

Introducing the Hokkaido

Brought to you by the Hokkaido Association of North America



History

The Hokkaido is a native Japanese dog. They originated on the northernmost island of Japan, and are often referred to as “Ainu Ken” after the original indigenous people of that island. They have very unique genetics and are quite an ancient breed. The Hokkaido was declared a Living Natural Monument of Japan in 1937.



Standard

Today, there are two main breed registries in Japan, the Hokkaido Ken Hozonkai and the Hokkaido Ken Kyokai. Almost no Hokkaido are registered outside of these two clubs, though the breed has gained AKC Foundation Stock Service recognition as of 2016. This is a medium sized dog, slightly larger than the Shiba Inu, but smaller than Akita. The average lifespan is 12-15 years.



Hunting

The Hokkaido is renowned for its bravery. While very few are still used to hunt bear today, at breed specialty shows in Japan, hunt instinct tests are conducted. There, the dogs are shown a live bear and scored on their movement, reaction, and hunting drive.



Temperament

Hokkaido are a moderate to high energy breed. They rest somewhere in between a Shiba Inu and Husky in terms of temperament. They want to please people, learn quickly, and are fairly reliable off lead. They do have a peculiar howl for greetings, and can be noisy when confined. Thus, apartments and long work hours are not a good idea for this breed.