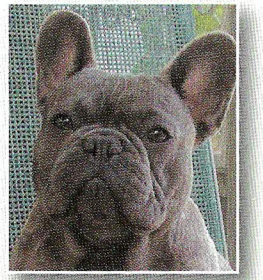
Frenchie Gallery

Blue Frenchies



First published in France and translated into English by the author Mon Belahlou

The "blue colour" in dogs is a diluted colour that is obtained from the black.

IN FRANCE and in many other countries, the blue colour is being promoted as rare in the French Bulldog, allowing unscrupulous breeders to sell a puppy for about 3500 euros (£3400.)

In France we believe that the recent appearance of the blue colour is the result of the sudden surge of importations of French Bulldogs who unknowingly or otherwise carried the dilution gene.

With the introduction of this gene, the black coat and pigment turns blue (or gray) and the fawn becomes cream.

The blue colour is rare because the breeders who work to improve the breed and its preservation and health will never produce this colour for the following reasons:

This colour is a genetic disorder.

This coloration is caused by the recessive gene called " blue dilution" (D / d) or cch (ch for "chinchilla"). This gene can also act on the black or brown pigments of the eye (giving blue/green /yellow eyes).

There are possible adverse heath problems associated with the dilute genes.

The genetics of coat colour in dogs is complicated because there are several genetic loci involved, some of which control the colour and intensity of pigmentation. Some control the pattern and colour distribution. In short, there are two types of pigment in dogs: a light pigment

(phaeomelanin) which can range from reddish through yellow to pale cream and dark pigment (eumelanin) which is either black or brown. The French Bulldog should carry only the gene for black pigment and the nose, lips and paw pads must always be black.

The FCI gives this definition of blue colour :

"Dogs whose coat is blue can in no case have a black nose and the colour of their eyes is often lighter than hazel. The intensity of the colour of the coat or skin can range from pale dove blue/steel blue or blue gray as in a slate blue.

When in some breeds, occasional blue dogs appear but the breed standard states that only a black nose /pigment is allowed, this colour should not be accepted into the breed standard".

There was already a report of this undesirable colour for the French Bulldog in 1933 in the book "Le Bouledogue Français, son origine, son histoire, son élevage" by The Countess of Comminges.

Where we read that the founders of the breed excluded from breeding these dogs with blue or mouse coloured coats because they are genetically linked with allergies, skin diseases, deafness and blindness. These problems appear in other breeds with this dilution gene.

The French Bulldog Club of Western Canada points out that a deficient immune system is linked to the dilution of colour sometimes called "Blue Dog Syndrome". Veterinarian Dr. Karen Charlet, author of a thesis, called "Alopecia mutants of colour" which is a syndrome characteristic of diluted colour.

Some people may find blue Frenchies attractive, but any blue Frenchie or their offspring should be never be sold for show or for breeding, as they all carry a genetic fault. Many people mistakenly believe that even though a dog may have a blue dog in its ancestry, that if no blues have been produced in several generations that means that their dog can't be carrying the blue gene. This is wrong. A recessive gene will keep passing 'hidden' through an infinite number of generations of carriers. The insidious thing about a recessive gene is that carriers pass the gene on to about 50% of their offspring, producing another generation of carriers; then those carriers pass it on to 50% of their offspring, and so forth, so that the gene spreads unnoticed through the gene pool as people unaware of an affected ancestor breed its descendents. It will only surface when a carrier is bred to another carrier (or to a blue). One of the beneficial things about line breeding is that it exposes the presence of undesirable recessive genes in a line, so that responsible breeders can undertake to eliminate them. ■