

MEDIA RELEASE

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Oodles of schnoodles – and other great pets

Cross-breeds, long the underdog in Australia's pet populations, may soon be top dogs if the latest trends continue.

The President of the Australian Pet Dog Trainers Association (APDT), Karin Bridge, says she has noticed a growing trend toward so-called 'designer dogs' attending her pet dog classes.

"Last year about 10% of the dogs that attended adult dog training classes were designer dogs. This year, around 30% of the puppies in our puppy classes have been designer dogs: ten Cavoodles, seven Spoodles, two Schnoodles, four Moodles and one Labradoodle," says Karin Bridge, President of APDT.

"There has been an increase in the number of designer dogs in Australia, as people look for pets that they perceive will be well suited to their living arrangements and lifestyle. The 'oodles' are very popular because it is likely that they will have a non-shedding coat but often cross-breeds are popular just because they are active, smart dogs that may be easier to care for than some of the pure-bred dogs," says Susie Willis from the Petcare Information and Advisory Service (PIAS).

"Attitudes to dogs that have parents from two different breeds have really changed in the last ten years. They are now seen as bringing the best of the breeds together and our research indicates that their numbers are on the increase," she added.

"Our Spoodle, Parry, is really part of the family. The kids love running around with him and he is always happy to do whatever they are doing. He has a great temperament and the fact that he doesn't shed hair was important when we were looking at the different options for a dog," says Melbourne mother, Amanda Jones.

PIAS cautions prospective pet owners not to simply fall for a cute 'made up' breed name and a bundle of fluff.

"There is no doubt that many of the so called 'designer dogs' make delightful pets but it is most important to select your pet based on the lifestyle you have and the level of time and commitment you can give your pet," says Ms Willis.

"Any of the 'oodles' are part Poodle and Poodles are energetic, athletic dogs that make great family pets. Their coats may be non-shedding but they do require grooming and clipping. If they are crossed with a larger dog such as a Labrador or a Golden Retriever, the resulting Labradoodle or Groodle will be a large, energetic dog that requires lots of exercise, clipping and grooming. Of course, this may be just the sort of pet you are looking for!"

“When choosing a cross-breed puppy, firstly consider whether one or other of their parents would suit you. The puppy may have stronger characteristics of one of the parents so it is always best to ask this question first. Also consider the puppy’s likely temperament, exercise needs, grooming requirements, energy levels and whether it is mainly going to be an indoor or an outdoor dog.

“It is also important to check that all breeding stock has been screened for hereditary conditions such as hip or elbow displasia as well as eye conditions such as Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA).

“Whether cross-bred or pure-bred, it is important to make sure that you can provide a lifetime of love and care for your best friend. In return, you’ll get 100% pure companionship,” Ms Willis said.

(ENDS)

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Australia – A Nation of Pet Lovers

Australia is a nation of pet lovers. It is estimated that 63% of Australian households have some type of pet with 53% of households owning a dog or a cat.

Over many years, Australian and international research has shown that owning pets can help improve a person’s mental and physical health, reduce the effects of stress, help children learn about responsibility, facilitate social interaction between people and build a sense of community.

The Petcare Information & Advisory Service (PIAS) is funded by Mars Petcare Australia as part of its commitment to socially responsible pet ownership. PIAS’ websites: www.petnet.com.au and www.i-pet.com.au provide information on the responsible and enjoyable ownership of pets. The sites are suitable for children, although PIAS encourages parents to supervise any online access by their children.