Country of Origin: Australia
Group: Herding
Use today: Herding; dog sports; family companion.
Life Span: 10 to 14 years
Color: Coat colors are black, red with or without tan, fawn, chocolate and blue.
Coat: Double coated. Short and dense undercoat and a hard straight and weather-repellent outer coat.
Grooming: This breed is easy to groom. An occasional combing and brushing is all that it needs. Bathe only when necessary as it will remove the natural oils in the weather-resistant coat and dry out the skin. This breed is an average shedder.
Height: 17 – 20 inches
Weight: 25 – 45 pounds

In Brief: Although the Kelpie loves the great outdoors, he is by no means a yard dog. He is bred to work with people. If he's a family pet, he needs to live indoors when he's not out with you playing, jogging, working, participating in local agility or obedience trails. Otherwise, he'll be lonely, bored and destructive. It takes a lot of time and effort to keep him occupied to his satisfaction. Excels as a watchdog.

Description: The Australian Kelpie has a compact body and well-developed limbs. Slightly longer than he is tall, the Kelpie has a broad chest and firm hind quarters that contribute to his flexible, energized appearance. The head is long and narrow. The medium length tail is low set. The short, compact feet have well arched toes. The double coat consists of a short and dense undercoat and a hard, straight and weather-repellent outer coat. Color possibilities include black and red, each with or without out tan; and fawn, chocolate and blue. Kelpie owners are more interested in the breed's working ability then their appearance.

Temperament: A compact, robust, enthusiastic, and tireless working dog. Excellent at herding, the Australian Kelpie is the most popular and successful working dog. Kelpies are devoted one-man dogs but far too work-oriented and energetic for a house or apartment existence. Their easy trainability and keenness on the job make them a fundamental component of the Australian work force. They are ready to respond immediately to any signal given by its master, even from a great distance. They are good with children when they are raised with them from puppyhood. Kelpies will try to herd other dogs, pets and animals whether they want to be herded or not. This workaholic will work until it drops. They are independent and in business for themselves rather than for pleasing a handler. Boredom is the breed's doom and the owner's as well. In their native country of Australia, Kelpies work all day even in intense heat, covering 1,000 to 4,000-plus acres. The breed uses "eye" similar to the Border Collie's on the tractable stock, but utilizes its nipping ability to turn more stubborn cattle. Kelpies can muster thousands of sheep from pasture to pen to truck. When a flock of sheep is packed as tight as Times Square on New Year's Eve, they will look for the shortest way to the other side, which is usually in a straight line. This very clever Kelpie will jump on the back of the nearest sheep and run lightly across the flock to reach the other side. They make excellent watchdogs and can also be trained as seeing-eye dogs. The Australian Kelpie is not an aggressive dog, but he can be protective when
needed, and will guard his family and their belongings when necessary, regardless of the risk to himself.

**Health:** Beware of PRA= Progressive Retinal Atrophy - retinal degeneration causing partial to total blindness.

**Living Conditions:** The Australian Kelpie is not recommended for apartment life. They are working dogs that need plenty of open space to run and will be happiest with a job to do. Their all-weather coat allows them to live where it is hot as well as where it is cold. They will be content to live outdoors with adequate shelter.

**Exercise:** The Australian Kelpie is a working dog that demands a great deal of exercise, preferably with some kind of job to do. Their energy levels are extremely high!! They are workaholics and will run until they drop!!

**Origins:** Although many still believe the Kelpie is a Dingo crossed with the Border Collie, more accurate documentation reveals the breed's development from English North Country Collies of the Rutherford strain. These hardy British working herders, like many sheepdogs, were imported to Australia during the latter half of the 19th century. Today nearly 100,000 Kelpies are employed on that continent. Despite their relatively small size, Kelpies are without limitations, capable of working cattle, goats, poultry and reindeer. They will excel in competitive obedience. The name "Kelpie" comes from the water kelpie mentioned by Robert Louis Stevenson, the Scottish writer, in the novel Kidnapped. This breed has been known since 1870.