

Red Cedar Retrievers: Companion Gundog Program Overview

Our training programs are structured in a way that works with the canine learning process. We work very hard to constantly read a dog's mental state throughout the training program by watching his or her body language to determine how they are responding to their environment and to our training. We believe a dog is like a book, all you have to do is read it to get your instructions.

Companion Gundog Training:

Our Companion Gundog training program is 12-16 weeks long depending on the dog. This is the fastest we feel dogs can successfully learn the necessary basics of a good gundog. This program can be geared towards waterfowl, upland or both to cater to our individual customers needs. We will accept dogs starting at 5 months of age and up.

There are a few things we ask you to work on your pup with before they come to us for training: socialization, crate training, retrieval of a wing and possibly a frozen pigeon, and basic obedience. Obedience commands that we use are: "Here" , "Heel" , "Sit" , "Keep" , "Down" , "Place" , "Kennel" , "OK" as a release from a command along with release for retrieves on the dog's name. The owner is encouraged to use these same commands before the dog arrives for training. If you have any questions, reach out, and we will walk you through how any of this can be done.

- **Bird / Gunfire Exposure:** We want to bring out as much bird desire in your pup as possible. We want to wake up that prey drive and turn them onto birds. Along with getting that bird desire, your pup will begin learning how to use his nose to find and flush game. Your pup will start on dead birds, then move on to clipped wing birds and finally onto flushing live game. We will also take the common thing that we see dogs develop, a fear due to improper introduction of gunfire, and introduce it the proper way. We will work at your dog's pace, as to not promote the fear of any of these obstacles.
- **Collar Conditioning:** We will introduce the e-collar to the dog in a way that instills the positive aspects of the device. This aspect will teach the dog how to learn. They will learn how to turn pressure off by doing what is asked of them. The dog will have an opportunity to associate the collar with positive physical activity and not solely as a correction device. When introduced correctly the dog should welcome the collar because they should associate it with physical activity doing tasks that the dog was bred to do. The dog should look to the collar to give

direction in the form of e-commands and not solely as a device used to correct acknowledged disobedience.

- **Basic Retrieve:** This aspect will create a desire and drive to retrieve. Many dogs will have a natural retrieve in which they will retrieve game most of the time to within five to ten feet away from the handler. This will enforce the need to retrieve, on command, back to the handler at all times. “Place” command, and basic marking, including land and water, will be included in this aspect of the program.
- **Force Fetch:** This aspect will teach the dog how to learn. They will learn how to turn pressure off by doing what is asked of them, similar to collar conditioning. During this process they will also learn to “fetch” whatever it is they are told. The command “hold” will also be taught, teaching the dog not to drop anything they have fetched until the handler says.

Owner Involvement:

We invite owners to join us once a month for a training session. This will not only give you an update on how your dog is doing with our program but also give you a sense of familiarity with the training process along with the knowledge of how to properly handle your dog. This will help with the transition of the dog back to you, the owner. You are welcome to join more often than once a month if there are no scheduling conflicts. However, if you can not join us once a month we do require you to attend 2 sessions during the last week of the program.

Our training will give the dog and the owner the tools to be a successful team in the field, however, in order for the dog to become the best that he or she can become it is up to the owner to maintain a level of performance at home and during the actual hunts. The first season in a hunting dog’s career is crucial in developing manners and setting behaviors. The set of tools we will develop will give you the ability to handle your dog so that he/she is a mannerly dog that is a pleasure to be with in the field and at home.