

The Versatile Herding Dog

A conversation with Yvonne Evans-Wynn of Wynhaven Collies

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Sheep herding was one of man's earliest occupations and for centuries the dog has served as man's ally in his work. As Robert Leighton wrote in *The Complete Book of the Dog* in 1922, "In all pastoral countries and in all times the dog has been man's chosen and most useful helpmate as guardian of the sheepfold."

Although in the modern age the natural abilities of the herding dog are in far less demand, the standards by which the Herding breeds are judged are still blueprints for a functional herding dog. In an ideal world those who breed and own these dogs would assure that they are not only structurally able to perform the functions for which they were created, but that they retain the instinct to do so. To that end more owners and breeders today are not only showing their dogs in conformation but are also participating in herding trials and in other performance events with their dogs. Yvonne Evans-Wynn is one of these owners, and *Dogs in Review* asked her to share some of the experience she's gained with her multi-titled Collies.

Yvonne came from an equestrian background and grew up with a family Collie appropriately named 'Lassie.' As an adult, when she was ready for a dog of her own, she was attracted again to the intelligence, temperament and beauty of the breed she had known as a child. Her interest in the breed led her to the Collie Club of Georgia where she met a local breeder, and Yvonne acquired her first Collie, a Rough blue merle named 'Rocky,' in early 1997. The pair attended a class for puppies that reignited Yvonne's interest in training and before long Rocky was enrolled in agility classes, followed by obedience training. A year or two later another Collie club member introduced Yvonne to herding trials, inviting her to a herding clinic and suggesting that she have her dogs instinct tested on sheep, and there her experience really began.

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