



Expert Grooming Article

# Rhodesian Ridgeback

Known as the Lion Dog or African Lion Hound, the Rhodesian Ridgeback is a combination of the early southern African pioneers' dogs and those of the Hottentots. He is known for his characteristic peculiarity of a clearly defined ridge of hair on the back, growing forwards. (read more over page...)



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# Rhodesian Ridgeback

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Bred and prized as a strong, endurance dog, able to withstand extreme temperatures and long spans without water, this wonderful, strong and balanced breed was able to work to flush partridge, bring down game, bail up a lion till the hunter arrived, guard the farm and still be a loyal companion and loving to children.

He is an easy dog to keep without the noise and bickering of some other breeds. Easy to train and eager to please and a good nature to go with it.

The Rhodesian Ridgeback coat standard calls for short dense hair that is sleek and glossy and never woolly nor silky. The requisite ridge of hair growing forwards from just behind the shoulders, to point between hips with two identical whorls of hair is a given. The US standard calls for disqualification without this. Colours may be a light wheaten to red wheaten with a touch of white on chest and between toes permitted.

Now to achieve this perfect texture sounds simple enough, yet often exhibitors ignore the clear wording of sleek and glossy and try to condition this coat with regular conditioners which only soften the coat and change the texture.

You don't have a lot of coat to work with as some of the "hairdo" dogs, but what you have must be perfect. It should gleam with great health and vigour.

Let's start with the head and eye area. For the Rhodesian Ridgeback use **Plush Puppy Let's Face It**. This is a hypoallergenic sulfate free low foaming shampoo designed just for faces. It's no tear formula features the highest quality Blue Cypress Extracts, Panthenol with Pro Vitamin B and SugaNate. These special ingredients clean, soothe, add moisture, aid healing and have anti-inflammatory benefits. A small golf ball sized amounts directly to the face and eye area allows you to thoroughly clean without causing irritation. It can also be used in and around the ears with the same benefits. Its low foaming design allows ease of rinsing, yet complete cleaning.



For a brilliant shine to the coat, use **Plush Puppy All Purpose Shampoo** diluted 1:5 (1 part shampoo to 5 parts water). We call this the 'Shine' shampoo as it features natural Henna stalk extracts that impart a beautiful gloss and shine to your dog's coat. It is wonderful to use on normal to slightly dehydrated coats.

Diluting shampoos allows even distribution throughout the coat and easier rinsing also.

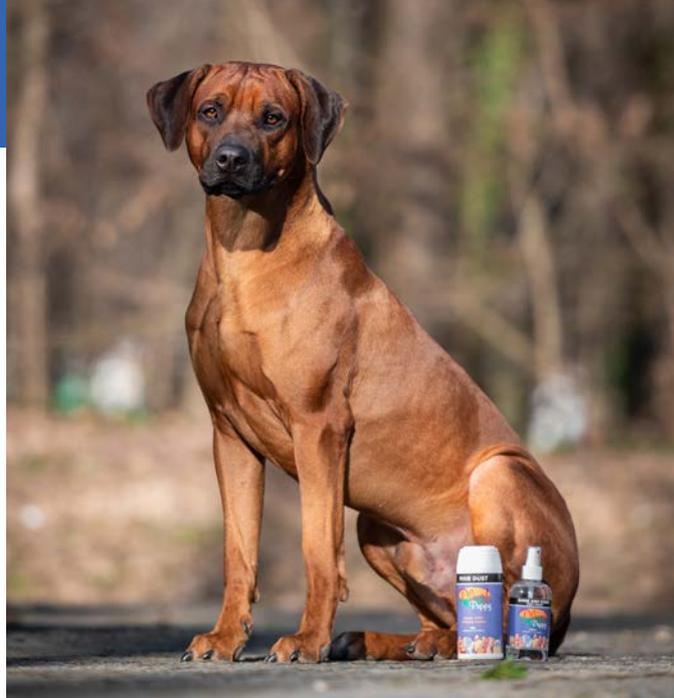
You can slightly deepen and bring up the red colour of your Rhodesian too by switching to the **Plush Puppy Herbal Whitening Shampoo**. This is a purple shampoo that adds purple tones to offset any yellow or fading in the coat. It doesn't lighten or alter the colour but cosmetically enhances and deepens the lost cool tones in the hair. Use at a dilution rate of 1:5. Also good for any white bits on the chest too. Try mixing this shampoo half and half with your All Purpose Shampoo to get the shine as well.

Once you have rinsed the shampoo, then you need to hydrate the coat without softening it. Use **Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil** a fantastic water-soluble oil that never looks greasy or sticky. It is a truly beneficial blend of using extracts of Calendula oil, Wheat germ oil, and Evening Primrose. This gives incredible shine and support to the hair against harsh conditions or regular bathing which one needs to do when exhibiting every week. It allows you to bath every week. Add 1 tablespoon to 4 Litres of water, then either sponge on or sluice well through the coat and LEAVE IN. DO NOT RINSE. It will maintain the texture and moisture in the coat. Nothing compares!

You show the coat with this oil and water mix in it. It looks professional, well cared for and gives you an edge to compete with those hairdo, sculpted dogs that look so glamorous. Your coats will gleam and stand out with great lustre and health.

This is the main basis of your Rhodesian Ridgeback grooming routine. Do it every week on every dog and the coats will be there for you when you need them. There are no short cuts to a great coat. They are not made overnight. It is a discipline to do this, but do it you must if you wish to maximise your wins.

Now the controversial piece of this article is that you should blow-dry this coat, using a force dryer. I do this with much experience knowing that it allows me to remove all dead hair better than any grooming mitt, brush



or whatever. I get that dead hair out, and regrowing faster and better than most! You thus never experience those ugly periods of shedding excessively with what looks like moth-eaten holes throughout the coat. Get it out and get it growing and fast! It works and the difference in the coats must be seen to be believed. I don't waste time doing this for nothing!

An amazing product that not only speeds up drying time but protects the coat is **Plush Puppy FAST Blow Dry Spray**. FAST dramatically reduces drying time, adds moisture and conditions while protecting the coat. It contains Australian Native Flame Tree extracts that hydrate a dry or old coat making it look perfect. It also protects the coat from damage from sun and heat. FAST is amazing on short coats for a brilliant shine. A light spray to a wet or damp coat, then brush through before drying.

Between shows, slather a workable slurry of **Plush Puppy Coat Rescue** and water all over the coat and leave in for as long as you can. If the dogs are outdoors, then leave it in for days on end. We do. If the dogs are house dogs, then leave on for as long as you can and rinse off. This has everything known to man in the formula and is all naturally and organically sourced.

It has been specifically formulated to bring dry or damaged coats back to life. Coat Rescue's naturally blended essential oils and pure plant extracts help restore strength and elasticity to dehydrated and tired coat hair. The treatment is exceptional on brittle coat hair. Infused with naturally blended essential oils and pure plant extracts including Kaolin, Almond Oil, Cinnamon Bark, Castor Oil, Soya Protein and Seaweed Extract.

We do like the shine that all of these products above add to the Rhodesian's hair. The more shine you get, the better the ridge stands out as shine allows the colour to reflect beautifully. Dull, poor coat will absorb light and not reflect.

So, you have done your homework, the coat looks a million dollars and the dog has terrific muscle tone giving off the impression of being upstanding and athletic and capable of great endurance.

Lastly a quick spray with **Plush Puppy Odour Muncher**. It literally munches the odour and works well for smelly problems such as emergencies in transit. Leaves a light fragrance, certainly not too much and definitely not too little.

Give the coat a light mist of **Plush Puppy Shine and Comb** a few minutes before entering the show ring and wipe down with your hand. See the shine!

What's not to like, watching this canine "spirit of Africa" stride efficiently around the ring with long and free stride? He is a true champion of this breed. The Rhodesian Ridgeback works, guards and is a faithful friend as well. I love watching the power and endurance and can only imagine how majestic he would look giving chase, demonstrating that great coursing ability. Now that would be something to see!

