

Something for Everyone at our Herding Trial !

The Sacramento Valley Shetland Sheepdog Club will be having our third biennial herding trial and test on Saturday, November 4. In addition to the traditional herding events, our trial will also include ***Herding Instinct Testing*** and ***Farm Dog Certification*** testing.

The Herding Instinct Test (HIT) requires no previous training on the part of the dog or the handler. As the name implies, this tests the dog's aptitude and interest to move livestock (herd). It should come as no surprise many of our dogs who have never seen sheep in their life will display an interest in and an instinct for herding. After all, the name of our favorite breed is Shetland ***Sheepdog***. The dog is handled by the judge, though the owner may be invited to participate. Dogs that pass the HIT are awarded an AKC certificate. (If you want an advanced indication of your dog's inherent herding skills, evaluations are conducted at Performance Dogs In Action, the location of the trial, every Sunday for a nominal fee.)

The Farm Dog Certification (FDC) is a new AKC title. This pass/fail test looks at whether the dog has the basic skills and confidence to work in a farm or ranch environment. It is like a CGC in the context of a farm setting. There are 12 elements to this test which include things such as walking past farm animals (without an inappropriate reaction), walking on uneven surfaces, jumping up on a hay bale, supervised separation, reaction to noise (power equipment, etc.), stand for examination, etc. Look on the AKC website for more details.

The test is conducted entirely on lead and requires two Q's to earn the title, which is appended to the dogs registered name. Since our event is two trials, you will have an opportunity to earn this title in one day. This test does require some preparation. For those who are interested, there is a class conducted every Saturday at noon at PDIA. Plan on attending 3-4 times to be ready. Please call ahead to register, 655-1558.

Our trial was a huge success in 2015 and we look forward to another great event. There are, alas, only a small number of our members who participate in herding at this time. However, all of our members are welcome and encouraged to attend. If you are new to herding come out and see what our breed is capable of! Consider challenging your dog ... and yourself, with the HIT or FDC. If you love Shelties you will be glad you came. Please call the trial chairperson, John Kreutzer 420-3064 for more information.