a special syringe and needle to inject the microchip between your dog's shoulder blades under the skin. The procedure is comparable to getting a shot. When my dog's got their microchip they didn't seem to be in pain. It was like getting their vaccinations. The fee for this procedure can vary from \$ 20-45 depending the area you live in.

Once injected into your dog, the veterinarian will use the scanner and check to ensure that the microchip is working properly.



Photos courtesy of AVID®

Once you have the microchip in your dog you have to register him/her with the microchip company, which will normally charge a annual or onetime fee.

With AVID® you pay a one-time fee of \$19.95 for a single pet or \$50.00 for all your pets (up to 3 pets). Avid does not charge a annual fee, but will charge \$6.00 for information changes. Change of ownership requires a new registration (<http://www.avidplc.com/>).

HomeAgain® charges a annual fee of \$ 16.99 and enrolls pets with any brand of microchip. HomeAgain (<http://public.homeagain.com>) annual membership includes:

- National Pet Recovery Database
- Lost Pet Specialists
- Rapid Lost Pet Alerts -->
- 24/7 Pet Medical Emergency Hotline
- Found Pet Travel Assistance

Lets be realistic, we know that no method of identification is perfect. In order to protect your dog you need be a responsible dog owner. Ensure that you keep current identification tags on your dog at all times, consider microchipping as reinforcement, and never allow your dog to roam free. Just remember that if your dog gets out and is lost that the chances of recovering him/her increases if you have proper identification on them.

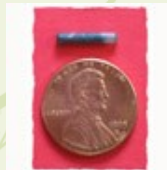


Photo courtesy of AVID®

Microchipping for Your Dog's Safety cont.



Here is some information on the two main Microchip Suppliers and Registers.

AVID®

To date, AVID® has sold several million microchips. According to a spokesperson, a pet is reunited with his owner every 32 minutes. Currently, over 142,000 lost pets have been returned home. For more information on AVID® microchips, visit them at <http://www.avidid.com> or call 1-800-336-AVID. To register a pet go to <http://www.avidplc.com/>

HomeAgain®

To date, HomeAgain® has sold over 500,000 microchips and over 34,000 pets have been reunited with their owners. For more information on HomeAgain® microchips, visit them at <http://www.public.homeagain.com> or call 1-888-HOMEAGAIN (1-888-466-3242)

Separation Anxiety

BY REGINA SKARZINSKAS

Separation anxiety is an exaggerated fear of being alone. It is a common condition and relatively easy to overcome. Common behaviors associated with separation anxiety are: defecation and urination in inappropriate places, whining, destructive behavior and excessive barking. Even depression and hyperactivity could be symptoms of separation anxiety in a puppies although they could also signal other problems, so it is important to rule out potential medical concerns first of all. Once you've established that anxiety over being left alone is triggering this behavior, the overall approach is to target the anxiety. There are two factors at play here, being left behind by the head of the pack, and not knowing how to keep him or herself entertained.

When you bring a puppy into your home, you and your family become the puppy's pack. The alpha is generally the person who has the primary responsibilities for feeding and caring for the dog. If your puppy is not used to being left alone or is left alone for long periods of time, the anxiety comes from being separated from the pack. It is important for the puppy to be comfortable and calm by himself and to understand that you will come back.

A crate is probably the best and most effective tool to deal with separation anxiety. There are two lessons to be learned. First that you will come back and second how to stay calm and entertained while you are gone.

Learning that you will come back.

The speed with which you go through these steps should be dictated by the puppy. Go up to his/her or her limits without crossing them. If at some point your puppy becomes anxious, go back to the previous step and start again. Patience is the key here and the rewards are priceless for your puppy as well as for the rest of the pack.

Start by putting the puppy in a crate and then immediately take him/her out. If he/she does okay with that, put him/her in a crate and count to 5 or 10 whatever his/her tolerance. Eventually you want to work up to maybe 5 minutes of your puppy quietly being in the crate.

The next step is put your puppy in a crate and step out of the room. Your puppy can still see you but you are not right next to him/her. Again slowly expand that time until you get to about 5 minutes.

Continue on Page 4



Separation Anxiety cont.



Follow that with putting him/her in a crate and walk out of the room and then immediately come back in. Again stretch that out to about 5 – 10 minutes.. Remember that if he/she is quiet and behaves lots of praise and reward. Your reward might be a big hug, a favorite treat, which may be something your puppy only gets when he/she leaves the crate or taking him/her outside for a few minutes to play with an absolutely favorite toy. It must be a high end treat and your puppy needs to associate this huge reward with good behavior in the crate.

Expand the time to about 20 minutes in the crate.

The next step is put your puppy in the crate, leave the room and open and shut the front door. Then, walk back in and let him/her out. Again expand that time. You see where I am going. In each case you take him just to the limit he/she can tolerate and reassure your puppy that not only will you return, but there is a huge reward for his/her patience. If you cover the crate, your puppy might even just fall asleep, but working both the association with napping and developing a comfort level with you being gone tackles a number of potential problems.

Work within his level of tolerance.

Learning to entertain himself

I also do this with puppies. Teaching a puppy to be independent is an important skill. There is nothing worse than a companion dog who cannot be part of the family because he/she is an attention hound. In my house there are times when the puppies can ask for attention and times when it is clear they are on their own and asking for attention is unacceptable.

So, I start out with a statue.. like a garden troll or any kind of fairly substantial symbol. My daughters and I sit on the floor and play with the puppies. I take out the troll and put it in the middle of the room whereupon my daughters and I completely ignore the puppies and read a book. We do this for a very short period of time to start and eventually lengthen it. Eventually the puppies learn that when the troll is out, they must entertain themselves as they get no reward or recognition trying to engage us when the troll is there.

As the puppies get older, I simply have t o put the troll in front of their pen. The goal of course is to be able to have a houseful of people and not a peep out of a one of them because that troll signifies..” go play by yourself”. By teaching your puppy that he is on his own, and what are appropriate ways to entertain himself, the focus comes off of you and on to keeping himself happy in an acceptable manner while you are gone.

I hope these have helped. While you are working on this issue, Rescue Remedy might be useful, but I would only use it when you absolutely have to. Giving him that sense of security that even though he can't see you, you will come back takes care of the issue at its root. Think of the Rescue Remedy as a tool to get you there with a few less bumps.



*Rogan, Sabha, Sierra
Conchur Tamaskan, Oregon*



*Moya, Tullia, Dallas
Conchur Tamaskan, Oregon*

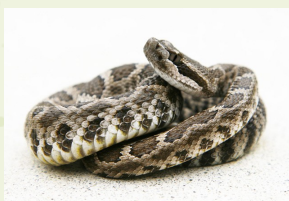




Rattlesnake Avoidance Training

By ERIC MATSUURA

Spring is considered by many to be the harbinger of rattlesnake season. However, warm weather can drive rattlesnakes to hunt even in winter. Taking the time to educate yourself and train your dog can prevent injury or even death. This is an informational article intended to increase awareness. I am neither a medical professional nor a herpetologist. Please consult with your veterinarian regarding rattlesnake vaccinations, post-bite treatment, or antivenin questions.



FACTS

There are four venomous snakes in the U.S.

- Pit Vipers – Cottonmouth Moccasins, Rattlesnakes, and Copperheads
- Coral Snakes ¼ of rattlesnake bites are “dry” – no venom is injected
- Bites are 25 times more fatal in dogs than in humans
- Approximately 5% of rattlesnake bites are fatal for dogs.
- Most rattlesnake venom is hemotoxic – damaging tissue, destroying blood cells, and causing internal hemorrhaging
- Baby rattlesnake and the Mojave Rattlesnake venom contains more neurotoxic properties making them extremely dangerous
- Rattlesnakes can be active all year round in some areas such as Southern California

TRAINING

Rattlesnake avoidance training consists of exposing a dog to the site, sound, and smell of a live rattlesnake that has been rendered safe - some schools will muzzle the head with tape and others have developed small helmets. Generally, dogs are taught aversive behavior with the use of a shock collar as the dog approaches the snake. Single or multiple snakes may be used and a “course” may be set up to provide different situations. This process is repeated until the dog passes an avoidance test. That is,

when lead along a path toward a rattlesnake, the dog will resist and pull the handler away from the path or stop and sit. Most schools recommend annual training.

PUT TO THE TEST

Our seven-month-old puppy, Zeus, was trained on March 27. Upon completion of the course, we felt confident that he had learned to avoid rattlesnakes. This was put to the test just 6 days later when a juvenile Pacific Rattlesnake showed up in our backyard (that’s him in the photo). My son, Blake, found it while he was playing fetch with Zeus. I captured the snake and placed him in a canvas bag. Please do not attempt this - I have handled snakes for over 30 years including dozens of rattlesnakes and possess professional snake tongs. We tested Zeus at three different locations in our yard. He could not see the snake but could hear and smell it. He stayed ten to fifteen feet away each time.



One last bit of advice – please do not get a false sense of security from snake fences or what you believe to be solid walls at your home. If you live in rattlesnake country, they will find a way into your yard.



Home of the Aatu Tamaskan

TAMASKAN BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

If you have any questions or would like some information on the AATU Tamaskan or the TBA please contact us at:

E-mail: info@tamaskanbreeders.com

Website: <http://www.aatutamaskanbreeders.com>

Welcome New TBA Members

By Tricia Lesch

The TBA Founding Members would like to take this opportunity to extend a heartfelt welcome to all new and renewing 2011 Breeder and Associate Members! We are not only excited for the new and renewing memberships but also for the newest foundation additions that are coming in 2011!

As most know, the TBA was established in early 2009 with one goal in mind... to gather together like minded individuals and dedicated breeders whose primary purpose is for the betterment of the Aatu Tamaskan breed where health and overall welfare are concerned. We feel grateful that all our members are devoted, immensely passionate and supportive of one another and that thus far we have been blessed with several vigorous Aatu litters.

Now that many of you are Aatu owners, if you are interested in becoming a TBA Member please contact our membership director at buckhorntamaskan@gmail.com.

Even if you haven't received your Aatu yet, your opinions and suggestions matter to us!



TAKEIA
Ta-Kari Tamaskan
Colorado Springs, CO

