



The Hunter's Blind

About NEFHRC Newsletter . . .

This monthly newsletter is to help members keep updated on our club events, achievements, or other announcements that may be of interest. Please call or e-mail Karen VanDonsel at (828) 877-3254 or karenvandonsel@gmail.com if you have anything you would like to submit. Alternatively, you may contact Tom Gaddis at (904) 699-3084 or President@nefhrc.net.

Please feel free to submit pictures, announcements of events, brags, sale of dog or training equipment, litters, or any other announcements for club members! The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month.

If you have an idea for a recurring feature article, please let us know. This newsletter is for you, our members. We want to include what you want. So, please help make this a

great newsletter. Submit your articles, pictures, stories and ideas. We want to hear from you!



Cody (yellow Lab) and Maggie (black Lab) taking it easy.

Dog and Puppy Points

Please take the time to send your dog/puppy points to our Webmaster, Karen VanDonsel. You can send the information to Karen via e-mail at karenvandonsel@gmail.com. Be sure to include the following information in the e-mail: owner's name, dog's call name, dog's date of birth, points earned only in the current calendar year and total points earned in all years. Alternatively, you can fill out the form on the club website at <http://www.nefhrc.net/club-information/submit-your-dog-points/>.

NEFHRC recognizes the top dog and top puppy each year. In this context, a "puppy" is defined as a dog aged 24 months and younger.

As of this publication, no points have been submitted for any dog or puppy!

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Coming Events:

- ◇ 10/08-10/09/2016 Coastal Empire HRC Hunt Test
- ◇ 10/15/2016 NEFHRC Training Day
- ◇ 10/15-10/16/2016 Midlands HRC Hunt Test
- ◇ 10/22-10/23/2016 SOWEGA HRC Hunt Test
- ◇ 10/22-10/23/2016 Mid-South HRC Hunt Test

This is probably not the article you thought by the title. This weekend 'Buck' and I had our first Finished level hunt test. I didn't pass (not 'we'). When my dog came to the line quietly at heel I was sure all my old problems with noise and excitement at the line were gone. The "training day" dog that would rarely get noisy or creep up from the line anymore now had to be re-heeled and even barked on the line!? He didn't even see one bird because he was so far in front of me. This prompted some thought about what and why and one of the first things that now is obvious is 'sit'.

To qualify I'm not a professional dog trainer and until 'Buck' all my dogs were simply hunting dogs and/or pets. I'd read a few books and was happy with training a dog that would bring back a bird most of the time.

I knew the starting basics of sit/here/come. We started at 8 weeks and I was sure we were on the right track. He passed started hunt tests and then seasoned and we were on our way. Why is he doing this now?

Looking back he has been trying to tell me for a long time that I wasn't quite the dog trainer that I imagined and that he didn't have the tools he needed. Early on I would have to give the 'sit' command a few times but he would then sit. That's not bad...right? He was even better at sit before his food bowl was filled or when he wasn't excited or there weren't any other dogs or people around. He's just young or excited (or some other excuse) and it will improve with time. In started tests with no gun in my hand I usually didn't even need to hold his collar (even though I did for insurance) and he got a 'started' title.

In seasoned training and then at tests he began creeping up ahead of the line a little even when I loaded the gun and especially when I shot. He was very fast to his marks but would start whining if he had to wait too long to be sent to go get his bird and then bark at me as he was flying off the line. When I had to tell him a couple of times to "HEEL" he would bark at me but would heel and it got 'better'. He was able to get his seasoned title so he will calm down as he gets older and more used to going to hunt tests is what I thought. And if I move a little quicker it would give him less time to get so excited.

We then trained on triples, harder blinds, diversion birds, marking drills, remote entry and all the 'cool' stuff that the people in the club with all the titles were doing. Every so often he would make noise at the line and would get put back in the truck but not like the year before so I thought "we" were really making progress until this weekend.

So what does this have to do with what my dog is worth? Read on.

Continued on Page 3

The sit command is one of first things we all teach our dogs. Why? To me 'sit' started the process of letting 'Buck' know who was in charge and dogs just want to either lead or follow. Sit also can give you one of the best dog protection tools ever. A dog that will 'sit' (correctly) on command can be stopped from doing any number of things that could change or even end their life or yours. We love our dogs and would hate to think of them hit by cars, bitten by other animals, etc. Isn't your dog worth that? We would hate to think that just by ignoring a 'sit' command our dog ran through the door knocking down a small child or elderly family member.

We spend a LOT of time and money training and going to tests and hunting with our dog. It really is frustrating when they don't test or hunt like they do when trained.

OK, so I get that 'sit' is important. But I really have to work on 'hold' or 'heel' or 'back' or 'over' commands now.....rrrrright??? I mean we gotta worry about the whole enchilada now right?

Well if the 'whole enchilada' is a dog that is a good pet, a great hunter, a title winning hunt test dog then 'sit' is the tortilla. You ain't got no enchilada without it. And 'sit' has to be 'SIT'.

So how did 'sit' come to mind after failing a hunt test? Well if I had taught 'sit' with NO exceptions—no move, no creep, no whine and kept that level of enforcement all the way through then he would NOT have crept up or whined "a little". By letting him do ANYTHING "a little" other than SIT he learned that sit means sit on training days but not when there are lots of dogs, people, guns, etc around. By letting him get "a little" ahead of me at the line I taught him that my job was to get him to the line and then he was in charge from there. By not sitting still at the line he didn't even see one of the first mornings birds and our test was done for the day. All because of 'sit'.

So what did 'Buck' teach me this weekend?

First... sit isn't just one of the basic commands it probably is THE primary command. Its gotta be taught early and correctly. A real 'sit', not say 'sit' four times then they sit. They only learn what we teach them and sit on the fourth try isn't what we want them to do. Sit and don't move until released. Reinforce it always. My dog is worth this.

Second...don't test your dog on things you haven't taught them correctly and expect them to pass the test.

Now what? Well today we only worked on 'sit' and 'heel'. I like enchiladas.

Food Allergies and Food Intolerance

Food allergies account for about 10% of all the allergies seen in dogs. It is the third most common cause after flea bite allergies and atopy (inhalant allergies). Food allergies generally account for 20% of the causes of itching and scratching in dogs. Food allergies plus atopy account for another 20%.

The entire process of a pet being sensitized to a particular agent in food and the complicated antibody response that occurs in the intestinal tract in pets with food allergies are not very well understood. Despite our lack of understanding of the actual disease process, there are many things that we do know including the symptoms, how to diagnose food allergies, and also how to treat them.

Food allergies affect both dogs and cats. Unlike atopy, there is no strong link between specific breeds and food allergies. Food allergies affect both males and females and neutered and intact animals equally. They can show up as early as five months and as late as 12 years of age. Many animals with food allergies also have concurrent inhalant or contact allergies.

Food allergy or intolerance?

There is a distinction that needs to be made between food allergies and food intolerances. Food allergies are true allergies and show the characteristic symptoms of itching and skin problems associated with canine and feline allergies. Food intolerances can result in diarrhea or vomiting and do not create a typical allergic response. Food intolerances in pets would be similar to people who get diarrhea or an upset stomach from eating spicy or fried foods. Fortunately, both food intolerances and allergies can be eliminated with a diet free from offending agents.

Common food culprits

Several studies have shown that some ingredients are more likely to cause food allergies than others. In order of the most common offenders in dogs are beef, dairy products, chicken, lamb, fish, chicken eggs, corn, wheat, and soy. As you may have noticed, the most common offenders are the most common ingredients in dog foods. This correlation is not a coincidence. While some proteins might be slightly more antigenic than others, many proteins are similar in form and the incidence of allergic reactions are probably associated with the amount of exposure.

Symptoms

The symptoms of food allergies are similar to those of most allergies seen in dogs and cats. The primary symptom is itchy skin affecting primarily the face, feet, ears, forelegs, armpits and the area around the anus. Symptoms may also include chronic or recurrent ear infections, hair loss, excessive scratching, hot spots, and skin infections that respond to antibiotics but reoccur after antibiotics are discontinued. There is evidence that dogs with food allergies may sometimes have an increased incidence of bowel movements. One study showed that non-allergic dogs have around 1.5 bowel movements per day where some dogs with food allergies may have 3 or more per day.

It is difficult to distinguish an animal suffering from food allergies from an animal suffering from atopy or other allergies based on physical signs. However, there are a few signs that increase the suspicion that food allergies may be present. One of these, is a dog with recurrent ear problems, particularly yeast infections. Another, is a very young dog with moderate or severe skin problems. A third tip off, is if a dog suffers from allergies year-round or if the symptoms begin in the winter. And the final clue, is a dog that has very itchy skin but does not respond to steroid treatment.

Food Allergies and Food Intolerance *(cont.)*

Diagnosis

The diagnosis for food allergies is very straightforward. But due to the fact that many other problems can cause similar symptoms and that many times animals are suffering from more problems than just food allergies, it is very important that all other problems are properly identified and treated prior to undergoing diagnosis for food allergies. Atopy, flea bite allergies, intestinal parasite hypersensitivities, sarcoptic mange, and yeast or bacterial infections can all cause similar symptoms as food allergies. Once all other causes have been ruled out or treated, then it is time to perform a food trial.

Food trials and elimination diets: A food trial consists of feeding an animal a novel food source of protein and carbohydrate for at least 12 weeks. A novel food source would be a protein and carbohydrate that the animal had never eaten before. Examples would include be rabbit and rice, or venison and potato. There are a number of such commercial diets available on the market. In addition, there are specialized diets that have the proteins and carbohydrates broken down into such small molecular sizes that they no longer would trigger an allergic response. These are termed 'limited antigen' or 'hydrolyzed protein' diets. Homemade diets are often used, as the ingredients can be carefully restricted. Regardless of the diet used, it must be the only thing the animal eats for 12 weeks. This means no treats, no flavored medications, no rawhide or pig's ears; absolutely nothing but the special food and water. In addition, the dog should not be allowed to roam, which may result in him having access to food or garbage.

Food Trial Tips

Only the recommended diet must be fed.

Do NOT give:

- Treats
- Rawhides
- Pigs Ears
- Cow hooves
- Flavored medications (including heartworm preventives) or supplements
- Flavored toothpastes
- Flavored plastic toys
- Any type of food when giving medications

If you want to give a treat, use the recommended diet. (Hint: canned diets can be frozen in chunks or baked, and these can be used as treats.)

If possible, feed the other the same diet as the patient. If not, feed other pets in an entirely different location than the patient, and do not allow the patient access to that food.

Do not allow the dog access to the cat's litter box.

Keep your pet out of the room at meal times. Even a few small amounts of food dropped on the floor or licked off of a plate can void an elimination trial and require you to start over. Wash the hands and faces of any children after they have eaten.

Do not allow your pet to roam. Keep dogs on leashes when outside.

Keep a journal in which you can record the date and any foods, treats, etc. your pet may have accidentally eaten.

Food Allergies and Food Intolerance *(cont.)*

Veterinarians used to recommend that a pet only needed to be placed on a special diet for 3 weeks but new studies show that in dogs, only 26% of those with food allergies responded by day 21. However, the vast majority of pets responded by 12 weeks. Therefore, it is very important to keep the pet on the diet for the entire 12 weeks. If the dog shows a marked reduction or elimination of the symptoms, then the animal is placed back on the original food. This is called 'provocative testing' and is essential to confirm the diagnosis. If the symptoms return after going back on the original diet, the diagnosis of a food allergy is confirmed. If there has been no change in symptoms but a food allergy is still strongly suspected, then another food trial using a different novel food source could be tried.

Blood Testing: There is no evidence that blood tests are accurate for the diagnosis of food allergies. Veterinary dermatologists insist that there is no merit in these tests whatsoever in the diagnosis of food allergies. The only way to accurately diagnose food allergies is with a food trial as detailed above. While the intradermal skin testing is excellent for diagnosing atopy (inhalant allergies) it is ineffective for food allergies. While specialized blood tests can be used to help in the diagnosis of atopy, they have no benefit in diagnosing food allergies. In our review of all the current books and articles on veterinary dermatology and allergies, we could not find a single dermatologist that endorsed anything other than the food trial as an effective diagnostic aid. If you want to diagnose and treat food allergies you must do a food trial.

Treatment

The treatment for food allergies is avoidance. Once the offending ingredients have been identified through a food trial, then they are eliminated from the diet. Short-term relief may be gained with fatty acids, antihistamines, and steroids, but elimination of the products from the diet is the only long-term solution. The owner of the animal has two choices. They can choose to feed the animal a special commercially prepared diet or a homemade diet.

If the owner chooses to feed the homemade diet, then they can periodically challenge the pet with new ingredients and determine which ingredients are causing the food allergy. For example, if the animal's symptoms subsided on a diet of rabbit and potatoes, then the owner could add beef to the diet for two weeks. If the animal showed no symptoms, then they could then add chicken for two weeks. If the animal began to show symptoms, then it could be assumed that chicken was one of the things the pet was allergic to. The chicken could be withdrawn and after the symptoms cleared up, a different ingredient could be added and so on until all of the offending ingredients were identified. A diet could then be formulated that was free of the offending food sources.

If homemade diets are used, it is essential that they be balanced, with correct amount of ingredients, vitamins, and minerals. Homemade diets for such long term use should be developed by a veterinary nutritionist.

Be aware that some pets with food allergies may develop allergies to new foods if they are fed those foods long enough. If you see signs of food allergies returning, consult your veterinarian.

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Food Allergies and Food Intolerance *(cont.)*

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Fall Hunt Test *by Tom Gaddis*

The 2016 Fall Hunt Test was held September 10th and 11th at SSJ Farms Quail Preserve north of Hilliard Florida. The test was a huge success with close to 90 dogs running each day. We had good though hot weather and the test grounds were fantastic. The started dogs were treated to great water and land setups that most felt was just the right balance of challenge for dogs at that level. Several of the club's new members ran their first hunt test and collected ribbons. Members Kim Hurst, Tom Kennicutt, Bo Bright, Susan Howard, Kevin Johansen and Betsy Reiney represented the club well and collected ribbons.

The seasoned judges set up what was felt by most everyone to be the best test of the weekend. Their walkup and then an angle entry water blind followed by a walk out a peninsula and double marks caused more anxiety with anglers than their dogs as most did very well.

Finished proved the most challenging tests of the weekend with water ranging from swamp flooded ponds with cattails and willows to a flooded creek winding through hardwoods. The land also proved tough running downhill through a shallow draw and over an old roadbed. A hand full of dogs managed to get passes. Betsy Reiney and Don Imfeld both passed finished both days and looked in grand form.

The tailgate and raffle was a big hit. Along with a good meal and the ribbon presentations we raffled off two beautiful rifles, two e-collars, gift certificates, etc. with the big prize of the night a new browning rifle won by one of our members.

As always the boy scouts were great as bird boys and were placed first in line for dinner Saturday night.

We appreciate everyone's help and attendance and the owners of SSJ Farms were very accommodating for us considering their quail season was just three weeks away.



NEFHRC

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Always for the dogs!

NEFHRC is sanctioned by the United Kennel Club, Inc. We are a club devoted to the training of bird hunting dogs for the purposes of hunting and hunt tests. As the UKC says, we are a club "*Conceived by hunters for hunters.*"

Club Officers and Contacts

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We're on the web!
<http://nefhrc.net>

Pictures from Fall Hunt Test:

(courtesy of Tom Gaddis)



Tom Kennicutt and Callie



Winston owned by Susan Howard



Tucker owned by Bo Bright

OCTOBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
						Coastal Empire
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Coastal Empire						Training Day Midlands HRC
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Midlands HRC						SOWEGA Mid-South HRC
23/ 30	24/ 31	25	26	27	28	29
SOWEGA Mid-South HRC						

NOVEMBER 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		01	02	03	04	05
						Old South HRC
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
Old South HRC						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
						Training Day
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			