

Valerie Reiss

"Outside a dog, a book is a man's best friend. And inside a dog, it's too dark to read."

-Groucho Marx

The inner and outer workings of the domestic dog and other canoid carnivores are where my research interests lay. Specifically, I'm interested in the genetics of domestic dog breeds and various mustelid species (a family of carnivores that branched off from the early ancestors of the domestic dog and wolf). The Boxer is the domestic dog breed that has my heart and is the main occupant of my genetics collection-with the Great Dane in second. In the mustelids, I am most interested in the Domestic Ferret, Black-Footed Ferret (a mustelid species native to the prairie states and currently the most endangered mammal in the US), and the Ranch Mink (a water-loving mustelid which has been bred in captivity for the fur industry since the early part of the 1900's).

Although there are many books on canine genetics and my breeds of interest, there are far fewer on the mustelids (most are older books on the Ranch Mink and a few on how genetics diseases of the Domestic Ferret relate to veterinary care). With this in mind, I have included some non-book items to further illustrate my studies. The bulk of my books were gathered with three goals in mind:

- To find information on the origins and evolution of the breed/species.
(This gives a picture of what genetic material was available to start with)
- To find pictures and information on individual animals or other species that were influential during the development of the breed/species.
(This gives a picture of how breeders, conservationists, and/or natural selection have shaped the genetic material and where the breed/species is currently)
- To find direct information on the genetics of the breed/species.
(Previously done through breeding observations and today done through biochemistry and pedigree analysis, this gives clues as to the causes of genetic traits and gives a picture of where the breed/species is going in the future)

With these goals in mind, the most desirable books for my collection are: later editions with the most up-to-date information, scientifically sound or peer-reviewed material, and those containing unique pictures or information as compared to other sources.

I would like to thank the MSU Library for making this contest available. It has benefited me in inventorying my collection and updating my website book lists (<http://www.msu.edu/~reissval/research.htm>). I would like to invite library staff involved in the contest to visit my research web page; any comments or suggestions are highly appreciated.