

## Finders: arrows

"Of the Dog called the water Spaniell, or finder," wrote the English physician, John Caius, in the mid-16th century. "That kind of dog whose service is required in fowling upon the water, partly through a natural towardness, and partly by diligent teaching, is included with that property. This sort is somewhat big, and of a measurable greatness, having long, rough, and curled hair, not obtained by extraordinary trades [OED: skilled handicraft] but given by nature's appointment; yet nevertheless (friend Gesner) I have described and set him out in this manner, namely powled [clipped short] and notted [clipped; cut short (hair or beard)] from the shoulders to the hindermost legs, and to the end of his tail, which I did for use and custom's cause, that being as it were made somewhat bare and naked, by shearing off such superfluity of hair, they might achieve the more lightness and swiftness, and be less hindered in swimming, so troublesome and needless a burden being shaken off.

"This kind of dog is properly called Aquaticus, a water spaniel, because he frequenteth and hath usual recourse to the water where all his game lyeth, namely, waterfowl, ducks and drakes, whereupon he is likewise named a dog for the duck, because in that quality he is excellent.

"With these dogs also we fetch out of the water such fowl as be stung to death by any venemous worm; we use them also to bring us our bolts and arrows out of the water (missing our mark) whereat we directed our level, which otherwise we should hardly recover, and oftentimes they restore to us our shafts which we thought never to see, touch, or handle again after they were lost: for which circumstances they are called Inquistitores, searchers, and finders.

"Although the duck otherwise notably deceives both the dog and the master by diving under the water, and also by natural subtly, for if any man shall approach the place where they build, breed, and sit, the hens go out of their nests, offering themselves voluntarily to the hands, as it were, of such as draw near their nests. And a certain weakness of their wings pretended, and infirmity of their feet dissembled, they go slowly and so leisurely, that to a man's thinking it were no mastery to take them. By what deceitful trick they do, as it were, enrise and allure men to follow them, until they be drawn a long distance from their nests, which being compassed by their provident cunning, or cunning providence, they cut off all inconveniences which might grow out of their return, by using many careful and curious caveats, lest their often hunting betray the place where the young ducklings be hatched. Great therefore is their desire, and earnest is their study to take heed, not only to their brood but also to themselves. For when they have an inkling that they are espied, they hide themselves under turfs or sedges, wherewith they cover and shroud themselves so closely and craftily, that (notwithstanding the place where they lurk be found and perfectly perceived) there they will harbor without harm, except the water spaniel by quick smelling discover their deceipts."

The foregoing text was lightly edited from Edward Topsell's *The History of Foure-Footed Beastes* (London: 1607; facsimile of the Bodleian Library's copy, Amsterdam: 1973), which includes the whole of Johannes Caius's *On English Dogges...* (London: 1576; 2nd edition, London: 1880), translated by "a student", Abraham Fleming; the Latin text had been published in 1570 (*Johannis Caii Britannici de Canibus Britannicis...*, and was originally a letter written in Latin by Caius (1510-73) to his Swiss colleague, Konrad von Gesner (1516-65), the most celebrated naturalist of the time, for inclusion in Gesner's *Historia animalium* (Zurich: 1551-58). Therefore the date of writing (although not the time of first publication in England in Latin--the date usually given), overlaps with that of the earliest use of firearms in waterfowling (see [Duck dogs -- guns](#)). Certainly, the writer's perspective entirely predates this use and gives us a unique description of "what Poodles were originally bred to do".

In relation to the arrows, the question arises: were these arrows shot from a cross-bow or a long-bow? English archers were famous for accuracy with the long bow, and frequent practice was mandatory, to the point that it modified skeletal development, as we know particularly from remains in *Mary Rose* which sank 19 July 1545. Cross-bows were used in hunting in England (although crossbows were tightly circumscribed because useful to highway men, being readily hidden under a cloak) and for both hunting and military use on the continent. Waterfowl seem a tiny target for either weapon. However, whichever bow was used, special "flu-flu" arrows were used for fowling. These arrows, which had special flensing to slow flight, and which gave the type its name (derived from French *frou-frou*, the sound which silk makes when moved), as well as one or another special points, rendered the arrows safer in the instance that the target was missed, and preserved one's dinner intact for the pot, in the instance of a hit.

Caius describes ducks lying up in close cover. This is particularly true of mallards in moult. The Poodle History Project editor was surprised to receive, in August 1995, a dead mallard fit for the table delivered spontaneously to hand by her Standard Poodle (CKC OTCh/WC). Thinking something must have been wrong with the duck, she put it in the garbage. Next day, the identical service was performed; the second duck was more obviously in moult. Nevertheless, it went straight into the field-training bird-bag in the freezer; and it was understood not to walk near wetlands at that time of year with a Standard Poodle in full possession of Caius's specs. Inevitably, this event made more complex ways of putting ducks on the table seem over-equipped.

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## Finders: truffles

**About truffles:** The truffle is a subterranean edible fungus which has a piquant aromatic flavour much enjoyed from antiquity; truffles are in great demand today. The several species are ripen in winter; cannot be cultivated, but may be preserved where found (in light, moist, well-drained soil); grow mainly in France and Italy in woodlands near the roots of pine, oak, and chestnut; in England, under the leaf mould in beech woods. Truffles are solid, fleshy, globular, range in size from marbles to softballs, grow in bunches of from 10-20, about a foot underground. They're dug out with a spud (a sharp, narrow spade); Poodles are among traditional indicators of their location. To learn more about the several species of edible truffles and their use, see: [Wikipedia Tuber \(genus\), truffle.](#)

**Notes--hunting truffles in Great Britain today:** "In October, 2008, four UK Barbets attended a breed-specific training day for truffle hunting, organized and run by Marion Dean of [Mycorrhizal Systems, Ltd.](#), a company founded on technological advances in the production of black truffles (*Tuber melanosporum*). Training focussed dog and owner on the art of scenting. All the Barbets showed a natural ability to use their noses, and recognition of truffle-scent was achieved very quickly using reward and voice praise. Training the breed to indicate the scent will take practice: choices of how the dog may indicate the scent include lying down; some dogs prefer to sit; the end result is the same.

"I am the owner of two Barbets, and am constantly searching for different avenues to increase the working relationship I have with them. Particularly my Bepop has the ability to learn and absorb different training techniques, and has passed tests for gundog training and water retrieving. I can now add truffle-searching to

her list: Bepop got it, first time (see photo). Historically, waterdogs were versatile; I think that Bepop shows they still are.

"Marion Dean has not yet had any Poodles in for training, which is a surprise considering that there are historical references to similar types being used for truffle-hunting in the UK." --Wendy Preston, 11/08

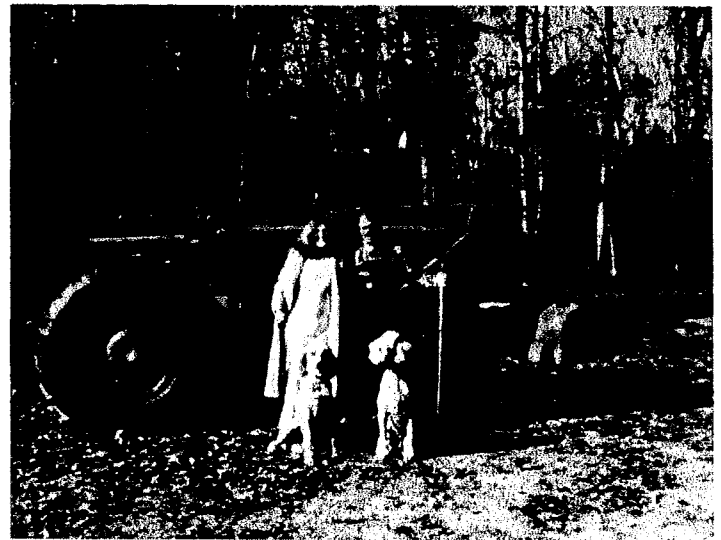


### Notes--hunting truffles in North

**America today:** In North America, we have "an Oregon White Truffle (*Tuber*

*gibbosum*), which grows along the west coast of the US, but is particularly common in Oregon. It's not generally considered as desirable as the truffles from France or Italy, but it has good flavor, and hey, we have to make good with what we've got." (MZ, 22 Jan. '01).

Garland Gourmet Mushrooms and Truffles, owned and operated by Franklin and Betty Garland, successfully pioneers propagation and cultivation of "black diamonds" (black Perigord truffles; *Tuber melanosporum*) in North Carolina. For a description of truffle-hunting in North Carolina with Standard Poodle Ginger, see "Smells like \$500--Move over Perigord: The black diamonds known as truffles are quite happy to grow in North Carolina," by Walter Nichols, *The Washington Post*, Wednesday, February 23, 2005, p. F01. "This is a picture we took for our Christmas card [2004]. It's sort of Green Acres meets American Gothic. Ginger is sitting in front of me and Cody is in front of Franklin. Only Ginger finds truffles, however." --Betty Garland, 3/05.



**References:** For a summary of truffle hunting, and including old photographs of truffle-hunting Poodles see "Able to smell truffles at a hundred yards", by Nicholas Thornton, *Dogs in Canada*, October 1992, pp. 45-6. See also, Rosa Engler, *Pudel* (Cham, Switzerland: Muller, 1995), p. 21.

The best (we've found as of 9/08) description of truffle hunting with Poodles (with a thorough explanation of the training related to that occupation) is given in "Instructions for Truffle Searching" by V. F. Fischer, and translated from German by Francis Mascall, *The Gardener's Magazine...*, J. C. Loudon, ed., vol. III (London 1837), pp. 403-6:

"13. Choice and training of Truffle Dogs. Truffles are perceptible to animals with a delicate sense of smelling, chiefly by the smell which they diffuse when ripe. The dog, as is well known, is at the head of domestic animals with an acute smell; and there is no doubt that dogs of all races, provided they are somewhat docile, may be used in truffle-hunting; though water-dogs (pudelhunde) are preferred for this

purpose, and next to them are spaniels and setting dogs. The last, in contestably, would do quite as well for this search as poodles or water-dogs, if their instinct did not lend them away from the search of truffles, to follow the track and scent of game. Pudél, or as we spell it in English, poodle, is a German word, and is used to designate that race of dogs which formerly used to be called water-dogs. Poodles seldom pursue such track of game; and even if they start it, they appear frightened, and keep closer to their work, from which property they are peculiarly fit for truffle dogs. Dogs are taken indifferently of the pure poodle breed ; no matter whether those from which they are bred have been truffle-finders or not. The colour, upon which some lay a stress, is of no consequence. The name which is given to the young truffle dog is of still less importance; and it is extremely ridiculous that some insist upon the truffle dog being named Putta, in the Italian language.

"A good truffle dog must be, 1. Very tractable, or be at a call; 2. He must search diligently and indefatigably; 3. When he scents a ripe truffle, he must hunt for it; 4. When he has completely discovered it, he must show the place where it is, by scratching with his fore feet; and, 5. When he has got it completely out, he must take it to his master without breaking into or devouring it. A dog that has these qualities may be called quite steady, and is trained in the following manner: The first training is begun very early. When the dog is nine weeks or a quarter of a year old, he is taught to come at a call. You must whistle to him, or call to him, saying, " Here," and praise him when he comes immediately, or punish him, though gently, when he is inattentive either to the whistle or the call. This must be daily practised and repeated, till he comprehends, and is obedient to, his master's voice or signal. If very stubborn, he must, like a setting dog, be led by a cord, and, upon a whistle or call, be so long pulled in, till he is at last obedient of himself. Then a beginning is made with fetching and carrying which is the thorough base of a good truffle dog. This is frequently learnt in play by the young poodle, with which force is not nearly so necessary as with the young setting dog, the latter being often obstinate. To teach the dog to fetch and carry, a light piece of wood, or a wisp of straw made up for the purpose, is thrown before him. If he fetches it, he is praised and rewarded with a morsel of bread, &c.; if he does not fetch it, he must be instructed to do it. The piece of wood is placed in his mouth; let him carry it a few steps, and caress him at the same time. The docile poodle soon comprehends what is required of him. If he fetches the wood, potatoes, apples, pears, bulbous roots, and even truffles, are then thrown before him. These objects he fetches just as willingly as the piece of wood. Care, however, should be taken that dead animals be not thrown to him; as by this his love of the chase might easily be awakened. Whenever he fetches a bulbous root, &c., he must be rewarded with a small piece of white or brown bread, and at the same time he must have a truffle to taste. Although this is the cause when he seeks for truffles that he sometimes breaks into them, yet it is essentially advantageous; because by this means he becomes perfectly acquainted with the object which he is hunting for, like a hound that is permitted to eat game. If at that time of the year no truffles are to be had, let a little old cheese, which has nearly the same effect, be given to the dog. But let both be given to him, not only at the very time of his training, but as a dessert at his usual time of feeding, during the whole time of his instruction.

"If the dog fetches every thing without distinction, as metal, gold, beans, &c., and is no longer stubborn, the elementary instruction, or chamber-training, is finished, and the training in the field is now proceeded to. This is begun by the dog's 'seeking what is lost, or fetching it.' This is first done with wood, with fruit, and with truffles, which are so hidden somewhere on the surface that he may easily find them. The instructor may also now begin to form artificial truffles, when no natural ones are to be had. They are prepared from strong-smelling cheese and fresh bread, which are mixed and formed into the shape of a truffle, to which is added a little of what is called truffle oil ; that is, olive oil in which truffles have been boiled. If the dog does his duty, and easily finds the objects he has been accustomed to seek, the natural or artificial truffle is lightly covered with earth, and the dog is told to 'seek what is lost.' If he do not find it, he is led to the place, and attempts are then made to induce him to scent and grub out what is hidden. The dog must then be rewarded in the way that

has been already so often mentioned.

"The dog is assiduously practised in this 'seeking what is lost;' the truffle is put deeper into the earth, and the dog is now first taken into actual truffle districts. The proceeding there is to be the same as before. Never omit to encourage him when he finds, and points out the place by scratching. By degrees he is accustomed to a continued regular search, like a setting dog; and he is admonished by the thrilling whistle with the mouth, by the expression, 'Seek further,' or 'Go seek,' or 'Forward.' When the dog scents a ripe truffle, and draws to, or in any way approaches it, as hounds do when they scent any thing, his instructor says, 'That's right,' 'Gently,' &c., to make him more careful and diligent till he points it out. Here endeavours are made, by further speaking to him, either to prevent his injuring, digging out, and eating the truffle; or else, by the word 'Fetch,' to make him bring it to his master when he has completely dug it out, which is easily done when it lies near the surface.

"When a dog begins to break into the truffles, and to eat them, or when he refuses to give them up, endeavours must be made to break him of this by gentle punishment, and by holding out bread to him. He must likewise be chid for digging after mice, or hunting after birds and hares, to which poodles are inclined.

"By a little practice, the dog soon acquires a certain degree of steadiness; and, after these two courses of instruction, is immediately fit to be used in truffle-searching, of which a short outline will now be added. It must still, however, be observed, that the dogs must have good and nourishing food, chiefly of vegetables. They must not run at large too much, but be confined a good deal to the kennel; and, to keep them in practice, they must be led out to seek truffles the whole year through, although no great quantity can be expected to be met with."

A method of training the truffle-Poodle, given in Rawdon B. Lee's *A History and Description of the Modern Dogs of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: 1894), pp. 186-7, is similar to that used today to train dogs to detect gas leaks in pipelines and drugs in shipping-containers: "The training of the dog should commence when he is about four months old, when he is taught to bring his master a truffle which is thrown for him. This quickly done, his next task is to fetch one of them which is hidden, and following this a truffle is first covered with earth, and this, too, he is encouraged to find and take to his master. So gradually the lessons continue, until the puppy will be quite reliable in finding and bringing in fungi which have been buried by his master two inches or so underground, the dog being, of course, rewarded with some little dainty each time he does his duty well. So far perfect, he is now taken out to some place where truffles are known to be, and the dog will find them, thus his training is accomplished with less trouble than either a pointer or setter is broken to find and stand game. Of course the little dog hunts keenly, and with his nose to the ground, his tail action and quickness on scent are quite equal to what are seen in a spaniel on the line of fur or feather. When a truffle has been 'set' or found two or three inches below the ground's surface, the dog will scratch the soil away with his paws in the fashion common to canines, but the better plan, and the one usually followed, is for the owner to dig up the prize, and so prevent any risk of its being injured by the dog's teeth. I need scarcely state that a truffle dog must be thoroughly and entirely broken from his natural inclination to hunt vermin and game."

The following summary/translation (HB, 8/97) is part of a chapter entitled "The Utility Poodle", *Der Deutsche Pudel* (Munich: 1907), and presents a similar training method: "Another use for the Poodle, because of his excellent nose, is that of truffle-dog. As early as 1746, Döbel in his *Jägerpractica* says that in this he is superior to all other breeds, and is nowadays used for this purpose in Italy, Spain and France, and also in those areas of Germany where truffles exist. The publication *Der Hund* in 1883 gave a detailed description of the truffle hunt, and the therefore required training. In the south of France the income from

truffles is considerable since annually several hundred thousand pounds are exported. It is thus appropriate to talk about the training of truffle dogs.

"Training should begin in the summer so that the dog remains in practice. Initially, one practices retrieving at home by sewing strong-smelling truffle into a small leather pouch and hiding this in various parts of the room and making the dog find and retrieve it. Once he does so willingly and without 'mouthing', it is then hidden in shrubs or under moss or leaves, and let the dog find it, consistently using the same command such as 'Seek,' 'Lost,' 'Truffle.' Later the pouch is hidden under deeper layers of moss or leaves. Once the dog finds it quickly and surely, one takes him to parts of the forest where truffles are known to grow, and makes him find and retrieve under ever more trying conditions. During training, one should talk to the dog as little as possible, not using any words other than those commands chosen for the truffle hunt. When the dog has found the truffles he is to be praised and patted, and made to sit, then rewarded with a 'treat.'

"Not until the middle of September after it has rained, does one take off the leash, and following into areas in which truffles are suspected, there one hides a fresh truffle (not in a pouch) on a number of occasions under two inches of earth and leaves. If the dog scents the truffle and starts to scratch to recover it, one should quickly go to the location and recover the fruit oneself, showing it to him and putting it into one's pocket. From now on the dog should not be allowed to retrieve, but merely indicate the location. When he does so, he should be made to sit, praised, and rewarded.

"Once the dog discovers the truffles even underground, take him into a truffle region and cause him to quarter upwind, since this will cause the scent to be found faster and more easily. An experienced and eager dog can scent truffles at 20 paces, and 6" below ground, indicating his find much in the manner of a Pointer.

"After return from the hunt, the dog should be fed his normal food, never before the hunt, when he should not get anything but fresh water. During the hunt he should be given treats only when he has actually found truffles. If he finds nothing, which can happen in dry and hot weather, he should not be given anything other than his food upon returning home."

The editor, while on holidays, finds her Poodle very useful finding sea-clams on the broad beaches typical of late-fall low tides on the New England coast. No training required (evidently other than that the dog understands the object of the search); it's only necessary to walk up the beach behind the quartering dog, digging at each site the dog scratches out.

The headpiece for this section is "Truffle-hunting" (ca 11"x 12") by G.B. Goddard, from the *Illustrated London News*, 2 October 1869. Here's the accompanying text: "The incident of rustic occupation or adventure which is here depicted by our Artist may be observed in September, where the soil favours the spontaneous growth of truffles, especially under the shade of beech-trees, in different parts of our country; but the produce of this kind in France, Germany, and Italy is far more abundant, and it is only the foreign truffle-hunter who can make a serious business of its pursuit and collection. This species of edible fungus, tuber cibarium or the common truffle, which is about the size of a walnut, with a warty rough service [sic surface] and black colour, having a peculiar smell, it is found at a depth of ten or twelve inches underground, where its existence is detected by the keen scent of sharp little terrier-dogs employed for that purpose. In some parts of the Continent, we are told, the truffle-digger is assisted by trained pigs instead of dogs; but there have been instances of men and boys possessing such an extraordinary power of the olfactory sense that they were enabled to smell out the truffle without the aid of a brute companion. The truffle is a dainty ingredient in cookery when used to add a flavour to sauces, but scarcely worth eating by itself. It may be purchased at Covent Garden."