How Many People

Have Been Affected

by Puppy Scams?

According to BBB data, near-

ing the last three years about

"businesses" selling puppies

and dogs. The FTC estimates

victims report these crimes,

so this number could be much

Sixty percent of these re-

ports indicated the consum-

ers never received the pets

they purchased, and others

received pets that had health

or genetic problems and did

Professionals

Pro Field Trainers Finding Mr. or Ms. Right

By Glenda Brown

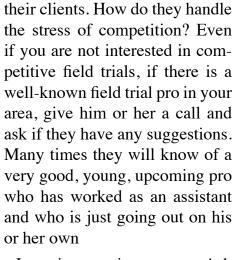
There often is much discussion about choosing just the right professional handler for a conformation dog. Many of the same factors are involved in sending a young Golden to a field trainer. It is important to do your homework, especially if you have not been involved with field work in the past.

Anyone can call themselves a "pro." It simply means that they charge for what they do. It doesn't necessarily mean they know anything, or that what they know is correct. It does not mean that they will take good care of your dog, that they respect all breeds of retrievers, or that they even have a clue. Some are very good at self-promotion; others let their dogs and the work done by the dogs they train do the speaking for them.

If you plan to send your dog with a pro, do as much research as you can to find out which pros are good; which work well with a variety of retriever breeds and have had experience working with Goldens; which pros do a round hole; and which pros retraining methods, who has an open mind, and who can com-

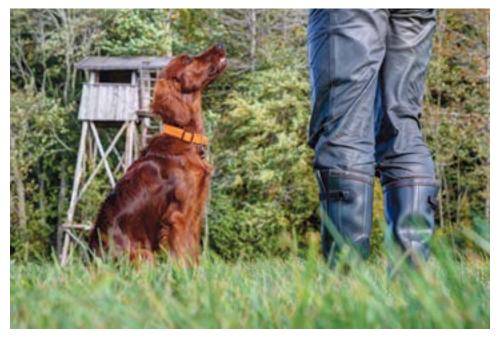
kennel to be immaculate and the living conditions for your dog to be excellent.

How do you find a good pro? Check with your local clubs and see if there are members that belong who are currently working with field pros—on a day basis or through sending their young



Bird Dog & Retriever News

Interview various pros. Ask for a list of their previous clients as well as some of their current clients. Ask where they learned their methods. Did they do an apprenticeship? What is their philosophy regarding dog training? Go and spend a few days watch-



obedience question, you would not want the opinion from someone that has trouble putting a not try to put a square peg into CD on a dog. It is the same with tronize you, nor should you come field work. If you are interested ally like dogs. You want a pro in hunt tests, attend some. Watch that is aware of the more current the different pros and how they as your mind. relate to their dogs. How do their dogs run? Do their tails wag? municate. You want a pro who Or do the dogs cringe or flinch does not think that "pushing the from a hand raised quickly? Do button" on an electric collar is the dogs looked focused, happy, the only answer to any problem and eager to work? If you can, that may occur. You want the watch how the pros interact with

dogs off for basics. Talk to them. ing them train. Ask them to dem-Remember that if you have an onstrate their basic program to you. Check into what they have accomplished with dogs they have trained. Don't let them paon like gangbusters. Be friendly, but keep your eyes open as well

> Remember, you are there to learn about them, not to tell them what you know. Any good pro should more than welcome you to check into his or her program and be willing to spend time with you. The pro should be proud of

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his program and what he or she has accomplished. Ask around. Check with persons who have had a great deal of experience in the field as to what their opinion is of this trainer. Go with your gut. Is this someone you would want to train your dog?

www.Bdarn.com

The top pros have a waiting list. Also, previous clients or persons who have a track record with their dogs will get preference. The sooner you can get your name on the waiting list the better. Don't wait until your pup is six months old to start looking around for a trainer. Tell the pro your goals and aspirations. Be realistic. My first goal was to attain a WC on my OTCH bitch.

Once you have decided on a pro and have sent your dog off, drop by and check how your dog is doing once the dog has started learning. Often a pro wants the dog for a few weeks without you on the scene so the dog can adapt to the new environment. Ask the pro to keep you informed on the dog's progress. Remember to use courtesy and common sense while doing this. Pros have a life too. You can e-mail/text the pro and list any questions you have. If they prefer to talk on the phone, ask when would be a good time for you to call, or let them know when you are available if they want to make the call.

You should spend training days there working with your dog and having the trainer work with you. If a problem arises, ask how the pro hopes to resolve it. This should be done in a pleasant manner and not in an accusatory fashion. Do some further homework. Read training manuals, research what your dog should be doing at different stages, etc., so that you can ask intelligent questions. Be an active member of the team, i.e., your dog, your trainer, and you. Always keep in mind that while you may have one dog with this trainer, the pro has quite a few dogs that he or she is training, and other clients with whom you need to share their time and attention.

It is extremely important that you pick a trainer who is the right one for your dog, not for someone else's dog, but for yours. It is very easy to ruin a potentially good dog through improper training.

The best way to keep your kids out of hot water is to put some dishes in it.

AKC News

How to Spot a Puppy Scam Online

By Miranda Carney

it's no surprise that email. you may be on the search for a new dog right now. But the truth is, as puppy buying rises, so do puppy scams.

In today's digital world, almost everyone uses the internet for shopping, including finding a new puppy! Don't worry — it's easy to spot puppy scams online if you're aware of the red flags to look for. And it's even easier to find a good breeder when you know what questions to ask. Here's everything you need to know before starting your online puppy search.

What is a Puppy Scam?

Puppy scammers post fake litters online or pretend to be someone they're not (usually an existing breeder) to take advantage of puppy sales (sans the puppies.) This means that if you aren't careful, you could find the perfect puppy, send the 'breeder' your money, and never receive a puppy or any followup communication in return.

While many times these fake listings appear on websites like Craigslist, some scammers find ways to position themselves as reputable breeders by stealing personal info from them.

Luckily, it's easy to know what to look for to ensure your puppy buying experience is both safe and enjoyable.

What are the Red Flags?

No phone calls. The seller prefers to handle communication by email and not the phone. A reputable breeder will always communicate with you via phone or video chat (if not in person) before selling you a puppy. Fraudulent sellers are oftentimes outside of the U.S. and may

all-time high — so by only communicating by

Juppy buying is at an be hiding their phone number

Photos of the dog or ad text can be found on multiple websites. Search for the text in the listing to see if the seller copied and pasted it from an-

Copycat or stock photos.

Sketchy payment. The seller asks for wiring of money or payment by gift cards. Be for their pet. aware that if you choose a non-secure method of pay- take advantage of people ment, it is highly unlikely when they are in high emotion your puppy home and you that you will get your money situations," said Steve Bernas, back. Avoid paying a stranger president and CEO of BBB using apps such as Venmo, as serving Chicago and Northit is harder to get your mon- ern Illinois. "The excitement that before leaving with your ey back if you don't get what of buying a new pet can cloud puppy, you will receive docyou paid for. Paying by credit good judgement, and victims umentation of your dog's pacard or PayPal are typically can be hurt financially and the safest options.

Research the prices for the breed you are considering ahead of time. Purebred dogs sold at deeply discounted prices are typically frauds. If the seller says they register their dogs with a specific organization, you can call the organization to confirm.

does not distribute badges to breeders.

Never get into fights with ugly people, they have nothing to lose.

"Scammers love to try to emotionally when they real-Price is too good to be true. ize they have lost their money, AKC logo should be clearand hopes for a new pet."

How Can I Safely Find a Breeder or Puppy Seller Online?

While scammers are likely to start talking money immediately, legitimate sources will Breeder "badges." AKC always take time and diligence to make sure the dog you are choosing is a good fit for your that the person you are dealfamily.

> rals. The best sources for purebred puppies will have ample positive reviews or referrals Agent For Guilt Trips

from satisfied puppy owners proving they are legitimate and reputable.

Meet your breeder or puppy seller. Always ask to talk ly 10,000 scam reports and on the phone or video chat. complaints have come in dur- Meeting in person is great whenever possible.

Ask questions. Responsible breeders and puppy sellers that only about 10 percent of love to chat and educate about dogs. Ask anything and everything that you might want to know about the breed, the breeder, and the available puppies. Ask about the breed and how your pup's parents compare to the official breed standard and other breed traits. How big are the par-

ents? What do they look like? What kind of temperament do they have? Have the parents achieved any AKC titles or awards?

Ask for proof. Don't be shy — responsible breeders will be happy to share information about your parents, puppy's and proof of health records and screenings. You should be sure that the puppy has been seen by a licensed veterinarian and know where the puppy is on

not receive documentation their shot-schedule. This will also help you so that you have the proper medical information when you bring will know what shots are needed next.

> Get documentation. Ensure pers. The words "American Kennel Club" as well as the ly visible. If the breeder or puppy seller hesitates to give you papers, this is usually a warning sign.

Be patient. If they seem anxious to complete the sale or get your deposit as soon as possible, or if you feel like they are pushing you to make a quick decision regarding a puppy, be careful. Such behavior is often a warning sign ing with is actually a scam-Analyze reviews and refermer, and there is no puppy.

My Mother Is A Travel