

## How can you find out about these activities?

The Flatcoated Retriever Society is here to help. We encourage owners to join our 'club' where you will find help and support on any subject Flatcoat related.

The Society produces a comprehensive information booklet which will be sent to you upon membership being accepted.

The Field Trial Sub-Committee, which co-ordinates all of the "working" activities of the Society, is your first port of call and along with the Area Representatives across the country there are many people who are ready and willing to give advice or to point you in the right direction if you are interested in trying something you and your dog might enjoy.

Most of these activities can be taught 'just for fun' but you can also compete if you wish.

So if we have whetted your appetite for working your Flatcoat, please get in touch. We have created a page on our website entitled "The Active Flatcoat" where you can find more information about the activities listed here, and contact details for the members of the Society who will be able to help.

We look forward to hearing from you!



## Who to Contact?

- **Flatcoated Retriever Society:**  
[www.flatcoated-retriever-society.org](http://www.flatcoated-retriever-society.org)
- **The Active Flatcoat:**  
[www.flatcoated-retrieversociety.org/working/the-active-flatcoat](http://www.flatcoated-retrieversociety.org/working/the-active-flatcoat)
- **Agility:**  
[www.agilitynet.co.uk/](http://www.agilitynet.co.uk/)
- **Canicross Trail Runners:**  
[www.canicross.org.uk](http://www.canicross.org.uk)
- **Competitive Obedience:**  
[www.obedienceuk.net](http://www.obedienceuk.net)
- **National Search and Rescue Dog Association:**  
[www.nsarda.org.uk](http://www.nsarda.org.uk)
- **Rally:**  
[www.rallynews.co.uk/](http://www.rallynews.co.uk/)
- **Talking Dogs Rally:**  
[www.talkingdogsrally.co.uk](http://www.talkingdogsrally.co.uk)
- **Talking Dogs Scentwork:**  
[www.talkingdogsscentwork.co.uk](http://www.talkingdogsscentwork.co.uk)
- **The Kennel Club:**  
[www.thekennelclub.org.uk](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk)  
The Kennel Club hosts many of the activities mentioned in this leaflet and much information can be found on their website.

Produced on behalf of  
the Flatcoated Retriever Society



# The Active Flatcoat

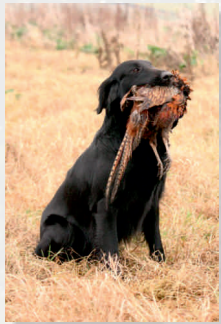


Welcome to the Flatcoated Retriever family. As a new, future or existing owner there are many activities available for you and your dog to enjoy.

The Flatcoat was developed as a game finder, a job at which he excels both on land and in water. During the early 1800s only spaniels and setters were used as Gundogs but with the improvement of shotguns and the advent of the big game shoots a different type of dog was required and so the 'retriever' came into being. Originally known as the Wavy Coated Retriever which was developed from setters including the Duke of Gordon's black setter, spaniels and the Lesser St John's Newfoundland, the breed evolved into the Flatcoat by introducing further dogs to get a flatter coat, a longer muzzle and to reduce some feathering.



The Flatcoat is one of the earliest retrievers to be developed in the British Isles. Known as the 'gamekeepers dog' he proved to be popular with many large estates the length and breadth of the country with his heyday in the Edwardian period. He lost popularity in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in favour of the later developed Labrador Retriever but with the dedication of a few enthusiasts he was saved from extinction and is once again a popular gundog today.



He is a highly intelligent dog that can be trained to a high standard to run in Field Trials and Working Tests or to pick up on shoots. However, he has many other talents that equip him with the ability to shine in other activities.

The Flatcoated Retriever Society encourages owners to give their dog 'something to do' in order to occupy his brain as well as his body. A dog that has been bred to work will quickly become 'self employed' if he has nothing to do, which will ultimately get him and possibly his owner into trouble.

He is an elegant, energetic dog with an independent streak so training is important. Doing 'something' with your dog will not only satisfy his need to use his brain but will build a strong bond between owner and dog that is something to be cherished.

The Society works very hard to keep the Flatcoat a 'dual purpose' dog which means he can equally excel in the show ring or as a gundog. But what if neither of these activities sparks your enthusiasm as an owner? Obviously it is important to find an activity that you can both enjoy.

## So what can you do?

There are many activities that you can enjoy with your dog so here are a few for you to consider.

- ♦ **AGILITY.** An activity where the dog and handler follow a set course negotiating obstacles along the way - jumps, tunnels, seesaws etc. This is the fastest growing sport for dogs.
- ♦ **CANICROSS.** Dog and handler are attached by a bungee line and take part in cross country running. An activity that will definitely keep you fit!
- ♦ **COMPETITIVE OBEDIENCE.** A highly skilled activity incorporating heelwork, stays, recall, retrieve, scent work etc. This is 'doggy dressage', very precise and satisfying when done well.
- ♦ **FREESTYLE.** An extension of heelwork to music in that the handler and dog can work away from each other and they can also use 'props' - boxes, canes, hoops etc.
- ♦ **GUNDOG WORK.** Flatcoats were bred as gundogs so this is what they naturally enjoy. You could simply enjoy the training or advance to a high standard if you wish.
- ♦ **HEELWORK TO MUSIC.** This is based on obedience heelwork but set to music. Handler and dog work in close proximity in any direction with the dog at the side, front or behind the handler and can incorporate twists and turns etc.



- ♦ **RALLY.** This is like a combination of obedience and agility. Again the dog and handler follow a set course but it is primarily the dog working closely with the handler incorporating specific turns, slaloms, stays, recalls, certain jumps, ignoring food and other distractions as you progress up the rankings.
- ♦ **SEARCHING.** It is possible to train your dog as a Search and Rescue dog. A dog with a good nose like the Flatcoat can excel at this. There are also courses available to teach your dog to find a specific scent rather than a specific object - dogs love this!
- ♦ **SHOWING.** The Flatcoat excels in the show ring. Shows are held up and down the country virtually all year - fun shows on a village green through open shows to championship shows the pinnacle of which of course, is Crufts.
- ♦ **WORKING TRIALS.** Originally based on Police Dog work this is an activity that not only trains your dog to be obedient including heelwork, stays, recalls etc. but also incorporates particular agility equipment and trains your dog to use his nose to find objects and to follow a track laid by a human and to locate objects dropped along the way.

