



Four Sloughis with their masters, a tracking Braque and two tracking Rateros in Algeria, North Africa (Rateros are a Podenco type, Braque a Pointer type) © Mangelsdorf

UNDERSTANDING THE SLOUGHI

By Dr. M.-Dominique de Caprona

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It has been adjusted to reflect part of the Sloughi history in Finland



Bensekrane's Saff, country of origin Algerian Sloughi © de Caprona

Endemic to North Africa, the Sloughi, besides being a national treasure for its countries of origin (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) has had a long and detailed history in the Western world. Following are a few milestones.

In 1867 Eugène Gayot, citing the Baron de Noirmont, writes “....The North of Africa produces very tall sighthounds, usually fawn brindled and with short hair, named Sloughis in the Arabian language. In Algeria, the natives hunt wild boar, jackal, hartebeest and gazelle with them. These dogs, highly treasured and difficult to find when they are pure-bred, were well known and appreciated by our ancestors; in a letter written to Charles IX by Pierre Bon, consul of Marseille, one sees that the King of Algiers sends to this prince Barb horses, lions and fawn sighthounds....” Charles IX of France, of the Valois Dynasty, was King of France from 1560 to 1574 .

In 1852, the General Daumas wrote the historic description of the Algerian Sloughi in his book “The Horses of the Sahara”. Late 1800s and early 1900s, the Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian Sloughis inspire famous artists of the time; the sculptors Antoine-Louis Barye , Gaston d’Illiers, Alfred Dubuccand and Jules Edmond Mason; the glass maker René Jules Lalique; the painters Henri-Emilien Rousseau, Eugène Fromentin, Jean- Léon Gérôme, Auguste Le Gras and others. Famous Italian and French writers Gabriele D’Annunzio, Alphonse Daudet and Joseph Kessel were also taken by the breed. Following the occupation by France of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, the Sloughi becomes a French sighthound by “right of conquest”.

In 1906, the Dutch artist Auguste Le Gras, who was the first to import Sloughis from Algeria and Tunisia to the Netherlands at the end of the 1800s, draws the ideal Sloughi. This drawing is still a reference to serious breeders and judges. The Sloughi was known and admired in France and other European countries long before the Saluki.

After WW 2 and the interruption of all Sloughi breeding in Europe, followed by not even a handful of breeders in the 1960s, the early seventies witnessed the renaissance of the breed in Europe. It is also at that time that the FCI standard of the Sloughi, which the French had put together in the early 1900s after claiming the Sloughi, was given over to Morocco.

In Finland the first Sloughi was Bou-Manjineni, imported from Sweden by Aili Porvali, of Golden-West kennel. She had two litters; first with Finnish & Swedish Champion Serdouk (imported from Sweden in 1971) in 1972 and a second litter with Quargla-Etnen (Serdouk's son also imported in 1971) in 1973.

The first litter with Serdouk produced 4 puppies (of golden-West Abdul, Ahmed, Azzaba and Ayana). Out of this litter Ahmed was to become the first Finnish bred International Champion. The second litter with Quargla-Etnen produced 3 puppies (of Golden-West Baikar, Behet and Birka). Later on International & Nordic Champion Winner-75 of Golden-West Ahmed and Birka produced 1 puppy, Cleopatra of Golden-West, which became Finnish Champion by accident, as she was white with gold marks!

By 1978 there were 9 litters and 61 registrations. Seven litters were bred by Aili Porvali, one by Hellin Hyökki, and one by Ansa Tapaninen. These litters were all closely related as they resulted from breeding between the of Golden West A and B litters. Ahmed had 3 litters with Birka, 1 with Ayana (his sister) and 1 with Azzaba (also his sister). From Ahmeds' second litter with Birka, 3 puppies were exported to Sweden, Of Golden West Ghagai, Ghiras and Gilda and 1 puppy to Norway, of Golden West Ghandour.

Somehow the interest in Sloughis died after the 1970's, and one had to wait a decade before Pia and Hannu Puomila imported a bitch Tiri Schuru-esch-Schams from Germany in 1991 and Usdan Schuru-esch-Schams in 1992. Jaana Hyväri imported a bitch El Sissa Min Darazzja Loewwla from Holland at the end of 1992.

Aili Porvali and Pia Puomila co-bred a litter between Tiri and Usdan in 1995, the of Golden-West H-litter of 10 puppies. All 10 puppies grew into champions (of Golden West Haddam, Hakim, Hamir, Hannibal, Harlem, Hassan, Habana, Hadina and Hannah)

Usdan also sired the first Tillieville (Ingela Näslund) litter in Sweden with Swedish Arhib's Asiir Bintu Hadjib. From this litter a bitch Tillieville Zim Salabim was imported to Finland. Several dogs in this litter were very successful also, not the least Tillieville Zoot Allures owned by Inge Gelius, first World winner in Helsinki and # 1 Sloughi in Sweden 2001.

In 1999, an artificial insemination with frozen semen was carried out between multi Ch. of Golden-West Hannah and Ch.Ghali Shi'Rayân from the USA. 9 puppies were born on May 15, 1999 at the Syringa kennel (Eva Hildorsson) in Sweden and 2 puppies of this litter, Syringa Heritage (Paivi Nurmi) and Syringa Harmony (Anna-Mari Rönkkö) were imported to Finland. Syringa Happiness was imported to the USA by

Shi'Rayân and became the first European bred Sloughi to win an American racing title, completing her sprint and oval racing champion titles within the year 2000. Syringa Heritage was # 1 Sloughi in Finland in 2000 and 2001. Syringa Harmony set a milestone in coursing by receiving the first coursing certificate in Finland (with a total of 409 points) and winning the first Derby in 2002 for a Sloughi.

The next imports came from the USA, Germany and Morocco. They were Hulkah Shi'Rayan in 1998 by Pia and Hannu Puomila, and Jaraa Shi'Rayan in 2000 by Tarja Matikainen. In 2002 Firus Schuru esch Schams is imported from Germany by Janne Reinikka and Lea Riihimäki.

The black brindle Hulkah Shi'Rayân became the first American bred Sloughi Swedish, Finnish and International Champion in Europe. She was the foundation bitch of the La'Jahhibu kennel (Pia Puomila and Anna-Mari Rönkkö) in 2002 when she whelped the first Scandinavian bred black red brindles, by artificial insemination with the dog Ch. Ghali Shi'Rayân. Jaraa Shi'Rayân made a first too, by winning the first Best Puppy in Show for the breed in Finland at the Finnish Sighthound Club show in 2001. She was out of Algerian bred Ramla by Ch. Fa'iq Shi'Rayan.

In 2002 there are some 82 Sloughis registered in Finland.

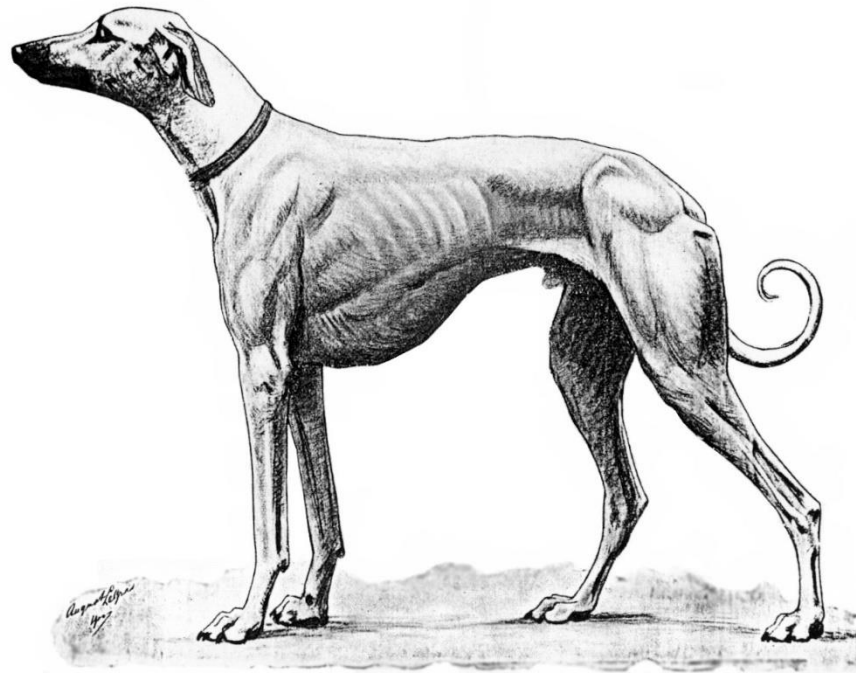
Finnish Sloughi Fanciers are currently active in Finland in shows and performance events, and the Sloughi population has new imports and litters being born.

During all these years and until more recently, the Sloughi was met with a lot of skepticism and downright antagonism by a small faction of the Saluki Fancy- the misconception being that this breed is just another version of the Saluki. This attitude has considerably undermined the efforts of Sloughi owners. However, it seems that the new millennium has brought with it a more tolerant and knowledgeable attitude toward this breed, as open minded people exposed to these dogs see the differences. Dog Genetics' recent DNA findings, by various scientists in different countries, have shown that the Sloughi has a clear genetic profile distinct from other dogs and other sighthound breeds.

Apart from its DNA, what are then the physical features that make a typical Sloughi? This article aims at illustrating the standard of the breed and describing correct Sloughi type. The new AKC standard is based on the FCI standard for the breed, established at the time the Fédération Cynologique Internationale was created in 1911.

Before evaluating a Sloughi, it is important to understand the role of these Sighthounds in North Africa. The Sloughi there is an all-around working breed of sighthound, guarding dwellings, protecting herds of sheep and goats against jackal attacks, and hunting hare, jackal, gazelle, and boar. Guarding requires a keen sense of who is a stranger and who isn't. This results in the Sloughi's typical aloof and cautious reaction to strangers, including judges. It also results in a breed with high prey drive, solid structure and strong jaws.

The first impression one gets of a Sloughi is that of medium to large sized, lean, somewhat bony, squarely proportioned, proud and aloof sighthound, with a far looking gentle gaze - males impressive while elegant, females more refined and usually smaller.



Ideal Sloughi by Auguste Le Gras 1905

Apart from the lop ears that were imposed by the French on the breed in 1937, Auguste Le Gras' drawing still represents most of the structural characteristics required of the Sloughi today. The artist captured the square proportions, the almost level topline from the base of the neck to the hips with a slight curve over the loin, the underline from a deep chest with long sternum, barely reaching the elbow, to a high tuck up. It shows the correct muscular shoulders, front legs, slope of bony hips, hind-legs and oval shaped feet. Angulations are typically moderate front and rear. The neck, the strong head with correct profile and slight stop are typical. The thin tail is carried with the correct upward curve, the curl varying among individuals from a tight curl to an open curl. Although a Sloughi in optimal physical condition shows muscular definition, it is always lean, and should not have bulging greyhound-like muscles. Males are often taller than females, their size ranging from 26-29 inches (66-72 cm) at the withers, whereas the females' height ranges from 24-27 inches (61-68 cm). Bitches are allowed to be a bit longer in body than the dogs.

Seen from the front, the Sloughi should not appear barrel chested, the ribs are relatively flat and the last floating ribs slightly rounded. The chest is neither too wide nor too narrow.



Classic moderate Sloughia of recent African lineage (Algerian and Moroccan)
Correct head, front and rear. © Marieke Wegner (Germany),



Classic moderate Sloughis of recent African lineage (Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan)
with correct silhouettes

Bitches are allowed a little additional length of body, as with other breeds too
Left © de Caprona, right © Marcus Arndt (Germany)

The Sloughi's coat is always short, its skin very fine, close fitting to the body, without folds. There is a large variety of coat colors in the breed. To use the breed's terminology, solid coats in all shades of dark mahogany fawn to light sand, with or without black markings such as dark overlay, black mantle, black ears, brindle, black mask are accepted. Although these coat colors exist in the country-of-origin Sloughis, liver mantle, liver brindle, liver mask, blue mantle, blue brindle, blue mask, white and black are not part of the current FCI standard and not cited in the AKC standard. Parti-colors were never part of any standard. Small white markings on tip of toes or on chest are usually tolerated, the ideal coat color being solid with no white markings.



Some of the Sloughi's coat colors. "The Nap" Tempera by the author.

From left to right: red brindle/black mask, sand/black mantle, sand/black mask, sand, red sand/black mask, sand/brindle/black mask, sand/dark overlay/black mask



Male Sloughi showing the correct lean muscles of the breed as well as a rare combination of most of the black markings of the breed: black mantle, brindle, black mask
© de Caprona



Variations of fawn, from mahogany red fawn to light sand © Chaouki (Finland)
Elegantin Magma and V'Hibba Shi'Rayan

On the move, the Sloughi appears effortless, feather light and covers ground without excessive reach and drive. His back stays level while he trots. The tail, with its typical upward curve, is to be carried no higher than the back, although the AKC standard accepts the upward curve reaching above the line of the back when the animal is excited. Puppies and Juniors are fleet of foot too.



Correct natural gait of the Sloughi, multi Ch. Malala Schuru-esch-Schams, FCI Eurosighthound 2016 © Kristina Kosmas



Sloughi Puppies are, from early on, sound movers.

The Sloughi's head appears at first as relatively wide, particularly in males. This good width of skull is coupled with similar lengths of skull and muzzle, with a slight stop. Seen from the side, the head is longish, refined, delicate but rather strong. Seen from above, it has the shape of a long wedge, the skull being the widest part, tapering to the tip of the nose. Between the ears, the skull measures about 4-6 inches (12-14 cm). The skull is distinctly rounded at the back and curving harmoniously on the sides. The nose is black with thin and supple lips just covering the lower jaw and the corner of the mouth is to be barely noticeable. The Sloughi's scissor bite shows normal teeth set on strong jaws. The AKC standard adds a level bite. Strong dewlaps and flews are to be avoided.

The medium sized lop ears are mobile and expressive, and can fold backwards when the dog is nervous or moving.

The expression of the large brown eyes is alert, gentle and slightly melancholy. Their color are shades of amber in light coats to dark brown, eye rims being pigmented.



Bensekrane's Saff © de Caprona and V'Hadiyyah Shi'Rayan © Markus Arndt
 Left: Correct planes of skull and bridge of muzzle in relationship to each other
 Right: Proportions of the Sloughi head seen from the front



Left: Phareeda Shi'Rayan © de Caprona
Right: head seen from $\frac{3}{4}$, Qalb Elasad Ayda © Liina Niemelä

The characteristics of the Sloughi that make it such an attractive breed are also further highlighted indirectly by what are considered faults or disqualifications in the breed. The FCI standard lists faults as any departure from the foregoing points stated in the standard - the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded to be proportionate to its degree. They are listed as follows: Bad ratio between length of body and height at withers, head and body slightly too heavy, stop too pronounced or not enough, eyes too light, top line not horizontal, croup narrow, too or insufficiently oblique, belly not enough tucked up, rounded ribs, chest not long enough, seen from the side cut up or very arched, tail too short, with too much hair, badly carried, muscles roundish and protruding, hair hard and coarse, small white mark on chest.

The FCI standard also lists disqualifying faults. They are the following: body clearly longer than high, haunch bones lower than withers, depigmented areas on the mucous membranes, over- or undershot mouth, ears erect, or raised with tips drooping, too long, folding backwards (rose ear), hair semi-long, Fringes on legs or tail, white stockings, larger white markings, color not in accordance with the standard. Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.



The Sloughi has charisma and presence and an ideal coat color has very little or no white markings .

Number 1 Sloughi in Finland 2015, Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Estonian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Baltic, Nordic Ch. Qalb Elasad Anig . Owner: Joanna Sjövall, breeder Pia Chaouki, Finland. © Chaouki



A good example of a top show Sloughi. International, Luxemburg, Polish, German VDH, German DWZRV, Dutch and Belgian Ch. Chameh Schuru-esch-schams has so many titles to her name, won in many different countries, that it is impossible to list them all. Here is a short selection. She is German National Specialty winner 2012, FCI Eurosighthound winner 2012, Amsterdam Winner 2012, Belgian Winner 2012, Winner Donaueschingen 2013, European Winner 2014. She was #1 Sloughi in Germany 2012, 2013, 2014, and in the Netherlands 2012. Owner Kristina Kosmas, breeders: Ingeborg & Eckhard Schritt (Germany) © Kristina Kosmas

Sloughis are athletes with a strong prey drive. They have long been admired for their coursing and racing ability, having already been coursing in France in the early 1920s. It is a good tradition in the breed to promote dual championships.



Top Dual Champion in Europe. German, Danish and Dutch Ch., FCI Eurosighthound winner 2015, Ganoosh Areen Ksar Ghilane, FCI European racing winner 2015, FCI short track racing Champion 2015, FCI World oval racing winner 2016, German Champion for Beauty and Performance. Owner: Anja Schwarzat, Breeders: Cora Nürnberger & Ylenia Gasparini, Germany. © Schwarzat. Ganoosh represents the best of a team work between North African (Morocco and Algeria), American and German breeders.

Last but not least, Sloughis of good breeding age gracefully, and can be shown in Veteran classes with success. Their life span is usually about 11 to 12 years old under optimal care. However, quite a few Sloughis turn 13-14 years old, while some have reached the age of 16, and one is even known to have turned 17 years old.



Aging with grace, 12 years old Multi Ch. BIS O'Dah Shi'Rayan, Field Champion, Oval Racing Champion, Superior Gazehound Racing Champion 5. The only Sloughi in the US at this time, combining top show wins with impressive racing and coursing titles. Owner: Dr. Bernd Fritzscht, breeder: Dr. Dominique de Caprona (USA). © de Caprona.