Africa’s Breed: The Basenji

Or There is a Lot More to a Basenji than Wrinkles and a Curly Tail!

Basenji Club of America for Judges Breed Study Group
The Basenji is one of the oldest breeds known to man and its origins are shrouded in the mists of time. They were brought as gifts to the courts of the pharaohs and were highly prized for their hunting ability.
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Basenjis are still to be found in various regions of Africa and serve their masters as they have for untold thousands of years by providing meat from the hunt for the family’s dinner.
Long nets are set up in the dense jungle and these fleet, agile little dogs drive small game into the nets where it is speared by the waiting hunters.
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A village on the Lomako River
Africa’s Breed: The Basenji

A boy and his dog
Africa’s Breed: The Basenji

Friendly, faithful companions
Africa’s Breed: The Basenji

The kids showing their dog
Africa’s Breed: The Basenji

We are extremely fortunate that we are able to incorporate native stock into our gene pool and we have recently received permission from the AKC to add carefully selected African imports into our breeding programs.

While you may never see a full African in your ring, it is important to realize that the native dogs have a lot to offer the breed and to treat them with respect. They often differ somewhat in conformation from our domestic dogs and you may notice a looser tail curl or a longer loin. Judge by the standard but please bear in mind that these dogs are a treasure to us.
Jungle drums beating
Excitement is in the air
It runs, I chase it
Basenji, 1200 B.C.
Bas-Relief on the Mastaba of Akhuthotep
Basenji, 1200 B.C

Not much has changed...

Photo from *An Egyptian Bestiary*
Basenji, 1912 A.D.

- Stuffed Basenji in Pygmy group, Belgian Congo, 1912
- Note native hunting bell
The following presentation will include text from the breed standard in blue with discussion points highlighted in gold.