

# HOW DO WE START THE CONVERSATION ABOUT THE THING NO-ONE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT?

**FACT:** Researchers have told us that the inherent ocular anatomy of the Bouvier confers a risk for glaucoma, especially in females who typically have smaller heads.

**FACT:** We have a long history of continuing to breed dogs who have relatives with glaucoma.

Before much was known about Canine Glaucoma, several dogs that carried the glaucoma gene(s) fathered many offspring. Many years later we can trace the incidence of glaucoma back to those specific dogs but we still cannot pinpoint which gene or genes are responsible for our current Glaucoma issues. In 2007, the Bouvier Health Foundation sponsored a study on Glaucoma in Bouviers at the University of Michigan with Dr. Paul Miller et al. That study is revered today as one of the best designed and executed research studies on Canine Glaucoma ever produced. This study followed 92 dogs over 10 years. Nine of the 92 dogs developed Primary Closed angle glaucoma (PCAG). All 9 had the presence of closed or narrowed iridocorneal angles or a closed ciliary cleft in one or both eyes and for the first time these malformed angles were significantly associated with the development of Primary Closed Angle Glaucoma. Additionally all 9 dogs that developed PCAG shared 1 common male sire or grandsire. A genetic component was established. However, to date, we still do not know if there is one specific gene or many genes responsible.

Unfortunately, there is a significant stigma associated with breeders who produce a dog who develops glaucoma. And as a consequence, Glaucoma is often “hidden in plain sight”. Ask yourself how many Bouviers you know who have lost an eye to glaucoma in the last 30 years. Every Bouvier owner can name several dogs. Bouvier owners who show their dogs in conformation are around many more Bouviers than are most performance or pet owners and they naturally hear about many more cases of dogs who have lost an eye to Glaucoma. Why is it then, that OFA’s “Blue Book” on ocular disorders lists ONE Bouvier with Glaucoma from 1991 to 2021. **ONLY ONE!**

This is an under reported disease and we cannot continue to ignore a very tough situation that we are all aware of. Let’s start the conversation that no one wants to talk about so we can improve our breed.

The Bouvier Health Foundation is kicking off a Glaucoma Awareness Campaign.

**Let’s start the conversation:**

## **DON’T LOSE SIGHT OF GLAUCOMA**