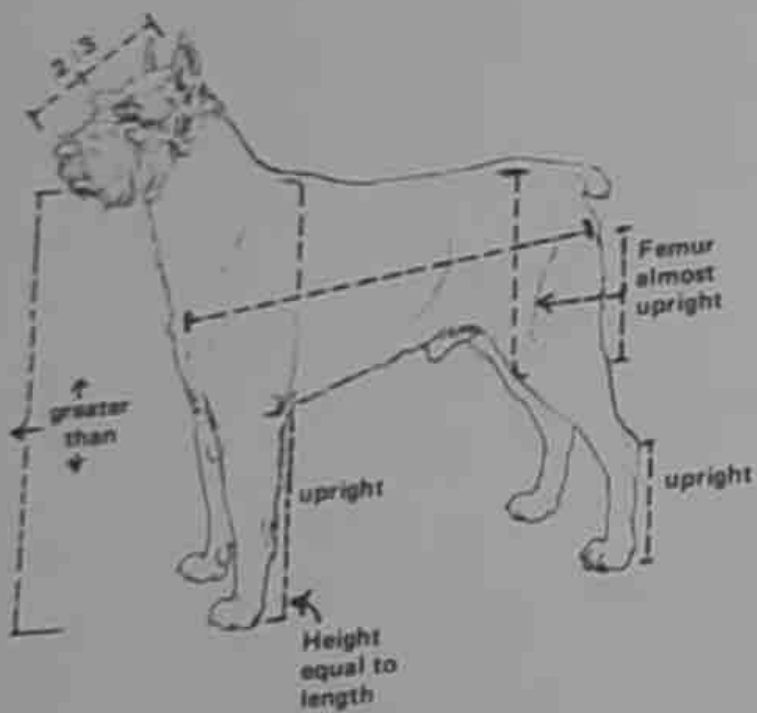
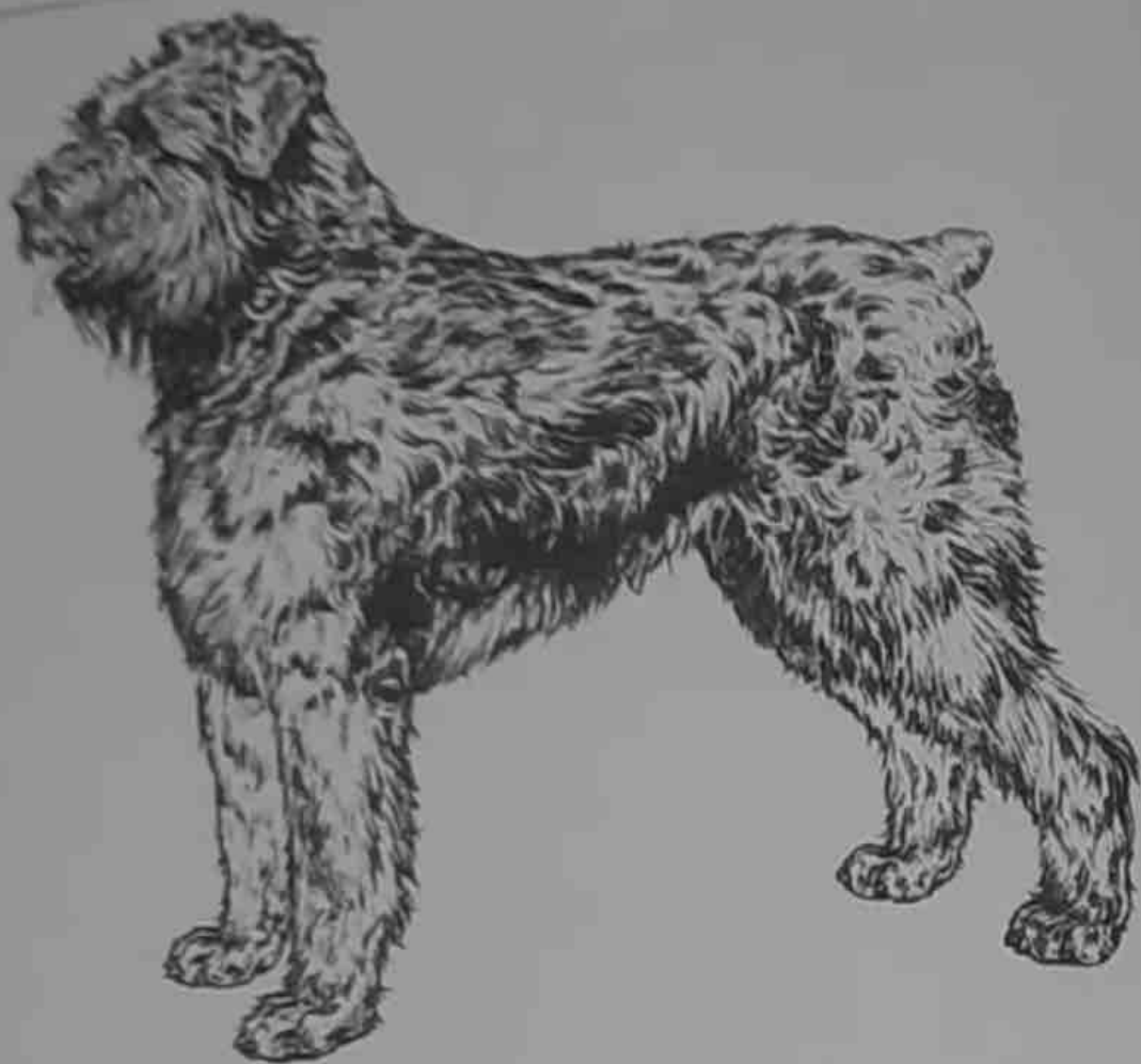


# BOUVIER DES FLANDRES





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**Origin** — The Bouvier des Flandres, as his name implies, is native to both the Belgian and the French Flanders, no natural boundary separating the two regions.

**Aptitudes** — The Bouvier des Flandres was originally used for driving, hauling and churning. Modernization of the farm equipment has put a stop to these uses, and nowadays the Bouvier des Flandres serves principally as the guardian of the farms and the estates, but also as a defence and policedog. His physical and moral attributes, his keen qualities of scent, initiative and his intelligence warrant his use as a tracking, liaison and game-warden's dog.

**General Characteristics** — A compact bodied, short coupled and powerfully built dog, with well-boned and strong muscled limbs, the whole giving the impression of great power, but without clumsiness in his general deportment. The Bouvier des Flandres testifies of intelligence, energy and audacity in his looks. He has the calm and reasonable character of a sensible but fearless dog.

## HEAD

The general aspect is one of massiveness, accentuated by beard and moustache; it should be in proportion to his build and stature. The head feels clean-cut when handled.

**Skull** — Well developed and flat, somewhat less wide than long. The upper lines of the skull and of the muzzle should be parallel. The length of the skull in proportion to the length of the muzzle is in the ratio of 3 to 2.

**Frontal groove** — Barely marked.

**Stop** — Shallow, more apparent than real through the upstanding eyebrows.

**Muzzle** — Broad, powerful, well boned, straight in his upperline, sloping slightly toward the nose which should never become snippy. The length is shorter than that of the skull, in the ratio of 2 to 3; his perimeter taken just below the eyes will be approximately equal to the length of the head.

**Nose** — The nose extends the topline of the muzzle to a slightly convex tip. It should be well developed, rounded in his outer lines; the color always black. Nostrils wide open.

**Cheeks** — Lean and flat.

**Ears** — Cropped to a triangular contour, held very erect, carried high on the skull and very mobile. It is recommended that the cropping should be done in proportion to the size of the head.

**Eyes** — Their expression free and alert; neither protruding much, nor sunken in the sockets. They should be slightly oval in shape, with the axes on a horizontal line. The colour should be as dark as possible, in relation to the colour of the coat. Too light eyes, or with a haggard (wild) expression, should be severely penalized.

**Eyelids** — Black, without traces of depigmentation. The haw must never be apparent.

**Jaws and teeth** — The jaws should be powerful and of equal length. The teeth strong, white and healthy. The upper incisors should meet the lower incisors as the blades of a scissor, or repose on each other as in a pair of pincers.

**Neck and shoulders** — The neck should be carried free and easy; strong, muscled, widening progressively into the shoulders, the length slightly less than that of the head. Nape powerful and slightly arched. No dewlap.

**Withers** — May project slightly.

## BODY or TRUNK

Powerful, broad-backed and short. The length from sternum to ischium should be approximately equal to the height at the withers. The chest must go down to the level of the elbows, and never be cylindrical in shape, even though the ribs are barrelled. The depth of the chest (that is to say the distance from the sternum to the last rib) should be considerable, about 7/10 of the height at the withers.

**Ribs** — The first ribs are lightly arched, the others well sprung and slanted backwards, thus giving the desired depth of chest. Flat-sided dogs should be severely penalized.

**Flanks** — The flank, located between the last rib and the haunch, must be very short, especially in the male. The abdomen is only slightly tucked-up.

**Back** — Short, broad, muscular and with no weakness, yet remaining flexible.

**Loins** — Short, broad, well muscled; they must be flexible without any appearance of weakness.

**Croup** — Must follow as closely as possible the horizontal line of the back, and mold imperceptibly in the curve of the buttocks. Wide but not excessively so in the male, more developed in the bitch. A sunken or a slanted croup is a serious fault.

**Tail** — The puppy should be docked during the first week, leaving 2 or 3 vertebrae. The tail must be aligned normally with the spinal column, and is carried gaily in action. Some, born tailless, should not be penalized on that ground.

## FOREQUARTERS

The forequarters should be heavily boned, well muscled and perfectly straight.

**Shoulders and upper-arms** — The shoulders are relatively long, muscular but not laden, and moderately slanting. The shoulder-blade and the humerus are of approximately the same length.

**Elbows** — Tight to the body and parallel. Being out at elbows is a defect. In action, they must remain parallel to the middle-line of the body.

**Forearms** — Viewed from front or sideways, they must be perfectly straight, parallel to each other, and perpendicular to the ground. They should be well muscled and strong boned.

**Carpus** – Exactly in line with the forearms. The pisiform bone alone must form a protuberance on the rear-surface of the carpus. Again, a strong bone structure.  
**Metacarpus** – Strong bone structure, quite short, only slightly sloping forward.  
**Forefeet** – Short, round, compact. The toes must be close together and cambered; toe-nails strong and black. Pads thick and tough.

#### HINDQUARTERS

Powerful, with pronounced musculature. They must move in the same planes as the forequarters.  
**Thighs** – Broad, well muscled. Their action must be parallel to the median line of the body. The femur should be neither too straight, nor too sloping. The buttocks are well let down and firm. The patella is situated on an imaginary line starting from the highest part of the haunch (the iliac crest) to the ground.

**Legs** – Moderate in length, muscular, neither too straight nor too inclined.  
**Metatarsi** – Robust, lean, rather cylindrical; and perpendicular to the ground when the dog is in the "show" position. No dew-claws.

**Hocks** – Rather close to the ground, wide, muscular. Seen from the rear they should be straight and perfectly parallel when in a position of "stay". When in motion, they should neither close in nor out, but remain perfectly perpendicular.

**Hindfeet** – Round, compact, the toes close together and cambered. Toe-nails strong and black. Pads thick and tough.

#### COAT

The coat is abundant. The top coat together with the dense undercoat constitutes the protective covering, perfectly adapted to the sudden weather changes in his native country.

**Colour** – The coat of the Bouvier des Flandres is generally fawn or grey, often brindled or charcoal; a black coat is also admissible, but should not be specially favoured. Light-coloured coats, said to be "washed-out", are undesirable.

**Topcoat** – Should be crisp to the feel, dry and dull, neither too long nor too short (about 6 cm. = 2-3/8 inches), slightly tousled without ever being woolly nor curly. It is shorter on the skull, and nearly smooth on the outside part of the ears, but the inner openings are protected by moderately long hair. The top-coat is especially close and harsh on the upper part of the back; it is shorter on the lower limbs always, however remaining harsh and dry.

A flat lying topcoat is undesirable, as indicative of a lack of undercoat.

**Undercoat** – A fluffy mass of fine and close hairs grows under the topcoat and with it forms a waterproof covering.

**Moustache and beard** – Ample; the hairs are crisp; shorter and harsher on the upper part of the jaws. The upper lip must sport a moustache and the chin should be adorned by a fully grown and harsh beard, giving the gruff expression so characteristic of the breed.

**Eye-brows** – They are made up of erect hairs, accentuating the shape of the brows, without ever veiling the eyes.

**Skin** – Adhering closely, without excessive looseness. The visible mucous membranes always very dark coloured (pigmented).

**Exterior sexual organs** – Well developed. For the male, the two testicles must be properly in place.

#### HEIGHT and WEIGHT

**Height** – The height at the withers is: from 62 to 68 cm. (24.4" to 26.8") for the males; from 59 to 65 cm. (23.2" to 25.6") for the bitches.

In the two sexes, the ideal heights are the media between the measurements given, thus: 65 cm. (25.6") for the males. 62 cm. (24.4") for the bitches.

**Weight** – The weights are approximately: from 35 to 40 kgs (77 to 88 lbs.) for the males; from 27 to 35 kgs (60 to 77 lbs.) for the females.

#### GAIT

The Bouvier des Flandres must be of harmonious proportions, to allow a free, easy and proud gait. The walk and the trot are the usual movements, although one does also encounter amblers.

#### SERIOUS FAULTS

**Structure** – Long-bodied individuals.

**Eyes** – Light.

**Ears** – Low.

**Prognathism** – Upper or lower (overshot or undershot).

**Ribs** – Flat, too long, or barrelled and short.

**Croup** – Falling off.

**Coat** – Washed-out colour.

**Coat texture** – Soft, woolly, silky; too long; too short.

**Eyes** – Wall eyes; haggard (wild) expression.

**Nose** – Flecked.

**Coat colour** – Chocolate brown; too much white.

**Cryptorchidism** – Monorchidism; bilateral cryptorchidism.