

A wolf in dog's clothing

For years, experts have been describing certain breeds such as Huskies and Malamutes as primitive, meaning that the breed today is very close to the original canine that inhabited the earth or to the wolf and wild dogs of the world today.

Some breeds have been bred directly from their wild ancestors without too much evolution, while others have had 400 years or more of careful engineering to alter them. Up until now, experts have studied the breeding history, behaviour, plus look of the dog (proportions, gait, size, head and dental shape) to determine the breed's purpose and also its wildness. But new genetic research may turn the dog world on its tail with surprising wolf links.

Scientists now tell us that the Pekinese is closer to the Wolf than the Husky, that Chihuahuas and Daschunds have ferocious killer instincts like hunting dogs, while genetically, Greyhounds are herders and Old English Sheepdogs and Border Collies are not. If you've ever seen a Greyhound catch sight of a squirrel or watched a Sheepdog herd the family, you will find this tough to accept.

Is your dog a wolf in doggie disguise? The most wolf-like breeds are the Sharpei, Basenji, Sheba Inu, Chow-Chow, Akita, Siberian Husky and Alaskan Malamute. The German Shepherd is surprisingly absent from this list. He may look like a wolf, but genetically, he's not.

The German Shepherd actually belongs to a cluster of breeds primarily used for guarding that include many dark - masked dogs ; Boxers, Mastiffs, Bulldogs, Rottweilers and Bull Terriers. Another surprise is the St. Bernard, which is not in this group, but rather in the herding group along with 'Lassie' type Collies.

The largest group of dogs belong in the hunting group. Members include all Retrievers, Standard (Big) Poodles, Pointers, most Terriers, Hounds, Border Collies and some tiny toy dogs such as Daschunds and Chihuahuas.



DEBORAH WOLFE

CAMP GOOD DOG

Does that mean that a German Shepherd can't guard? Or that you can leave a pet Greyhound alone with baby goats? Hardly! Dogs can do amazing things both good and bad. Every dog can be trained to do the simple tasks we require of come, sit, stay, heel, off and manners (see [\[gooddog.com\]\(http://gooddog.com\) for free training tips\). That's doggie kindergarten, and it's easy for most of them, especially when you consider their proud lineage and the many abilities they inherit from their breed and from their common wolf ancestor.](http://www.camp-</p>
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So take this new information in stride. Your dog may be more wolf than you thought, but then again we all know that dogs, wolves and coyotes can interbreed, and that proves there is a lot of wolf in every dog!

By Deborah Wolfe, Owner of Camp Good Dog Inc., www.campgooddog.com.



Network For Animals held a dog wash Saturday at Consumer's Co-op in Pitt Meadows. The group is active in promoting spaying and neutering of your pets. Gryffin gets his revenge by shaking the water off.

By Jayne Fletcher

