

Analysis of the 2020 survey of

The Health of British Flatcoated Retrievers

Once again thanks must go to the many owners who took the time to complete the questionnaire – this time, a first for us, as it was made available online. This method brought with it challenges but did result in the highest return thus far. Where possible comparison between earlier surveys has been undertaken and noted.

This study reports on a total of 1780 dogs

(1177 + 603 deceased within the previous 5 years)

Representing an increase of 56% (live) and (100% deceased) on the 2011 survey

Due to the method of response the total number of owners supplying the data could not be verified. The total number of submissions was 1808 but these included duplications, unusable entries and data for dogs residing overseas.

Although the higher number of submissions greatly increased the amount of data it greatly increased the analysis time, as did entry errors, which were often found late on during the collation and analysis; incidences of duplication were high.

During the setup of the live questionnaire, unfortunately, the choice of 'sex' was omitted although, thankfully, this could in the most part be established through comments or breed records.

Data Protection has been observed, with all information being kept / used confidentially. Any queries regarding content can be forwarded to the Hon. Breed Health Secretary. Collation and analysis was undertaken by Tamsin Swain RVN, who had also collated the 2006 and 2011 surveys. It should be understood that the data provided was that as completed by respondents and has been taken in good faith; reviewed by the Health Sub-Committee and used to inform future breed health strategy and the Kennel Club Breed Health and Conservation Plan.

This survey was wholly undertaken by the Flatcoated Retriever Society, through the Health Sub-Committee and Breed Health Coordinator.

The results will be made available for information and the promotion of breed health but must not be copied in part or entirely without the permission of the General Committee of the Flatcoated Retriever Society.

Main Study Group (LIVE) – 1177 dogs (with usable responses)

GENERAL

Black	88%
Liver	11%
Yellow	<1%
Not stated	<1%

Male	441
Female	491
Not stated / unclear	245

Neutered 35% with the average age for this being 21 months.

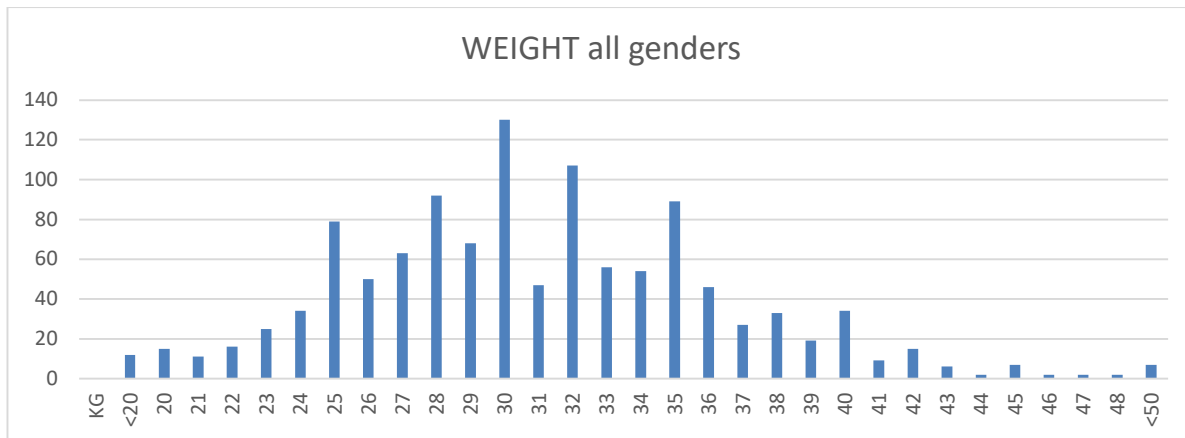
AGES

Oldest	14.75
Youngest	3 months
Average Age	5.25

10% of the study group >10yrs

WEIGHTS

An average weight across both genders was calculated to be 30kg.



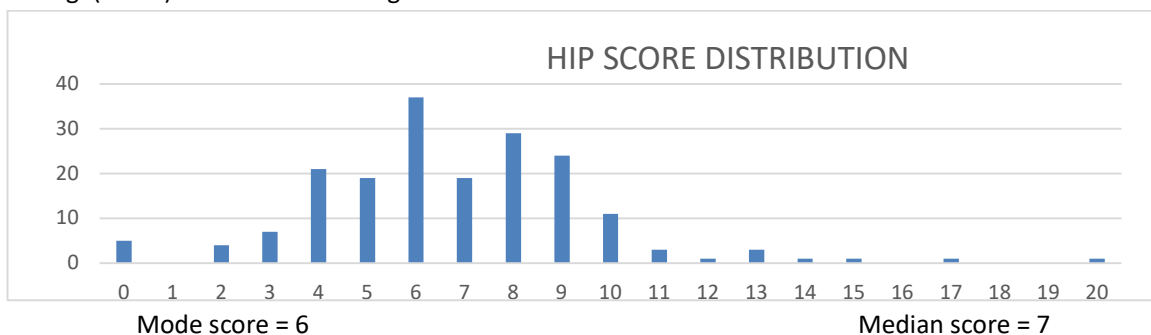
Males:	Mean = 33.55kg	Median = 33kg	Mode = 32kg
Females:	Mean = 28.5kg	Median = 28kg	Mode = 30kg

HIP/ELBOW/PATELLAR SCORING

HIPS

Responses indicated that 222 dogs had been Hip scored, with results given for 186 dogs (16%), which included 3 from abroad (A) and 1 of 'excellent'. 8 owners were still awaiting results. 23 did not supply the score.

The average(mean) was 6.8 from a range between 0 – 20



ELBOWS

Scores were given for 73 dogs all of which scored zero. 6 were still awaiting results
(It should be noted that BVA results from the last 2 years contradict these results).

PATELLAE

50 dogs were reported on, these had been assessed either under the FCRS Scheme or by a vet or had been found to have 'issues'.

36 - fine/Grade A /Satisfactory

12 – fail/Affected/Grade 3 (2 were found to have slight luxation)

9 – were reported to have had corrective surgery.

EYE TESTS

18% (212) dogs had eye tests performed (this is a significant reduction on the test in 2011 which was 45%). Of these 170 provided meaningful results.

Clear/unaffected/Pass/0/normal = excellent	143	(67% of those tested)
Affected	2	(<1%)
Grade 1	20	(9.4 %)
Grade 2	4	(2%)
Mild goniodysgenesis	1	(<1%)
PLA (abnormality)	1	(<1%)
Results not supplied	42	(20%)

DISEASES AFFECTING FLATCOATED RETRIEVERS:

Neoplasia -malignant & benign (live)	358	30%
Disorders of the skin inc. ears	241	20.0%
Orthopaedic	193	16%
Reproductive	147	13%
Digestive	118	10%
Respiratory	103	9%
Ophthalmic	97	8.2%
Neurological/Spinal	42	3.5%
Disease of organs inc heart	37	3%
Endocrine	28	2.3%
Incidence of any other disease		<1%

Orthopaedic conditions

16% (193) of dogs were recorded as affected (some with multiple conditions)

	No.	% of study
Arthritis	80	7%
Patella Luxation	22	2%
Cruciate Disease	22	2%
Elbow dysplasia/OCD	23	2%
Hip Dysplasia	10	<1%
Spondylosis spondylitis	12	<1%
Following accident	8	<1%
Undiagnosed lameness or weakness	9	<1%
Disc disease	5	<1
'bony spurs'	2	<1%

+ twelve other types of disease with only a single occurrence:

Ophthalmic conditions

8.2% (97 dogs) were reported to have or have had ophthalmic conditions. Many having multiple issues. These are conditions that were reported to be affecting the dogs and does not include results of eye tests.

Distichiasis	18	1.5%
Entropion	15	1.2%
Ectopic cilia	13	1.1%
Ectropian	13	1.1%
Conjunctivitis	19	1.6%
Allergies	7	<1%
Polyp/cyst	6	<1%
Other	5	<1%
Cataract	5	<1
Deep set eyes	4	<1
Ulcer	3	<1
Lower lid droop	3	<1
Dry eye	2	<<1
Trichiasis	2	<<1
Injury	2	<<1
Block tear ducts	2	<<1

Age related sight loss	2	<<1
+ other with single incidences	5	<1

Digestive tract conditions

10% (118) of dogs were reported to be affected by some type of gut disease:-

Food Allergies/sensitivities	59	5%	
GDV (Bloat)	23	2%	(female 8, male 11, 4 ns)
Irritable Bowel Disease	18	1.5%	
Foreign body/Obstruction	7	<1	
Gastroenteritis	5		
Campylobacter	2		
Coccidia/Giardia	2		
Toxic human food consumed	2		
Other single incidence	3		

Reproductive disease

13% (147) of those recorded (both male and female), some had multiple issues:

False pregnancy	92	8%	
Irregular seasons	39	3%	
Pyometra	3	<1	
Infertility/Poor fertility	4	<1	(female 2, male 2)
Penile abnormality		3	<1
Retained testicle	2	<1	
Other	5	<1	

Respiratory disease

9% (103) of the study had suffered from one or more respiratory diseases:

Kennel cough	87	7%
Laryngeal Paralysis	14	1%

Disease of organs

Cardiac conditions

2% (25) of dogs were recorded as affected with there being no clear gender bias.

Heart Murmur	14	1%
Mitral Valve Disease	3	<1
Dilated Cardiomyopathy	3	<1
Heart Rhythm Disorder	2	<1
Other	3	<1

Diseases of other organs (exc. heart)

= 12 dogs affected

Liver shunt	4	<1%	
Renal Dysplasia	3	<1%	
Renal failure	3	<1	(10 & 13 yrs)
Urinary tract infection	2	<<1	
(pancreatic disease below)			

Endocrine disease

There were 28 reported incidences (2.3%)

Hypothyroidism	22	2%
Pancreatitis	11	1%
Hyperthyroidism	3	<<1%
Other	4	<<1%

Immune mediated disease

Individual reports of these were all below <<1%

Neoplasia

30% (358) of the living dogs studied had masses or tumours of some kind (some had multiple) as reported by their owners.

Benign tumours	271	23%
Malignant tumours	54	4.6%
Not stated or not known	33	3%
Mast cell	11	<1
Melanoma	8	<1
Not stated but confirmed malignant	7	<1
Histiocytic sarcoma	5	<1
Osteosarcoma	4	<1
Squamous cell	3	<1
'sarcoma'	2	<1
Testicular	2	<1
Plasmacytoma	2	<1
Individual other	13	1%

Neurological and spinal disease

36 cases reported		3%
Seizures of unknown origin	14	1%
Epilepsy	9	<1%
Disc disease	8	
5 individually reported	5	<1%

Skin disorders

Non-specific allergies- skin	42	3.5%
Ears	25	2%
Environmental/contact allergy	30	2.5%
Food intolerance -> skin issue	21	1.8%
Seasonal allergies	20	1.7%
Multi cause allergy	14	1%
	<u>152</u>	<u>13%</u>
Ear Infections	48	4%
Yeast/fungal ear problem	27	2.3%
Parasites	16	1.4%
Dry skin	5	<1%

Atopic Dermatitis	3	<<1%
Eczema	2	<<1%
Other with single incidence	9	<1%
Total affected with either skin or ear	241	20%

Travel

10.5% (124) of the dogs within the survey had travelled abroad.

Vaccination

98% (1158) of the contributions gave details of vaccination.

Standard (primary then 3yr cycle)	1030	87%
Primary course only	81	7%
Primary then titre test	26	
Primary then 1 st year booster only	2	
(Standard until >10 then cease)	3	
Titre test only	2	
“only when req’d”	2	
Nosodes /homeopathic remedies	15	1.3%
Rabies only	1	
Lyme disease	1	
Kennel cough vacc given in addtn	9	
Rabies vacc (in addtn to above)	26	2%

Endoparasite treatment (wormers)

980 (83%) stated that the dogs were wormed of which 797 were wormed regularly following a standard vet-based regime. Many respondents did not give further details. 1 dog was faecal tested and wormed when necessary. 8 dogs were wormed using furry ears, pumpkin seeds and garlic.

Ectoparasite treatment (flea and tick treatment)

91% of responders stated that they used ectoparasite treatment with frequency ranging from:

“only when required” to regular monthly usage. Some preventative treatments last for up to a year (seresto collars) whilst others requiring more frequent application. Variation across frequency of application is of little significance with preventative coverage being recommended to avoid complications from tick bites or parasite infestation both for the animal and within the home environment.

Diet

Dry food / kibble	609	52%
Combination (dry/wet/raw)	416	35
Raw	96	8
Wet	22	2
Prescription inc Gluten Free	4	<1
Homemade	2	<<1
Not stated	28	2

Exercise

1065 (905) gave amount of exercise in figures. There was a huge range from just 10 mins to 5 hours with the average being approx. 1.75 hours daily. (NB. the study includes young puppies and also elderly dogs).

ACTIVITIES**GUNDOG**

		38%
Gundog Training	217	18%
Working Tests	70	6%
Picking up	139	12%
Field Trials	12	1%
Beating	6	0.5%
Gundog Demo	2	<1%

AGILITY

		9%
Agility	90	8%
Rally	4	<1%
Hoopers	4	<1%
Dog Parkour	1	<1%

RINGCRAFT/SHOWING

130 **11%**

OBEDIENCE

135 **11%**

OTHER

2%

Heelwork to Music	7	0.5%
Canicross	3	<1%
Flyball	7	0.5%
Search & Rescue	2	<1
Man Trailing	3	<1%
PAT dog	5	<1%
Assistance dog	3	<1%