

More than skin deep

- [SRIYA NARAYANAN](#)

Don't just go by external features while adopting a pet



Sparky is a handsome, six-month-old Indian puppy with a glossy black coat of fur. He demands frequent cuddles and would make an ideal pet – however, potential adopters fell in love with his personality but hesitated to take him home because of the colour of his coat. “Many people think black is unlucky,” says his rescuer Anuradha who finds the superstition baffling. She observes that two of her earlier rescues were also black and are now doing well with families that are delighted with their decision to adopt them.

Aishwarya Prem rescued an Indian pup with a brindle fur coat five months ago and named him Buddy. Soon, all of Buddy's friends found homes but he had no takers as people preferred pups with uniform fur patterns. Eventually, Aishwarya adopted him as he got along well with her existing pets. Pointy ears and curly tails are sometimes quoted as reasons for rejecting a potential pet. “The objective is to take in a rescued dog,” says Aishwarya who says that pets are lovable irrespective of their external features (that might sometimes be unconventional), and adds that Buddy is the most affectionate and obedient dog she has known.

Female animals also find it hard to get homes. At adoption drives, it's common to see female pups and kittens sporting pink ribbons, staring helplessly at visitors from their enclosures as the crowd trickles out. The common misconception is that they are a reproduction risk, although spaying them with a good vet takes care of the problem. Luckily for these animals, attitudes are changing, feels Mini Vasudevan, founder, Humane Animal Society, Coimbatore. She refers to a couple who visited her NGO's adoption camp a few months ago. “Bhanumathy and Balakrishnan had no particular breed in mind, no unusual requirements,” she says. “It didn't bother them that they were taking home a female Indian pup – that too the last one to be adopted in that batch! A sense of mutual recognition signalled that they'd come to the right place to be united with Sweetie. It's been five months since she found her forever home with this happy couple.”