Report on the Health Survey conducted by The Country Griffon Bruxellois Club of NSW

Dates -February – March 2016

The Survey

The survey was conducted over a one month period of time from 25th February to 25th March 2016.

The survey was promoted as widely as possible on Griffon groups on the social media and breed clubs in Australia and New Zealand.

The survey was promoted to as many countries as possible including Australia, New Zealand, USA, UK and Europe in order to get as wide a coverage as possible.

The survey was conducted by the Survey monkey and was anonymous. In order to protect anonymity respondents were not asked to identify country.

The survey was structured so that a respondent could only complete it once.

Purpose of the Survey

The survey was created in response to ongoing discussion about the overall health of the Griffon breed. It was obvious that there existed several schools of thought regarding this which ranged widely.

At one end of the opinion scale there is a group of people who promote the breed as being riddled with health issues and even go so far as to actively promote cross breeding with Australian Terriers in order to solve the health issues they believe exist in the breed. [1i]

At the opposite end of the spectrum are people who believe that the breed is generally healthy and long lived and have personally never experienced any of the issues described by the former group.

What became obvious in this discussion was the lack of comprehensive data on the breed on these matters.

Some surveys had been undertaken but they were on a very small scale and involved a small number of Griffons or were only based on data in a single country. [ii]

Other data on health came from health professionals who were treating Griffons with specific health conditions. While this data also included a number of unaffected dogs, assessed by breeders for health and research purposes the vast majority of dogs included in this data were dogs that had shown symptoms, thereby making the data collected skewed towards the poorer grades.

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[i] http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article…

[ii] UK Kennel Club Breed Health Survey 2014
http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/media/16510/griffon%20bruxellois.pdf

Griffon Bruxellois Club of Victoria Australian Health survey 2010   - Griffiti June 2010 Newsletter of the Griffon Bruxellois Club of Victoria

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[1]

This is particularly the case with SM/CM and the data collected can make the condition look worse than it may actually be.

The survey was designed to provide a snapshot on the health of the breed. It shows that at one specific period of time (one month in 2016) these were the health issues that affected Griffons, according to the owners and breeders of the Griffons.

Its purpose is to identify the health issues experienced by the breed at this time so that a greater understanding and knowledge of the breed health status can be obtained.

The survey will be made available widely to breeders, owners and clubs. These organisations or individuals will then be able to use the information as they see fit.

It is not intended to:
• provide specific medical details,
• provide details of testing or treatment
• identify countries, breeders, owners, researchers or veterinarians
• recommend future treatment, research or direction.

Structure of the Survey

The survey was structured with 10 questions.

The first question was in two parts.
 It asked if the respondent was a breeder, owner or other.

It also asked the number of Griffons owned or bred by the respondent.
This allowed the respondent to answer on a number of dogs, creating a wider statistical base

The following 8 questions referred to specific health issues that have been attributed to the Griffon Bruxellois. They asked respondents to state how many Griffons they had owned or bred with those specific conditions.

The final question provided a space for comments.

The survey did not distinguish between owners and breeders and it is possible that the results could be duplicated for an individual dog if both the breeder and the dogs now owner reported on a particular condition.

However if this occurs it is more likely to show a higher response to a particular condition, presenting the incidence of the condition as worse than it actually is. This is unavoidable but needs to be taken into consideration when assessing the results. Such data is more likely to err in favour of an increased incidence .

Survey Findings and Results

Number involved in Survey

A total of 457 people responded to the survey

This was broken into the following categories:

Breeder - 32.30%

Pet Owner- 61.95%

Other- 5.75%

Total – 100%

The total number or dogs referred to in the survey by the respondents was 9,130.

The lowest number from a single respondent was 0

The highest number from a single respondent was 440.

Summary of Results

- The most common issue identified by respondents was Patella Luxation with a total of 223 dogs identified with this problem
- The second most common issue was cleft palates/hair lips with 193 dogs identified
- The third most common issue was undescended testicles with 127 dogs identified with this problem.

Table of Findings

	Issue	Number of dogs identified
1.	Patella Luxation	224
2.	Cleft Palate/hair lip	193
3.	Undescended testicles	127
4.	Cataracts	104
5.	Inguinal Hernia	94
6.	Hip Displaysia	64
7.	Brachycephalic Airway Syndrome	57
8.	Heart Condition(under 8 years of age)	55
9.	Entropian or Distichiasis	50
10.	SM/CM(symptomatic and diagnosed by MRI)	48
11.	Anasarca (water baby)	46
12.	Wry mouth	46
13.	Cushings Disease	28
14.	Epilepsy	23
15.	Stenotic Nares	20
16.	Hydrocephalus (diagnosed by MRI)	17
17.	PRA	15
18.	Alopecia (baldness)	15
19.	Legge Calve Perthes	13
20.	Pectus Excavatum	11
21.	Granulomatous meningoencephalitis	8
22.	Non specific fitting in baby pups	4
23.	Missing Limbs	3
24.	Dermoid Sinus	2

Other Health Issue Identified by Respondents

These issues were identified by respondents in the final comments section- Question 10.
A number of them were repeatedly identified so the number of times they were identified has been included.

	Issue	Number of Dogs Identified
1.	No Health Issues	63
	Liver Conditions	
2.	High Liver Enzymes (at 8)	1
3.	Liver shunt	1
4.	Diseased liver	1
	Forms of Cancer	
5.	Myxo sarcoma on is tongue.(at 13)	1
6.	Canine hemangioma sarcoma	1
7.	Liver shunt	1
8.	Ear cancer	1
9.	Lymphoma (12 years old)	1
	Renal Conditions	
10.	Renal failure at 15	1
11.	Kidney stones	1
	Eye Conditions	
12.	Eye popped out- ultimately removed	1
13.	Canine eye Proptosis	1
14.	Old Age cataracts	1
	Allergic Conditions	
15.	Allergy	8
16.	Itchy Feet	1
17.	Sensitive skin	1
18.	Significant skin issues undiagnosed after 4 vets and multiple types of treatment for "allergies" "bacterial infection" "fungal infection"	1
19.	Irritable bowel food allergy to fatty food	1
	Chest/Abdominal Issues	
20.	Stones in bladder	3
21.	Pancreatitis	3
22.	Bulbous Prolapse	1
23.	Collapsed lung	1
24.	Mitral value disease	1
25.	Collapsed trachea	1
	Breeding/Whelping Issues	
26.	Umbilical Hernia	5
27.	Vulva operation due to issues	1
28.	Whelping difficulties	1
29.	Fading Puppies	1
30.	Puppy born with no tail and no anus	1
	Structural Issues- including Teeth	
31.	Incisor teeth missing	1

32.	Hip Problem	1
33.	Deformed spinal condition	1
34.	Brittle teeth	1
35.	Scoliosis Idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis	1
36.	Tooth problems	1
37.	Paralysed through injury	1
38.	Drag front paws	1
39.	Hind limb dewclaws	1
	Neurological Issues	
40.	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	1
41.	Dementia	1
42.	SM - MRI'd & reported by Rusbridge as a D - non-symptomatic	1
43.	In females nervousness	1
	Other Issues	
44.	Haemolytic anaemia	3
45.	Occasional snorting/cough	2
46.	Weak sexual drive and inability to mate in the male	1
47.	Low fertility	1
48.	Addison's disease	1

This survey will deliberately draw no conclusions- that is up to the individual breeders and clubs.

A full break down of all responses – untouched and unadulterated can be seen on the following pages