

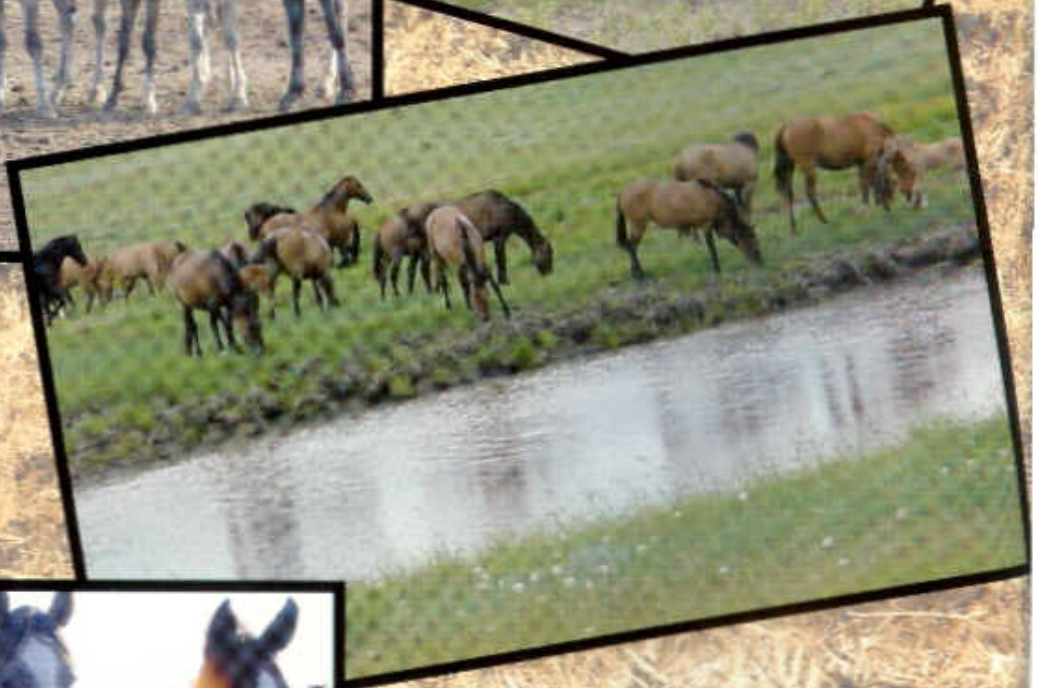
International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros

ISPMB



Vol. 44 Issue 1
Winter 2004

Wild Horse and Burro Diary



ISPMB

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Cover and last page photos by Welden Lee, Wildlife Photographer

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President's Report

By Karen Sussman



Wild horses and burros face the gravest time in the history of our country. One would think that when wild horses and burros were nearly eradicated in the late 60's that this might have been the worst-case scenario for our American Treasures. Hardly, because in 1974, shortly after the Wild Horse and Burro Act passed, there were approximately 74,000 wild horses and burros in our country. Today, with BLM's current "management levels," we face having 75% less horses and burros than existed shortly after the 1971 law passed that stated "horses and burros were fast disappearing from the American West."

Insidiously, with the wild horse and burro protection law in place, the BLM continues to pound away at numbers of animals leaving less than 100 animals in the majority of the herd areas. According to geneticists, horses and burros should have a minimum of 140 to 160 animals in each herd area. BLM cannot say for sure that there is a great deal of interplay between herds – they just don't have the people power to observe this.

Since managing the three wild herds in South Dakota, it is obvious that the herd stays intact. The most that we could hope for is a group of bachelors straying from the herds to infiltrate nearby herds – if allowed by the different bands of that herd. After observing the herds on a daily basis now, I would guess that there would be little interchange unless the herds are used to running together with each other. At a time when hundreds of

thousands of horses roamed the landscape, one can see that there was much intermixing of animals increasing the diversity of the gene pool. But today, we have fences, gates that aren't opened and a diminishing habitat that also prevents the intermingling.

Today we can clearly say that wild horses have more genetic diversity than any particular breed of domestic horse in our country. This is easy to understand, because nature has a better breeding program than our domestic breeding agendas. When the domestic horse industry breeds 80% of it mares to just 6% of the stallions in that breed, how can one have diversity?

There should be an outcry from the American public to stop BLM from reducing animals below viable levels. The law also states that the BLM must minimally manage the herds... that means with the least intrusion. When numbers go below genetically viable levels, BLM will begin to trade horses from one herd area to the other. This is not minimal management but management at its MAXIMUM. We also have experience in this managing our own herds. To reintroduce animals into the herds can result in great difficulty for the reintroduced animals. We have done that with the White Sands horses, just being apart for only a few months. The newcomer is ostracized from the herd. One also has to factor that if they are put into a new area, the newcomers must find water and safe harbor from inclement weather – snow or drought. Their expertise comes from living in areas for long periods of time. It takes at least ten years to know where to go in the deepest of snows and where to find water is the longest droughts. One figures there is at least a ten-year cycle in extreme weather changes. Although now with Global Warming, scientists predict extremes in the weather continually and increasingly as the Globe begins to warm.

The American people overwhelmingly want wild horses and burros to exist on our landscapes. They truly represent the last living symbol of the Old West. Their manes flying in the breeze as they gallop across the lands, their untamed spirit represents the great American dream. We must hold BLM accountable for these latest actions and assault on our magnificent wild horses and burros – before it is too late.



International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros

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About ISPMB

The International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros was formed in 1960 by Helen and John Reilly to help Wild Horse Annie in her efforts to save America's wild horses. Together, they worked tirelessly for the next eleven years and were successful in getting federal legislation to protect America's diminishing wild horses and burros, the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971.

ISPMB is the oldest wild horse and burro organization in the U. S. In 1968, ISPMB initiated the first wild horse adoption in Montana's Pryor Mountains paving the way for the government's national "Adopt-A-Horse/Burro" program in 1976.

ISPMB was instrumental in encouraging the government to establish protective ranges for wild horses and burros. Four such ranges exist today. The organization developed the first wild horse and burro registry in our country giving honor and recognition to all wild horses and burros. As the adoption program took hold, ISPMB pushed the government to develop protective standards and guidance for management, capture, and adoption of wild horses and burros. One such important measure was to push the BLM to prohibit gathers during critical times of foaling that today are now in place.

In 1989, ISPMB signed a historic agreement with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that created the first volunteer compliance adoption program in the United States, checking on the welfare of adopted wild horses and burros.

After the Good Friday massacre of 54 wild burros in the Black Mountains of Kingman, AZ, ISPMB raised the largest reward in history at that time for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators. BLM's maximum fine for crimes against wild horses was only \$500.00. Realizing the great discrepancy, ISPMB worked closely with the BLM to raise fines in Arizona's federal district through the Sentencing Reform Act. Now BLM penalties for crimes against wild horses and burros are as high as \$100,000.00 per animal per offense.

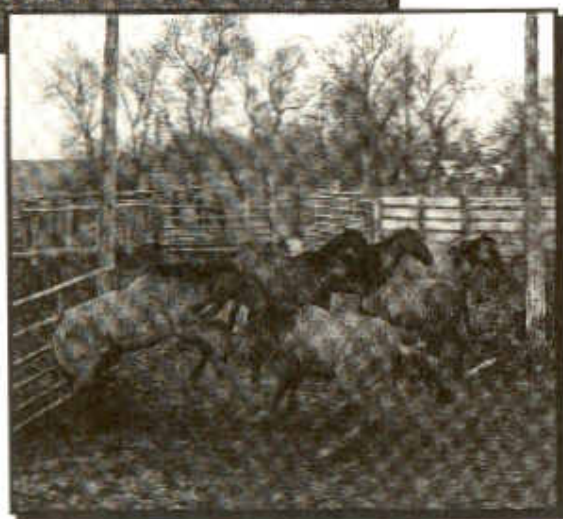
ISPMB's Arizona Adoption program assisted the BLM by touting that no wild horse or burro in that state would end up in the slaughter plants. ISPMB bought well over 100 animals from the slaughter trade and placed the majority of animals in safe, protected homes after the animals failed their initial BLM adoptive homes. ISPMB retains a few of the animals now in South Dakota.

All three of ISPMB's presidents served on the National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board under the direction of the Depts. of Interior and Agriculture.

With the drastic reduction of wild horses and burros in our country, ISPMB began a new program in 1999 by taking threatened and endangered herds that were slated for elimination. This task was monumental as it gave the organization the ability to work on developing a "model management" program for wild horses and burros in our country. It also prevented elimination of rare herds such as the Gila Wild Horses from central AZ, who were literally untouched for over 100 years and escaped capture and elimination in the 30's by mustangers. The horses are the nearest related horse to the Spanish reintroduced horse in our country dating back to Father Kino's missions in northern Mexico and southern Arizona.

ISPMB remains an innovative leader in the field of wild horse and burro protection.

Gila Wild Horses - Ready for Release into the Wild



Gila Wild Horses - Released

Sunka Wakan

ISPMB's International Center for Indigenous People and Native Horses

Located on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, Sunka Wakan is focused on education, conservation and healing of the land and people with the help of the wild horses. Tourism will be a major program of the Center so the Center can be financially self-sufficient. Tourism will also bring millions of visitors to the ranch to learn about wild horses and burros, raising the awareness of the needs of protecting wild horses and burros on public lands. The Center will be home to ISPMB's two wild herds where management standards for the animals will be perfected. The Center will house a museum, Interpretive Center, food and lodging, and continuous educational programs including animal assisted therapy programs. Visitors from around the world will be able to watch wild horses in their natural habitat and enjoy their natural behaviors. Already, ISPMB has conducted wild horse tours now for the past several years.

The name for the Center is derived from the Lakota (Sioux) word for horse whose literal translation is "sacred dog." The name underscores an important goal for ISPMB - to restore dignity and respect to our nation's wild horses and burros that they so rightly deserve. The traditional Lakota people believe that the horse is a sacred animal. Those that honor the horse and hold it in a sacred way will be protected and cared for by the Creator.

The Center will celebrate the interrelationships between the wild horses, the land, and the Lakota people.



Gila Studs

Highlighted Herd

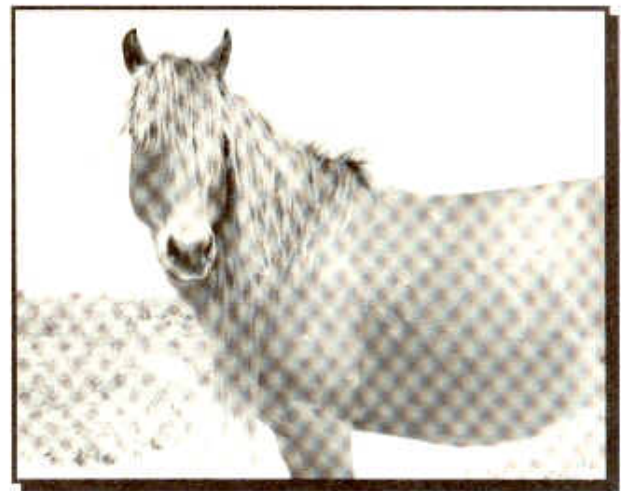
Since the second voyage of Columbus in 1493, the Spanish had been including horses on every ship bound for Hispaniola (now the Dominican Republic and Haiti). They established large horse breeding farms to provide transportation for their soldier-explorers, and by 1500, the Spanish Crown had one ranch that boasted sixty brood mares. In fact, so many horses were being brought to the new world, that in 1520, the emperor declared an embargo on exporting horses from Spain.

Between 1520 and 1525, Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon, a wealthy judge originally from Toledo, Spain, organized and financed several expeditions to the southeast coast of North America. Fulfilling his ambitions to be a conquistador and establish a colony for Spain, de Ayllon himself sailed from Hispaniola in 1526, with 500 people and 100 horses, to what is now the coast of the Carolinas. Disease and Indian hostilities resulted in failure of the colony within a year. De Ayllon died of fever, and only 150 people lived to make the trek south to find a passing Spanish ship back to Hispaniola. In the years both before and after de Ayllon, Spanish galleons plied the waters off the coast, losing ships, men and livestock to the shoals along the banks. From Cape Lookout to Currituck, the elders still say of the wild horses, "they swam ashore off sinking ships."

In 1585, seventy years after de Ayllon's failed colony, Sir Richard Grenville led Sir Walter Raleigh's second expedition to the present day North Carolina coast. Grenville stopped at Hispaniola and captured and bartered for horses from the Spanish. In route to Roanoke Island, his flag ship Tiger was grounded on a sand bar, and after the squall the ship was careened, or rolled over on her side on the beach for bottom repairs. It was during this incident, some historians believe, that more Spanish horses were released on the banks; either cast overboard to reduce weight and try and float the ship, or turned loose just before the Tiger was rolled over for repairs. The grounding was north of Shackleford at what is now Portsmouth Island on north Core Banks. During this period a large part of this coastline was called Florida by the Spanish, and Virginia by the English. The name Carolina did not come into use until 1663.

Author Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, writing of life in Virginia from 1660 to 1690, noted that "more

interesting was the hunting of wild horses which abounded in the woods. These animals, as they were unmarked, belonged to anyone who could capture them. But to do this was no easy matter, for they were so fleet and so difficult to follow through the woods that one was more apt to ruin an old mount than to gain a new."



Lodge, Shackleford Stallion

During the 1670s Barbados settlers began coming to the Carolinas. These were poor people, many of them former prisoners or indentured servants, who brought with them Spanish bred livestock from the feral herds of those islands.

By 1754 wild banks ponies were being bought by people on the mainland to be gentled and used in teaching their children to ride.

In 1838 and 1839 as part of Andrew Jackson's Indian removal policy, the Cherokee nation was forced to migrate on the long march that has become known as The Trail of Tears. Dr. Phil Sponenberg of Virginia Tech, a North American Colonial Spanish horse authority, in describing some western herds wrote: "A few tribal types have continued to be bred as distinct strains. The Choctaw and Cherokee horses are among these. Both of these tribes, in addition to the Chickasaw and Creek, were avid horse brooders in their original homes in the southeast... Following removal of these tribes to what is now Oklahoma they continued to breed horses. The basis for these Oklahoma herds was horses brought from the southeast on the Trail of Tears, but no doubt some western horses were added as well. The original horses were Spanish, obtained at first from the chain of

missions across the deep South in early Spanish

colonial days. The additions were surely Spanish as well and some have unique blood types as evidence of



Male, Shackleford Stallion

the accuracy of the oral history of isolation surrounding these herds."

In 1856 Edmund Ruffin of Virginia, famous as an agriculture authority, described his visit to the Outer Banks in his *Sketches of Lower North Carolina* published in 1861. Of the Banks horses he wrote, "Many years ago I had first heard of similar wild horses on some of the larger sea-islands of Virginia, and wrote and published some account of them. But I had supposed that the stock (in the wild state) had ceased to exist there - and did not suspect that wild horses, and in much greater number, still were on the narrow sand-reef of North Carolina." Ruffin continued, "There are some hundreds of horses of the dwarfish native breed, on this part of the reef between Portsmouth and Beaufort harbor—ranging at large and wild."

In 1899, Surfman Rasmus Midgett of the Lifesaving Service was awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal of Honor for his rescue of passengers from the wrecked barkentine, *Priscilla*. Midgett was riding his Banker horse, *Tom Creef*, when he discovered the wreck on the Outer Banks halfway between Little Kinnekeet Station and Gull Shoal Station. He used *Tom Creef* to help rescue the passengers.

The May 1926 issue of *National Geographic Magazine* described pony penning on the banks. The writer

estimated seeing between 5,000 and 6,000 wild horses on the banks north of Beaufort. An article photograph caption read, "Supposed Descendants of the Barbary ponies brought to America by Sir Walter Raleigh's colonists."

In September 1933, a great unnamed storm cut an inlet in the southern Outer Banks at Cape Lookout, dividing Shackleford Banks from Core Banks. (Since 1933 Shackleford has remained a separate island.) In December, Blanch Epler, MD, living at Hatteras to provide medical care for the Bankers and Coast Guardsmen, wrote to *National Geographic* of sand-pony penning. "The day chanced to be one set aside for tick-dipping. Hundreds of wild sand ponies and cattle were being rounded up to the vat, cows or calves coming sedately, driven or tied behind the two wheeled carts, but less willingly came the ponies, blood brothers to those of a Portuguese castaway ship of long ago, or maybe, as some say to the Barbary ponies brought over by Raleigh's colonists."

In June of 1982, members of the Spanish Mustang Registry (SMR) came to the Outer Banks to observe the last remaining bands of Banker Horses still existing in the natural state. The SMR registered several horses to represent various areas of the banks. The registry contains two Shackleford horses; a mare, *Scotch Bonnet*, and a stallion, *Mr. Shackleford Banks*. One of the cowboys from Oshoto Wyoming said, "People don't know how rare this little horse is and hard it is to come by. They don't know what a prize they're getting."

In the mid 1990's a management plan which would drastically reduce the number of horses on Shackleford Banks, leaving only a "representative herd," was made public by the National Park Service. Local citizens, aware of the historic and cultural significance of the horses, protested and began seeking the assistance of wild horse protection groups, citizens throughout the state and country, equine scientists and scholars, and their legislators. NC Congressman Walter B. Jones, Jr. introduced, on 13 February 1997, the *Shackleford Banks Wild Horses Protection Act*. Supported by Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., NC Department of Cultural Resources, NC Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources and the entire North Carolina delegation, the legislation passed the US Congress on 22 July by a vote of 416 to 6. The Senate then passed the bill, and President Clinton signed it into law on 13 August 1998. The wild horses of Shackleford are now

protected by federal law, and are co-managed by the nonprofit Foundation for Shackleford Horses and the Cape Lookout National Seashore.

The wild horses will stay on Shackleford Banks, their numbers protected at a population range of 110 to 130 members, for the enjoyment and wonder of future generations of Americans. In the words of one writer they represent "Freedom and a Right of Legend"; in the words of another, "They remain the embodiment of the small, tough competitor whose coat may be ragged, but whose spirit flies over the sand dunes like the wind."



Teddy, Shackleford Stallion

The Foundation for Shackleford Horses supports its work from public donations and grants. The address is:

Foundation for Shackleford Horses, Inc.
108 Amos Gillikin Road
Beaufort, NC 28516
Phone: 252-728-6437 or 6308
<http://www.shacklefordhorses.org>

Library of Congress pages on the Shackleford horses:

http://lcweb.loc.gov/bicentennial/progpage/NC/nc-3_h_jones6.html
http://www.americanlibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/es/nc/shackle_1

Animal Assisted Therapy Program Begins to Assist Recovering Alcoholics

Wild Horses Create Miracles

ISPMB has launched yet another program designed to bring healing to those who battle the dreaded disease of alcoholism. September marked the beginning of a new era for ISPMB's wild horses – the genesis of healing. Although ISPMB has been involved in many animal assisted therapy programs including the assistance in the development of the early prison training programs for inmates and wild horses, volunteer programs, adoption programs, etc..... this program has special qualities.

ISPMB's rescue horses are willing participants of classes conducted by Karen Sussman and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe's Four Bands Healing Center. Horses are chosen by their character and behavior to demonstrate to class participants many aspects of therapy. Issues covered in class have ranged from developing healthy relationships, trust, defining boundaries, bonding, reduction of stress, etc. As class participants work with the horses on specific issues, breakthroughs and important information is derived from these sessions.

Horses, considered sacred by the traditional Lakota people, are returning to bring much needed peace and harmony to the people. Class has continued throughout the harsh South Dakota winter. It was cancelled once due to temperatures well below zero. Many times, it is the first time for class participants to ever touch a horse. To think that only a century and half ago, the Lakota people were the greatest horse people on earth. To see the reconnection of the two-legged and four-legged once again warms the souls of many of us here on the reservation.

ISPMB's goal is to begin to teach this program on a full-time basis in cooperation with Four Bands Healing Center, the tribal alcohol Twelve Step Program.

BLM May End Wild Horse Adoptions

BLM is reviewing their Adoption Program to determine if putting wild horses in sanctuaries may temporarily reduce their costs while they bring horses and burros to their proposed management levels (see *President's Report*). The cost of adoptions per horse range from \$600.00 to \$1200.00 depending on what state holds the adoption. The sanctuary would be a holding area large enough for horses to roam free and graze. Studs would be castrated and separated from the mares.

Over a three-year period the sanctuaries would then become more costly per horse than adoption. Although the Adoption program is flawed in many ways, it is the best Public Relations that the BLM could ever ask for. ISPMB has maintained that this program could be the "white hat" program for the agency. Few people east of the Mississippi even know who the BLM is. BLM's most avid volunteers come from the Wild Horse and Burro program. With good marketing, the BLM could have a great program.

At the recent National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board meeting in Phoenix in early February, the BLM is now considering any horse over 4 years of age as "unadoptable." Again, a good marketing program and with an understanding what makes horses more adoptable would eliminate this unfounded attitude - that only horses four and under are adoptable. This

judgment just reflects the lack of knowledge in making such a statement. It is always attitude that should regulate the first prerequisite for adoption. Good attitude for assimilation into a shared environment (adoption) is so important and those attitudes can come from nearly all ages of horses. The BLM also talked about color being an important factor in adoptions. The more that color is bred out of the natural herds, the more unhealthy a herd can become. The majority of wild horses are bay color (approximately 75%) and that prevents sunburn, cancer, and the terrible consequences from the depleting ozone layers and exposure to the ultra violet rays.

BLM should manage for adaptability and not adoptability. The Wild Horse and Burro Act was designed to protect horses and burros for eons of time. Letting the adoption program drive management of wild horses and burros on public lands will lead to terrible pitfalls in the future protection of the herds. Anytime that we humans interfere in decisions that are made by the herd we run the great risk of manipulating the herds in a negative way. Unless we study the herds by living out in their areas and spending years of observation, can we make even halfway intelligent decisions. A good example of this is to just study the domestic horse industry where decisions were made - not in the best interest of the horse. Many domestic horses are inbred and their conformation changes according to the fad or fancy of the breeders.

We must keep the strong diversity of bloodlines in our wild horses. We cannot reduce numbers to less than 150 in each herd and we should not allow the BLM to manipulate management to satisfy the adoption program.



Jethynnie Forquer and Handsome

Photo Credit: Lisa Dines

California Rancher Charged With Cruelty to Horses

In January, after a six-month animal welfare investigation, the Santa Barbara District Attorney's office filed charges against Slick Gardner of Buellton, CA. Gardner was charged with nine felony counts including cruelty to animals and grand theft in connection with his handling of adopted wild horses at his ranch.

Gardner, a 57 year-old candidate for county supervisor, was not arrested. His arraignment that was scheduled for January 20th was delayed and he faces up to eight years in prison if convicted on all counts.

The wild horses on Gardner's ranch come from the two Shoshone sisters whose horses were removed from their land in Nevada last year. The other wild horses once roamed the Virginia Hills range near Virginia City. Gardner received over 500 horses from the two sources. There are approximately 400 animals left on his 2,000-acre ranch. Over 270 of the starving animals were placed into foster homes to help restore them to health until the arraignment.

In our last magazine, we noted that Gardner's check of \$11,000.00 for the Shoshone horses bounced and he never made good on it according to the Dann sisters. Prosecutors note that charges involve billings for the purchase of hay that were never paid. Gardner has also been billed \$200,000.00 for costs of horse removal and the cost of the county investigation into the alleged animal cruelty.

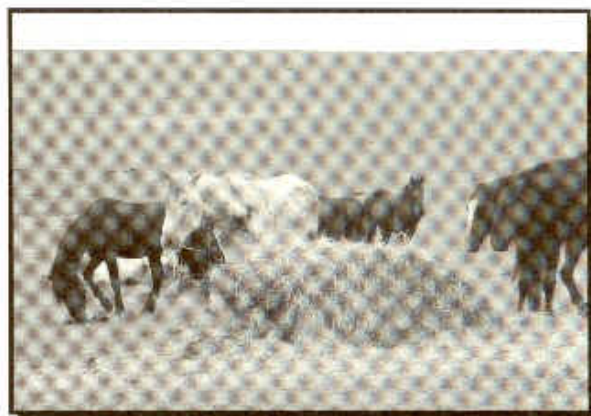
In April of 2002, Gardner received nearly 80 Virginia Range horses from the Nevada Department of Agriculture that were promised to ISPMB by then NV AG Director, Paul Iverson. Many of the horses were with color. Unknown to ISPMB that the horses would not be coming to South Dakota, ISPMB had already geared up to inviting over 100 people to the blessing ceremony set in May for the release of the horses onto the Cheyenne River Reservation where 80 Virginia Range horses presently roam. Speaking with Nevada Ag's State Vet, Dr. Thain, ISPMB's president was told that it was much cheaper for the state to ship the horses to California than to South Dakota and that there was no problem with the Gardner ranch. Had those horses come to South Dakota, they would be thriving today on a 22,000-acre ranch. This was a costly mistake by the Nevada Department of Agriculture.

CHAMP Helps White Sands Wild Horses

We are grateful to CHAMP (Corrales Horse and Mule People) for helping us this winter by giving a donation for the purchase of hay to help our White Sands Wild Horses that originated in New Mexico where CHAMP resides. Special thanks goes to the organization and their president, Mr. Herb Altheimer and Chairperson, Ms. Fietze Williams, for their support.

The White Sands wild herd is not nearly at numbers to sustain the population genetically but we coming close. When the herd reaches that safe target number than ISPMB will begin to adopt these horses out to the public. We hope to offer them to New Mexico residents because this is where the horses originated. ISPMB is formulating a "model management program," determining what horses should be removed and who should stay.

Two other New Mexico groups are scheduled to help ISPMB. We will submit articles for the paper "Hoofprints" out of Edgewood, N.M. Located in Albuquerque, Bow Wow is planning a local barbecue with entertainment to benefit ISPMB. We are hopeful that other New Mexico organizations will help us safeguard the last of the White Sands herd that once roamed the White Sands Missile Range.



White Sands Wild Horses

Catalina Island Buffalo Return to the Plains

Coming Home of the Buffalo Hallowed and Blessed by Arvol Looking Horse

After bringing 80 wild horses back to the Cheyenne River Reservation in 2001, ISPMB participated in the return of 105 wild buffalo in November to three private homes on the Lakota Reservations where the buffalo will live out their lives. It all began in the summer when a group called In Defense of Animals, Bill Dyer, president, called ISPMB's president, Karen Sussman. The joint effort between the two organizations took place with the help of the Catalina Island Conservancy, an organization that monitors the expanding buffalo herd on Catalina Island. Each year, the Conservancy removed buffalo and sold them to slaughter. It was a local resident, Debbie Avellana who sparked the controversy paving the way to saving the lives of these buffalo.

Debbie is a petite woman who values the buffalo and all living animals on the island. She couldn't believe that the Conservancy would allow these animals to be sold for slaughtering purposes so she took up a "one-woman" crusade to save the buffalo. In Defense of Animals was called in to find a solution and with fund-raising, the Humane organization funded the transport and private adoption of the Catalina Island buffalo.

It was ISPMB's job to find appropriate homes where the buffalo would flourish and continue to propagate. Sussman ran an article in front page of the local newspaper. A deadline to apply for the buffalo was given and then the work began. Sussman interviewed all the participants and divided the buffalo amongst those who were truly interested in the preservation of these animals. After the adopters were accepted, Sussman made trips out to their ranches and personally interviewed the participants. With homes in place, it was now up to the Conservancy and In Defense of Animals to deliver the animals.

Because the animals had to be shipped across the ocean in a ferry from the island, they did not arrive until mid November. The day began with Arvol Looking Horse blessing the animals before they ever stepped foot off the trucks. Arvol is the Keeper of the Sacred Pipe on the Cheyenne River Reservation. Mr.

Looking Horse recounted that day the words of the spiritual sages of 1890 who said that the Lakota people would be without buffalo and horses for 100 years. Mr. Looking Horse believes that the return of the buffalo and the horses signify the beginning of peace and harmony amongst the people.

The Catalina Island buffalo have a unique history. They were brought to the island in 1924 with a motion picture company filming "The Vanishing American" starring Richard Dix. The original herd of fourteen has turned into a herd of 250. This island can sustain a population of 150 animals. Although not native to the island, the buffalo attract many visitors to the island. Genetic studies have been carried out on the buffalo and they have pure buffalo genes. In other words, no cow genes prevail in this herd. It is thought that they originally came from the National Bison Range established in 1908 and located in Moiese, MT.

The buffalo that lived on the sunny island were not used to the harsh winters as their ancestors once were. Coming in the beginning of winter could have posed a problem. The day they arrived, temperatures rose into the 40's and by the end of the week the temperatures reached a high of 66 degrees. The unusually warm temperatures were perfect for the first week of assimilation to the upcoming subzero temperatures in January.

The buffalo arrived and were thin because they don't have the forage that they now have on the Plains. Today they are all thriving in temperatures as low as minus twenty-two. They have gained weight and they are roaming thousands of acres on the Plains enjoying their new found freedom.



Arvol Looking Horse Blessing of the Buffalo



Catalina Buffalo - Standing Rock Reservation
Ron Brown Offer/owner

Giving Programs that Help Sustain ISPMB's Work

Membership in ISPMB

Your continued membership in ISPMB is vital to the preservation of our wild horses and burros. We appreciate your continued support. We have several categories of giving and we always appreciate when you pass on an envelope to friends and family so they can join our family. Our membership lists are private and have been for the 44 years of our existence.

Individual - \$35.00
Contributing - \$50.00
Associations - \$50.00
Sponsor - \$100.00
Sustaining - \$500.00
Benevolent - \$1000.00
Corporate - \$5,000.00



Four Gila Bachelors
Photo credit: Nancy Hensal

Adopt-A-Horse

We are grateful to the following people who have committed to our giving programs. Adopting a wild horse helps to keep our wild horses running free. Each person who has adopted a horse receives a colored photo of his or her horse. The cost is \$150.00 a year or just \$12.50/month. One can adopt the same horse on a yearly basis with a yearly contribution. This is a great gift idea. We acknowledge the following people who have adopted a wild horse.

Adopt- A-Wild Horse Donors

Lynn Barnhart
Emily Corrigan
Mary Jo Fisher
Karen O'Toole
Marian Weston



Gila Band
Photo credit: Nancy Hensal

Adopt-An-Acre

Each acre donated will help us towards the purchase of ISPMB's own ranch where *Sunka Wakan*, the International Heritage Center for Indigenous People and Native Horses, will be located. The donor's name will be inscribed on a donor wall as a founding member of

the Center. The cost of one acre is \$250.00 and can be made in twelve-month payments at \$21.00/month.

Lasting Memories Garden of Hope

A gift to the wild horses and burros in your will or trust will help ensure the safeguarding of their future. Your name will be displayed at the *Garden of Hope* at Sunka Wakan. We are extremely grateful to all of our members who have notified us of their intent to remember our wild horses and burros.

Gifting Annuities

This opportunity affords you to make money by giving to the wild horses and burros. A gifting annuity takes advantage of favorable tax treatment that's available only to charitable organizations and their donors. Check with your financial advisor about investing in a gift. For more information, please call our office at 605-964-6866.

Gifts of Stocks and Bonds

If you have highly appreciated stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, you have an opportunity to save taxes twice and do something meaningful in the process. Just think, wouldn't you rather share your success with saving wild horses than give it to Uncle Sam? You can take advantage of this giving opportunity by receiving an income tax charitable deduction based on the full fair market value of your securities, and by avoiding the capital gains tax on appreciation.

If you would like more information on this, ISPMB can refer you to a qualified representative to help you. For more information call ISPMB at 605-964-6866.

Hay for Hope (Helping Our Precious Equines)

With the continuing drought in South Dakota it looks as if we will be feeding our wild horses until we receive relief in the form of rain. Our Hay for Hope program will list all donors who contribute monthly for hay or one-time donations of \$500.00 or more helping us afford to purchase hay. Besides donating money, we hope this program will bring in donations of hay from any area in the U. S. This may take sponsoring a drive in your area to collect hay. If you want to donate monthly, just note that on your remit envelope and we will send you more envelopes.

We are grateful to all of our members who have helped sustain us this past year. This year with your permission we will list our donors.

The Day that Healed Her Heart Finding Mr. Handsome

*This is a true story about the bond
between human and horse.*

By: Karen Sussman

It was a hot summer day with Phoenix temperatures beating down in triple digits when Johnnie Forquer came to check out an ad she had seen in the local paper about volunteering for ISPMB — *working with wild-horses*. Johnnie had thought that she once had tamed a wild kitten and how hard would it be to tame a wild horse.

I recall seeing a profound sadness her eyes as she introduced herself. She was quiet and timid like many of the horses in the corrals awaiting the fulfillment of their unknown destiny. As she began to introduce herself, I was haunted by the sadness. Prompted by the wonderful energy of the wild horses surrounding her, it wasn't long before her story began to unfold.

With tears in her eyes, Johnnie began to tell me the story about the loss of her horse Sugar who died of cancer after a partnership of nearly 26 years. Yes, Johnnie was only 12 years old when her Grandmother bought her this half-Arab filly. One could begin to see the spark ignite in her eyes as she recounted her life with her dearly beloved horse. Sugar's death reminded Johnnie of the pain of separation. She grew up in a single parent home never knowing her father and her father never having the desire to know this sweet innocent child. Life was not easy but Johnnie had the love of her mother and grandmother.

It was her grandmother who insisted that Johnnie should get a horse after Johnnie had told her Grandmother about a recent visit to a nearby ranch where she had seen a beautiful 15-month-old filly. On Johnnie's second visit to the ranch, the filly whinnied at Johnnie as if to say "take me." That was the day that changed her life.

Johnnie's voice changes to a gentle softness as she recalls the stories about Miss Sugar Loaf. Sugar always waited at the end of the pasture when Johnnie's bus arrived from school. No matter where on the fifteen acres Sugar might be, all it took was the calling of her name and she came galloping to meet Johnnie. Although Johnnie had never trained a horse before, she did everything with Sugar. There were frightening times too but the lesson Johnnie always learned was that she could trust her horse no matter what. If anything, Sugar began to protect Johnnie. There was the time that a dog ran to the end of his chain and it broke. Soon the dog was on Sugar's heels. Sugar gave one swift kick and the dog went flying about six feet. Then there was the semi that passed them beeping his loud horn. Sugar took it in stride.

Johnnie related how there was such a void in her life now that Sugar was gone, almost a loss of identity. How can one ever reconnect again with another horse. No one could take Sugar's place or could they.

Johnnie's first day on the "volunteer" job was met with heart in her throat as the horses were let out of the corral and came galloping full steam right at Johnnie. "I put my hand out in front of the horses and I was thinking at the same time, 'What makes me think I can stop a stampede?'" The horses passed by Johnnie and she recalls Geronimo actually winking at her as they



Handsome
Photo credit: Lisa Dines

It wasn't long before the two hearts melted together. The softness and gentleness of Johnnie's way transformed the big bay gelding into the big soft loving soul that he is. He had chosen Johnnie from that first day and watching the two together was a thrill.

Johnnie fell in love with how handsome this horse looked and before you know it, the name stuck. And as if to aspire to the name, the bay gelding developed into a truly magnificent horse. Handsome's mane grew and he began to fill out— ribs no longer showed and he watched for Johnnie to come and visit. It wasn't long before Johnnie made the decision to adopt Handsome.

The two became inseparable. Johnnie eventually moved Handsome to a private home when ISPMB moved north to South Dakota. There isn't a day goes by that they are not together. If Johnnie has a bad day, Handsome knows and offers his head for her to lean on. It is the bond that many people experience with their wild horses. The bond is unlike any other experience with a horse. There is a deep connection between the soul of horse and rider. There is a trust that is felt like no other trust between horse and rider. For Johnnie it was even more... it was a cleansing of the soul, a true healing of the heart and mind.

A Man Who Loves Horses Gives a Lyrical Voice to Mustangs

By: Karen Sussman

Captivated by the spirit and beauty of the wild horse, song writer, John Abernathy put words to the heart of the mustang with his song "Runnin' in the West." John was adamant about writing the song from the mustang's point of view trying to help people understand about what life is like running free on the open range.

The song was nominated for an Emmy by the National Academy of Television, Arts, and Screen in 2001. The thought for the song came from coming face to face with the piercing eyes of a black stallion with a white star that John had visited at the Cross Plains, TN Wild

Horse Facility. John had nothing to do one day in Nashville, so he decided to visit the monthly adoption held at the facility of Paula and Randall Carr. A strange feeling came over him while looking at the horses, "It was like I was visiting friends from back home." The image of the magnificent stallion stayed with John for three weeks. John felt that both he and the stallion were begging to go back home to the West! One night driving home from work at Broadcast Music, Inc. "The words began to flow into my mind with the image of this great wild horse in the background," John said.

Soon he contacted the BLM and suggested that they take the song for advertising for adoptions. John believes that there have been little to no songs written from a horse's point of view in many years! The song replaced a wildlife ad of Robert Redford's and soon was nominated for the Emmy.

John needed a photograph of a wild horse wearing a saddle. He had seen an ad in the paper for a wild horse for \$500.00 or best offer. He stopped to see the horse who really caught his eye standing beside a barn. The adopter said that the horse was still wild because the adopter had many surgeries and could not work with the horse. John told him that if the ad stayed in the paper that some "redneck" would take the horse and sell it for a profit for slaughter. Although the adopter could not work with the horse, he sure didn't want his horse sold for meat in Europe. He took the ad out of the paper and John continued to return to work with the horse. The adopter told John he could do anything he would like with the horse, but he could not BUY the horse! Finally, John had a saddle on the horse and was beginning to ride the horse. The owner came out one day and finally said to John, "You really like that horse, don't you?" John replied, "I sure do." The offer was made to John to sell him the horse for the cost of the adoption, \$125.00, and John jumped at the chance.

Now John had his own wild horse and he named him Tonopah. Each day Tonopah progressed and finally the day came in December that John retired and was ready to head back West - home at last. He left Tonopah there during the winter for fear that he would not make the trip well in bad weather. When he returned in the Spring to take him back home, Tonopah had reverted back to the wild in the few months of John's absence. It only took three days to convince Tonopah to walk right into the trailer and soon the pair were headed to New Mexico.

Tonopah has quickly bonded to John. John is beginning to ride him bareback and with a saddle. As John steps out of his truck to greet Tonopah, the horse as already greeted him with a great big whinny. When another person comes to visit them in Tonopah's corral, Tonopah comes between John and his guest trying to always protect John.

John board's Tonopah at an old friend's place name Roy. Roy, in his 80's, is one of the last living riders of the Horse Cavalry. He is tough and is always on John when he is going to take that horse and ride him and work him. "He's nothing but an old pet," says Roy. John taunts Roy and grabs Tonopah's face and kisses him smack on the nose. The horse reciprocates and licks John's face. Roy turns around, grumbles with a few expletives and off he goes. When John is not around, Roy is the first to tell everyone at the local coffee shop what a great horse Tonopah is and "the prettiest son-of-a-gun!"

John has come a long way from the days that the local mailman used to let John ride his "mail delivering horse." He was only three years old. Those were the days! John had one special horse growing up - a Quarter Horse. Although he had a great relationship with his horse, John says none can compare to Tonopah. He is so alert, his instincts are sharper, and he is always thinking. Tonopah has bonded to John and has a one-person relationship going which is typical of so many wild horses. Wild horse are discerning about with whom they will share their heart and often you hear stories

that they become one-person horses. Frank Dobie related many of those stories in his book about wild mustangs. Many of us have experienced these awesome relationships.

You can see John and Tonopah at the New Mexico State Fair to be held on April 30th through May 2nd. He will be manning a booth for the BLM where he and Tonopah hope to capture the hearts of many.

Letter to the Editor

Hi Karen,

Nice talking to you today. Hang in there, girl. You and ISPMB were such a help and inspiration to us when we began to fight to keep the Shackleford horses. Your support was invaluable, and we will never forget or be able to thank you enough.

I sent that article to a friend just now, and realized that I hadn't updated it with our new address (the P.O. box changed to a street address - otherwise it's the same).

Foundation for Shackleford Horses, Inc.
108 Amos Gillikin Road
Beaufort, NC 28516

Thanks,
Carolyn Mason



John and Tonopah

National Geographic Arrives on Cheyenne River Reservation

Late September and early January saw the arrival of Maggie Steber, photographer for *National Geographic* magazine and Dr. Joseph Bruchac, writer for the magazine. *National Geographic* magazine is gearing up for a national article about the revitalization of the Native tribes throughout the United States. The articles will appear in September 2004's issue in celebration with the opening of the first Native American exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.

ISPMB's wild Gila herd was photographed and we hope that the horses will appear in the magazine. Not only were the horses photographed but also an extensive photographic session was done on our new animal assisted therapy program for recovering alcoholics. We are hopeful to share our program with *National Geographic's* 44 million readers.

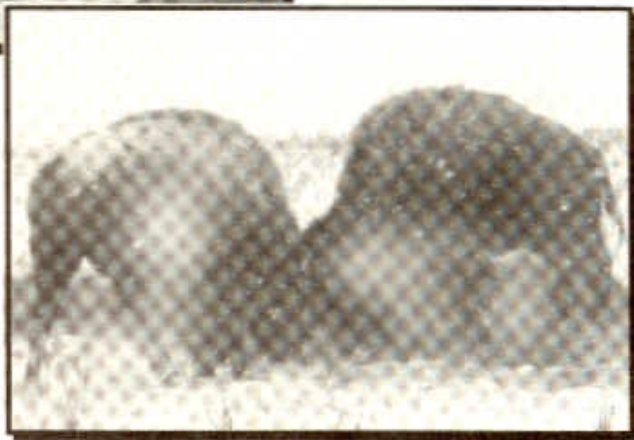
Photographing the Gila horses was really a sacred event. It was a cold September day and four of us crawled up to the many bands of horses. To our great surprise the horses surrounded us as we knelt on the ground. It was as magical a day just like the day two years ago when the Virginia Range wild horses were released onto the Tribes 22,000 acre ranch. The buffalo stood in a semi circle as they watched the blessing ceremony and when the horses were released they turned and walked off. To imagine that the Gila horses would now come up to us and surround us was an awesome sight. Hearts in our mouths, we quietly quaked in their presence remaining reverent. A few weeks later, Dr. Bruchac arrived and we drove to the Gila horses and watched the sun set over the glistening backs of these ancient

horses. The horses came up to the truck and looked in at its occupants. The feeling that enveloped us was a connection to primordial times. It was as if time was no longer existent.

As the snows and cold weather pounded the Plains, Maggie returned again in January. This time she photographed the Catalina Island buffalo that arrived here in late November. It was pure joy to work with Maggie for a week as she scanned the reservation for special photographs. We now will wait and hope the story will be told about the resurgence of traditional life on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation.



Maggie Steber



Catalina Bull Challenges SD Charlie. Catalina Wins!

Your Continued Support is Essential to Our Success

It appears for the next year or two, we will have to continue to supplement hay to our wild herds and that means that we must call upon you to help us meet our extraordinary goals. Saving wild herds has been an amazing program. Had the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros (ISPMB) not intervened, our two herds (now 150 horses) would have been eliminated - gone forever into the annals of history. We knew this would be a monumental task of great historic significance and we knew it would require more money than the organization had ever before needed.

We did not count on nature's drought but because of it, we have met so many wonderful donors and supporters. We have taken the giant leap to develop an International Center - an innovative way to help save our wild horses and burros in our country by raising awareness of their continuous plight for survival on the lands that Congress designated for these "last living symbols of the Old West."

This year, we will be working very hard to secure grants to help us realize our dream of our Center on our own land. Our capital campaign to raise five million dollars will begin very soon. Once we have secured the rangeland, then our building project will go quickly. The Center will serve as a global tourism site where people from here and around the world will visit. Tourism will achieve three important goals; building awareness about America's wild horses, allowing us to continue to save endangered herds, and allowing us to become financially independent. For the visitor, the greatest benefit of tourism is experiential. Many people's lives have been transformed through interaction with these wild animals. Transformation has been as powerful as the healing of bodies and souls. With the continuing chaos in the world, tourism is thriving in the United States. It is an ideal time to travel and the sooner the better.

Understanding our difficult financial times in our country, we are asking you to remember our wild herds and all the work ISPMB has done and continues to do to protect America's wild horses. We cannot let our wild horses and burros become a memory. We must continue to work hard to protect them for future generations to enjoy. Our wild horses are the healthiest both physically and emotionally of any breed of horses in the world. We just simply cannot allow the continual decline of numbers until their gene pools become threatened.

Your continued support is so greatly appreciated. We hope that you will look at the many ways that you can continue to support our worthy projects that preserve a part of history and bring health to the planet. And please always remember, your contributions save lives.

ISPMB In Desperate Need A Tractor

ISPMB has been fortunate in that we have been able to afford to have neighbors feed our wild herds in the dead of winter with temperatures below zero. As of next month, ISPMB will need to purchase or have a tractor donated to assist with feeding our wild horses. Farmers are gearing up for what they hope to be a productive farming year in South Dakota and will not have equipment in our location.

We are very hopeful that someone will help our wild horses by donating a tractor that can lift 1200-pound bales of hay with a grapple fork. We have the means of picking up the tractor anywhere in the United States thanks to our trucking friends, Gene and Debbie Jacobs (*see article North Carolina Trucking Team*). Donations are tax deductible and will help ISPMB to save more money that can go toward feed if the rains do not come this way this year.

In the two-plus year time frame, ISPMB has spent more than \$7,000.00 on labor for feeding. We would love to save that money and invest in a tractor that is in good running shape. We encourage all of our readers to check with friends, farm dealers, etc. to help us find a great deal or a donation. We need to be prepared to feed especially if we encounter a blizzard next year that keeps traveling immobile from farm to farm. We couldn't face having our horses without hay and we do hope that the rains and snows will once again come to South Dakota.



ISPMB Wish List

Each issue of our publication, we will be listing our needs to help our wild horses. Please let us know if you can help. All donations are tax-deductible. If you would like to enjoy seeing the herds, would you consider coming to our ranch to assist in the areas of professional help. We can supply the room and board for services.

Farm Needs:

Tractor with Grapple Fork (large enough to lift 1200-pound bales of hay)

Truck (4wheel – large enough to haul horses)

Stock Trailer
Portable Fencing
Horse Feeders
Buckets
Saddles
Bridles
Blankets
Halters
Lead Ropes

Other Needs:

Hay
Protein Blocks
Wormer
Bleachers
Picnic Tables
Folding Chairs

Professional Help:

Carpenters
Electricians
Plumbers
Fencing
Painters
Resistance Free Trainers
Landscapers

Extreme Needs:

Donated ranch land
Tractor

ISPMB Tourism Expands

ISPMB's tourism program is growing ever since its inception in 2000. The Gila wild horses have provided many photographic opportunities for tourists, travel operators, and foreign travelers this past year. This herd is fast becoming familiar with vehicles, flash bulbs, and stalking visitors behind cameras. Considering that this herd when first released into the wild would take off faster than a bolt of lightning across the landscape, they are now relaxed, curious, and often times surprise visitors with a nearly nose to nose contact.

When visiting this herd, one can see wild horses in their natural environment exhibiting all sorts of wild characteristics – an opportunity not available to the majority of public visiting areas. Watching the Gila horses can encompass laughter, awe, to practically holding your heart in your mouth as studs begin to fight for mares. Then during foaling season, it is always a miracle to see a new life born on the Plains. We are

careful not to disturb the mares during foaling season. The greatest entertainment is to watch the bachelor band begin to playfully fight in preparation for the day that they will win over a young mare discharged from her band.

Lunch is packed for the all day visitor. A small feast is spread out in the back of the pick up parked along the stream bank where signs of beaver are widespread. Hawks fly overhead swooping over the prairie dog town taking hold on

the grass flats. A restoration project will begin this summer in hopes that it will attract golden and bald eagles to the area. Deer prance through the trees and prairie as evening falls.

All this with beautiful sunsets and horses peacefully grazing is a picture that sometimes just doesn't seem real. For more information on tours, please contact ISPMB's office at 605-964-6866.



Stream Catcher - Gila Foal

Evolution of the Horse

"The World's First Horses in the Dawn of the Eocene"

by Patricia M. Fazio, Ph.D.

(Copyrighted by the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros)



Miohippus on a U.S. postage stamp published in 1996 as part of a series on extinct mammals.

The diminutive "dawn horse" walked on padded toes not hooves, browsed lush plants, fruits, and leaves rather than grazing on grass, and was no larger than a fox. Yet its appearance on the face of the earth, 55 million years ago during the early Eocene epoch, launched the meandering, complex evolution of the horse family (Equidae) that gave rise to modern horses. Along the way, nature experimented with numerous horse genera and species, varying the number of toes, alterations in teeth structure, body size and shape, coat color, and patterns of eating behavior and plant preference. Out of 27 equid genera, only one genus, *Equus* sp., which includes contemporary horses, zebras, and asses, survives. Horse evolution has often been cited as the classic example of the evolutionary process, where natural selection molds characteristics, both biological and behavioral, to promote survival, while it gradually eradicates those traits that do not sustain life.

It was once thought that horse evolution was a straight-line process, with horses becoming progressively larger, with fewer toes, and alterations in tooth structure that changed them from browsers to grazers. However, the evolution of horses took place not in a smooth, gradual, or straight-line fashion, as had been previously thought, but through a branching process, more fully understood, recently, through improved dating techniques (geochronology) and advances in interpreting evolutionary development and taxonomy.¹



Equus possessed four toes on each front foot (left) and three toes on the hind. Vestigial toes of two on the front feet and one on the hind foot were still present.
(From http://www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Park/7841/horse_evolution/equus.html)

Until the nineteenth century, horses throughout the world were considered "domesticated livestock," selectively bred for a variety of practical and aesthetic purposes – transportation, warfare, work, hunting, show, racing, pleasure riding, and companionship. Horse breeders chose animals for coat color and pattern, conformation, gait, temperament, stamina, and speed, giving rise to a multitude of distinct breeds with distinguishing characteristics and a wide variety of uses. Horses belonged to mankind, to be genetically manipulated... apart from nature... and were not conceived to be wildlife or even derivatives of a wild ancestor. They simply "emerged" – or so it seemed – filling a critical niche in the daily existence, survival, and livelihood of human civilization.

However, in 1838, when a bricklayer in Suffolk, England – digging in his backyard – discovered a small tooth (and soon thereafter a fragment of jawbone with a tooth attached), the true saga of the horse as a comprehensive biological and ecological entity began to unfold. Intrigued, he turned his finds over to scientists at The

¹ "Unbroken Spirit: The Wild Horse in the American Landscape," 2001. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming.
http://www.bbhc.org/unbrokenSpirit/evolution_1.cfm

Geological Society of London, who hypothesized these remains to be those of a monkey. In fact, renowned British comparative anatomist Richard Owen (1804-1892) originally concluded that these fossils proved primates once lived in England.² This assumption sprouted several speculations. Perhaps England had once had jungle habitat – with monkeys chattering and screeching in the upper canopy; or maybe Gypsies traveling through the English countryside had lost one of their pet monkeys. Yet, a few months later, a second jaw of the same type, with a full set of teeth intact, was found in southern England. After considerably more comparative anatomical and taxonomic analysis, the monkey idea was discarded, and the mysterious creature given the name—*Hyracotherium* (“mole beast”). This newly described genus would become the first distinct taxonomic group of horses of the family Equidae, followed by 26 other horse genera throughout the evolutionary history of the horse. Since this ancient skeleton closely resembled hyraxes (rock rabbits), similar in size and external appearance to rodents, the paleontologists named the original fossil horse genus after them.³ Some scientists hypothesize that species of *Hyracotherium* are not only ancestors of the modern horse but also relatives of rhinos, tapirs, and several extinct animals, such as the strange clawed chalicotheres, huge horned titanotheres, and the “Beast of Baluchistan,” the largest land mammal ever to walk the Earth.⁴



Several species of *Hyracotherium* lived from 55 to 45 million years ago. These early horses were descendants of the Condylarth, a dog-sized, five-toed creature that lived about 75 million years ago. *Hyracotherium*, while showing few “horse” characteristics, most likely gathered in small herds or bands, much like modern wild horses. They browsed on soft vegetation and fruit. Their teeth were quite primitive, resembling those of monkeys and other primates, which explains the London scientists’ early confusion. They were low-crowned and soft, suggesting a relatively short life span – perhaps 4-6 years. These primordial horses were tiny in stature (10-20 inches at the shoulder, weighing about 12 pounds), had four toes on the

forefeet (with one vestigial front toe) and three behind (with two vestigial hind toes). Each toe had a pad on its underside, similar to a dog. This pad persists as the ergot in modern horses. Its feet and legs were adapted for running on the soft earth of moist forests and swamps in which they lived. They possessed a primitive, short face, with high-set eye sockets in the middle, a short diastema (space between the front teeth and cheek teeth), and little or no lateral vision. *Hyracotherium* had a flexible, arched back, with the hindquarters higher than the shoulder, a short neck, small snout, squat legs, and a tail with short hair, with no mane in evidence. Its color most probably resembled that of a deer, having a darker coat accented by lighter spots... but this is conjecture. Well-known science artist Charles Knight of the American Museum of Natural History gave the dawn horse a striped coat because, he speculated, it was a browsing animal, and modern browsers often have striped coats as camouflage in the play of light and dark on the forest floor. Scientists have concluded, based on remains, that the coat was similar to a deer in texture.

Following later nineteenth century paleontological exploration in North America, it was discovered that *Hyracotherium* lived in both Europe and North America at the same time, when the British Isles and the North American continent were attached, as part of a supercontinent called “Laurasia.” Included in this vast continent were North America, Greenland, and Europe, north of the Alps and as far east as the Himalayas. *Hyracotherium* appeared in Laurasia at the beginning of the Eocene epoch (lasting 16 million years), during which all major orders of modern mammals appeared.¹ Then, this earliest horse, for some unknown reason, became extinct in

² Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, Gainesville, “Fossil Horse Cybermuseum”
<http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/natsci/vertpaleo/fhc/hyraco2.htm>

³ From: http://www.geocities.com/szswim38/horse_evolution/index.html

⁴ “Unbroken Spirit: The Wild Horse in the American Landscape,” 2001, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming”
http://www.bbhc.org/unbrokenSpirit/evolution_1.cfm

Europe during the Oligocene epoch. By this time, Europe had separated from the North American continent. Consequently, the evolutionary process for the horse in Europe stopped at the alpha-stage, while continuing on in the New World, through a complex branching process of trial and error, success which all major orders of modern mammals appeared.⁵ Then, this earliest horse, for some unknown reason, became extinct in Europe during the Oligocene epoch. By this time, Europe had separated from the North and extinction. The horse hence became America's "gift to the world," evolving through all of its evolutionary phases with North America alone.⁶

Scientists discovered a complete *Hyracotherium* skeleton while excavating rock structures in the southern United States in 1867. Remains of this genus within the United States can be found in such places as the Wasatch Range in Utah, the Wind River Basin of Wyoming, and in rich Eocene beds in the Bighorn Basin of northern Wyoming, just a few miles from the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range. In 1889, Henry Fairfield Osborn and his colleagues from the Department of Mammalian Paleontology at New York City's American Museum of Natural History discovered "...a considerable number of skeletons of the...original North American horse..." in fossil beds near Mount Blanco in the Texas Panhandle.⁷ Fossil remains of the horse have been found representing every phase of evolutionary modification in what is now the western United States. They are also found in many Eocene localities in Europe.

Othniel Charles Marsh in 1876 called this oldest-known horse *Eohippus* or the "dawn horse," but, later, it was found that the older scientific name, *Hyracotherium*, had already been applied in 1840 by British anatomist Richard Owen. Observing scientific precedent under the rules of zoological nomenclature, therefore, the earlier name, *Hyracotherium*, stands.⁸ Since *eohippus* is no longer the correct scientific genus, it is neither capitalized nor italicized.

The little first equid of the Eocene established the first ancestral roots of the horse as a native wildlife species within North America. The contrast between modern horses and this petite primitive creature is great. Yet almost all of the intermediate stages of the horse family are known – a powerful demonstration that not only is evolution a fact but also of how it occurred in this instance. When we look at *Equus caballus*, the modern horse, in the greater design of a remarkable evolution over 55 million years, we see a depth of ultimate survival and adaptation, created through millennia, that mankind's domestication and genetic management could never begin to scratch.

⁵ Heather Smith Thomas, *The Wild Horse Controversy* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1979), pp. 17, 18; Ryden, *America's Last Wild Horses*, p. 19.

⁶ Patricia Mabee Fazio, "The Fight to Save a Memory: Creation of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range (1968) and Evolving Federal Wild Horse Protection through 1971," doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University, College Station, 1995, Chapter II.

⁷ Heather Smith Thomas, *The Wild Horse Controversy* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1979), pp. 17, 18; Ryden, *America's Last Wild Horses*, p. 19; Henry Fairfield Osborn, "Origin and History of the Horse," Address presented before The New York Farmers, Metropolitan Club, New York, 19 December 1905, p. 1.

⁸ "Unbroken Spirit: The Wild Horse in the American Landscape," 2001. Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, Wyoming http://www.bbhc.org/unbrokenSpirit/evolution_1.cfm

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The author holds a B.S. degree in animal husbandry/biology from Cornell University, an M.S. in environmental history from the University of Wyoming, and a Ph.D. in environmental history from Texas A&M University. Her dissertation on wild horses was titled "The Fight to Save a Memory: Creation of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range (1968) and Evolving Federal Wild Horse Protection through 1971." She retired as a curator from Cornell University in 1997 and is currently a free-lance writer living in Cody, Wyoming.

Miracles Do Happen

Temperatures Warm in November

Gila Wild Filly is Born

By: Karen Sussman

Wild horse foaling season usually begins in April and ends in September. There may be an occasional foal born as late as October but those foals run the risk of encountering extremes in temperatures that drastically increase their mortality rate. The most critical time in a wild horse's life is the very first year and with each successive year, mortality decreases until old age.

The snows hit South Dakota in late October but worse are the winds that drive the snow already on the ground. The ground blizzards can bring temperatures as low as minus sixty. One can really freeze within just minutes of exposure.

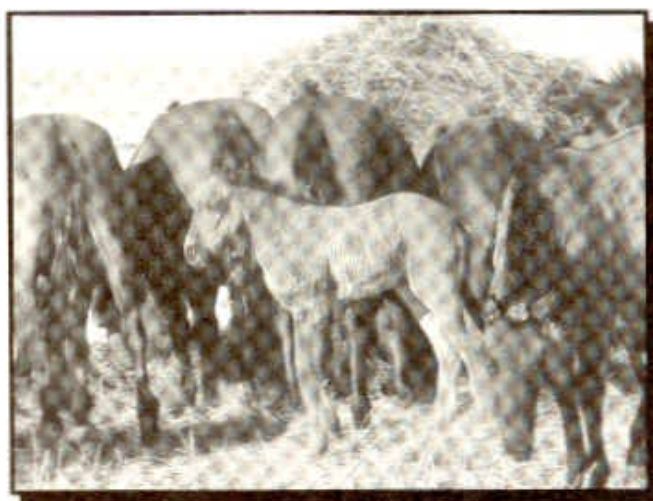
It was already mid November and the ground was relatively clear of the October snows. It was the week that the Catalina buffalo came from the sunny skies of California to South Dakota. The temperatures had warmed to the forties and our skies were clear.

It also was a day for reflection, a day to be thankful for the beautiful weather that was provided for the undertaking of the return of the buffalo to the Plains. As often that I do, I drove to the pasture where the Gila horses roam and there I found them in a draw near the water. The temperature now was already in the sixties as the sunlight sparkled off the backs of these magnificent duns. I was amazed to see the variability of the colors of dun. Their wide dorsal stripes that pierced their backs appeared to have separated the horse in half. Old timers believe that in the light of a full moon, this phenomenon is what saved the horses from their predators because they just didn't look like a horse. I picked the highest hill that overlooked the herd and began to fall back into my seat into a total state of relaxation. I was remembering how the Medicine Man on Pine Ridge, Richard Moves Camp, had blessed the horses while on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Then I began to reflect on Arvol Looking Horse, Keeper of the Sacred Pipe, on the Cheyenne Reservation who had just blessed the horses this past year and all their new foals. These memories were sparked because just the day before, Arvol had blessed the Catalina buffalo coming back to the Lakota people. He had said that the return of the buffalo and the wild horses

to the Lakota people signified a fulfillment of a prophecy given by the elders and chiefs in 1890... that the people would be without the horses and buffalo for one-hundred years. As my mind began to wander while watching the herd contentedly graze, I caught a glimpse of a little figure barely standing next to its mother trying to nurse. For a moment, I thought I was dreaming. It couldn't be a newborn foal this late in the year! As I peered closer, here was a tiny dun-colored foal that was still wobbly on its legs; umbilical cord still attached so I knew this was a brand new baby. "Who did it belong to and was it a filly or colt," I thought.

The herd moved closer and it was evident that it was a little filly born to a mare named Auntie. I was overjoyed, as Auntie has had a hard time of it since her capture in 1999. She had lost her first foal and her second foal was unaccounted for. During her first year in captivity while the horses were in Arizona awaiting their trip to SD and release, she helped nurse another mare's foal, named Flame- a story all to itself. She had always been such a good-hearted mare, so kind. Now, here she was foaling in the winter.

It wasn't long and the little one just collapsed to ground, basking under the warm sun. The herd continued to move and up this little filly jumped as her mother nuzzled her to move. The filly nursed frequently and Auntie encouraged it. My thoughts were racing to the possible upcoming snows, the dropping temperatures, knowing this little one would have to spend a lot of time sleeping and eating. I reassured myself that wild horses have a very strong survival mechanism that has been honed over time. Along with that and the miracle of the weather of that week, I knew that she would be okay.



What We Can Learn from Emily Corrigan

By: Karen Sussman

Hope for the Future of our Earth and All that Is
Therein Comes from a Lesson Given by A Child

It was a few weeks before the Holiday Season was upon us when I received a call from Emily's mother. Emily had decided to give \$100.00 to the charity of her choice and she chose to help our wild horses. I was so impressed that a young child of six years would even think about charitable giving that I just had to investigate further as to how a child of this tender age became so concerned about giving and not just receiving. Here is Emily's story and I hope we can all learn from it.

Emily and her brother Drew came to central Oregon from San Jose, California with their parents Rob and Mary Ann. Maybe one could say that Emily's fascination with horses came from her mother's love of horses. Together Rob and Mary Ann wanted to instill the act of giving within their children. It began two years ago when the children were given money to give to their charity of choice. That would have made Emily five years old. This year, Emily's mother called and notified ISPMB that we would again be recipients of Emily's generosity. Emily received a picture of three-year old "Peepers" who is partially blind and could not be released with her mother into the Gila Wild Horse Herd. Here was a horse with a special story and here was a little girl with a special story. What a good match.

Emily volunteers at a horse rescue in her hometown called Sisters Saddle Club. After interviewing Emily by phone, she told me that she grooms the horses, waters them and cleans their stalls. The group was founded for horses who might not be cared for properly. Emily takes riding lessons and says, "I'm not afraid of horses." She attends a combination of first and second grade, although she entered school as a first grader she will graduate as a second grader this year. Her enthusiasm bubbles as she explains her favorite subjects in school, "Reading, math, recess, oh all of them." She giggles throughout the interview just like one would imagine a vibrant six-year old to do.

Emily's father explains that Emily has a heart of gold. With her birthday party coming up on February 18th, she wants to invite everyone. "She is a great little girl," her Dad proudly tells. And rightly so I agree, because I'm sure I could count on my hand the number of children at her age who give to charities. It is so refreshing to see the great lessons that Rob and Mary Ann Corrigan are teaching their children. Emily is learning lessons straight from the heart. Wouldn't this be a wonderful class offered to young children in early grades – *the art of giving*.

Happy 7th Birthday to you Emily Corrigan and may you always be blessed for taking care of the horses.



Emily Corrigan

North Carolina Trucking Team Responds to SOS

Thanks to a second story in *Truckers News* last May about ISPMB's need for hay, Debbie and Gene Jacobs of Bolton, North Carolina came to the rescue. With the drought continuing in its second year in South Dakota, ISPMB's need for hay during the summer months was paramount. A call came from the Jacobs while they were trucking through the eastern part of South Dakota – exactly where we had a load of hay awaiting pick up.

Debbie and Gene arrived Memorial Day weekend and brought the load of hay across the state at no charge to ISPMB. Meeting Debbie and Gene was like meeting old friends. Not only did they make it for the holiday weekend but they also pitched in and helped for a weekend crowd of 35 people who came to participate in the blessing ceremony of Karen Sussman's newly acquired ranch where the ISPMB wild horses temporarily reside. A traditional Lakota meal was provided to all the guests and all enjoyed a tour of the wild horse range. The Jacobs even worked hard to get ISPMB's bus ready to roll for the wild horse tour after it had been stored in the garage all winter.

It seemed all the more apropos to have the Jacobs at this special Ceremony blessing the horses and the property because Gene is from the Waccamaw Siouan Tribe in North Carolina. Both Debbie and Gene have their own horses and menagerie of dogs. The dogs accompany them on all their trucking trips. Neither could be persuaded to stay at the ranch house because they would not leave their dogs in their truck alone.

After spending a lovely weekend at the ranch, Debbie and Gene promised to return and return they did. This time they drove to Wisconsin in October and picked up

a load of hay and brought it to the horses. They drove across the Missouri River and helped us pack 500 plus small bales onto their semi and then unloaded them in our barn. Now if that wasn't enough, they drove to the other side of the state and sat for a day before they could get a load back to North Carolina. While waiting there, Gene said, "Let's just drive back with another load of hay." So off they found a local farmer and loaded up the hay to bring back to the ranch. No money was



Gene & Debbie Jacobs

exchanged to the rancher and it was pure trust that the farmer would be paid! It is wonderful to do business in the Midwest where trust is just a part of business.

How great it was to see their smiling faces as they pulled into the ranch. Perfect timing to as the well temporarily stopped and they spent all evening watering 100 horses. They must have had halos around their heads because they always appeared at the right time!

What a wonderful world this would be if we had more Debbie and Genes!

Three Truckloads of Hay Arrive from Oklahoma

Hay Drive for HOPE (Helping Our Precious Equines)

In an appeal that ISPMB sent out last October for hay donations due to the collapse of a grazing lease in September for the White Sands herd, the organization was thrilled to receive three truckloads of hay from the Travis Ranch in Oklahoma. In our last magazine, we featured an article about Mrs. Travis who at the age of 99 years still manages a large horse ranch.

By the end of October, with little hay in reserve for the nearly 100 White Sands horses, ISPMB was faced with supplying enough hay for the winter at a time when hay prices would again be soaring. Transportation costs from outside the state nearly doubled the cost of hay in 2002. It just so happened that a local rancher, not more than ten miles away, sold his ranch and all his stock. He had enough hay to supply the White Sands herd. The hay would be sold at auction but ISPMB would not have enough capital in reserve to be a significant bidder at the auction.



Mrs. Doris Eaton Travis

Coming to the RESCUE again was Mrs. Travis who loaned the organization money to purchase the hay. The horses are thriving this winter with South Dakota's local hay. We know that when this drought passes that we will not encounter the dilemma's that have been wrought by the dry weather in the past, provided that we receive the much needed rain.

Mrs. Travis believes that all beings are interconnected and that the Creator has led her to many philanthropic ventures including the hay donation. "These moments are the way we are able to express God's love or universal love," she said. "You have to allow yourself to be open to these opportunities."

Ms. Sussman, ISPMB's president, believes that it is no accident that Mrs. Travis and she have crossed paths because their philosophies are so similar. Sussman says, "This project has always been driven by a greater power than I or anyone can ever imagine." "One understands the spiritual nature of this project living in an area where the horse is held sacred by the traditional Lakota people." Sussman says, "I have observed first hand the miracles that come from honoring the horses. I have learned so much from them and I am humbled to be in their presence."

Wild Mustang Bronze

Artist Kaye Guerin Yourstarshining has designed a bronze sculpture of a wild mustang. For every bronze sold, ISPMB will receive 20% of the sale price. Kaye has donated paintings to our auction held in Scottsdale. She is an avid supporter of our wild horses. The cost of the bronze is \$500.00. The bronze, now available for purchase, is being cast in Chicago at Art Castings of Illinois Foundry. The money will help ISPMB continue to protect its wild herds. The bronze is displayed on an elegant beveled green marble base, with a black plaque lettered in gold reading, "ISPMB - I support America's Wild Horses." Each bronze also bears the signature of the artist at its base. This is a wonderful opportunity to obtain a fine piece of timeless art that will complement any collection and at the same time make an important contribution to our living symbol of American freedom... the wild horse.

About the artist: Kaye is a professional painter, sculptress, and photographer. She works in many mediums in an adventurous manner. During the winter she lives in Tucson, AZ with her husband Francis, who is a stone sculptor and is Dakota from the Sisseton-Wahpeton Reservation. Wild horses are the central theme in the bronzes and paintings. Both have traveled extensively to visit America's most significant herds. Her art is now featured in fine galleries in four states, including the Charles Russell Museum in Great

Falls, MT. Kaye lectures on bronze art and is currently illustrating a book on the Wilbur-Cruce herd of AZ. Her series of bronzes depicting the Lewis and Clark Expedition essentially show the hard working little mustangs of the frontier, as they really were... the horses that so captivated Remington and Russell. Kaye says, "My horses are not idealized, but are sinew and straining muscle, serving their human partners with courage and devotion." Her bronze, "MUSTANG," designed for ISPMB portrays the coiled energy of a wild horse ready to spring into action, distilling the power of this magnificent animal into a compelling piece of art.

To Order:

Please send a check or money order for \$500.00, payable to Kaye Guerin Yourstarshining (no cash or credit cards, please). Your order will be placed immediately with Act Casting of Illinois. Please allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery. Shipping and handling charges are from \$15 to \$30, and will be paid by the buyer. We guarantee our work and all deliveries are insured to make your purchase from Yourstarshining Studio a pleasant and memorable expense. Address orders to: Yourstarshining Studio

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Tucson, AZ 85716

or feel free to call us at (520) 908-2341. Become a collector of fine bronze today while helping to ensure the future of America's wild horse.



*"MUSTANG" by Kaye Guerin Yourstarshining
Bronze on Green Marble Base H.9"xL.8"*

Update on National Bill to Stop the Slaughter of Horses

The *American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act (H. R. 857)* is moving along well in Congress. A Senate sponsor may be on the horizon according to sources. The bill must be passed in the House of Representatives first (Congressional rules). There are 168 bipartisan cosponsors of the bill so far.

The bill is written as follows: To prevent the slaughter of horses in and from the United States for human consumption by prohibiting the slaughter of horses for human consumption and by prohibiting the trade and transport of horse flesh and live horses intended for human consumption, and for other purposes.

One of the major holdups in the bill comes from Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), who is the chair of the Agricultural Committee that has primary jurisdiction over the bill. According to a representative of the National Horse Protection Coalition, Goodlatte is in the pocket of the industry supporting horse slaughter.

Let it also be noted that the Illinois Horsemen's Council in a recent report defended horse slaughter and attacked those who supported legislation to end the cruel practice.

It is noted that approximately 55,000 horses are slaughtered for human consumption annually in the U. S. by foreign-owned slaughterhouses. Tens of thousands of live horses are exported from the U. S. annually for slaughter, many of whom have traveled thousands of miles over several days suffering from lack of water, food, and rest contrary to acceptable non-slaughter standards.

Often horses endure repeated blows to the head with stunning equipment that often does not render the animal unconscious before their hind legs are chained and raised high in the air so their jugular neck veins can be slashed to bleed out. If people could only see these animals as they begin their death walk up the ramp, there would not be one person who would oppose this bill.

The bill will gain a groundswell of support if every concerned American will write to their representatives and ask that they support the bill to end slaughter of horses in our country.

Wisconsin Hay Drive Hits Local Media

Local Seymour resident, Karen Dalke, took up the crusade for hay this past summer. Dalke and ISPMB's Vice-President, Jody Marriott appeared on Green Bay TV in a request for hay for drought stricken South Dakota. We thank John Pashouwer, the Dalkes, and William Goodall for their rally of support. The truckload of hay was delivered in October as weather began to change in the Plains.

Mr. Goodall donated a field to be cut, the Dalkes farmed the field and their neighbor, Pashouwer added two bales to the truck. This is an ongoing effort in our hay drive for HOPE. (see Karen Dalke's article - Tejo)

Tejo—the Story of a Sorraia Stallion

By: Karen Dalke

Tejo (tay zhoo) is a four-year-old Sorraia stallion, named after the mighty River in Portugal. He represents the most primitive Iberian horse in existence today. There are only about 200 Sorraias worldwide. Tejo is one of only two Sorraias in North America.

Sorraias are a remnant population of an indigenous, South Iberian wild horse, which survived almost pure in the inaccessible lowlands of the Portuguese river until the early 1900s. The Iberian scientist and horse expert DR. RUY D'ANDRADE discovered these horses in 1920 and is responsible for their preservation. Most of these horses exist on private lands in Portugal and Germany. However, the Sorraia Horse Nature Reserve, a public facility, was recently established in Portugal to allow these animals to live and breed in a semi-wild state.

The Sorraia is always regular dun or grulla. Their common height is 14-14.3 hands. They have a convex profile, a sooty face, outlined ears, and a bi-colored main and tail. Zebra stripes on the legs; neck stripes and shoulder stripes are common, and sometimes they also have fishbone markings on their backs. Newborn foals can have a zebra-like pattern all over. The Sorraia is

extremely flexible, moves freely, and is sometimes gaited. Sorraias are inquisitive and self-assured.

On the second voyage of Columbus, he intended to bring the best-bred Andalusians, but to his surprise he discovered they had been replaced with Sorraias. In retrospect, this may have been a happy accident as they adapted easily to their new environment. Relatives of theirs can still be found among wild mustangs of the American West.

Tejo joined our "herd" in 2001. As a foal he lived in a pasture setting and his first trailer ride was from Germany to Amsterdam where he boarded a plane en route to New York. After arriving in the United States, he was trailered across the country and finally settled at our home in Seymour. Tejo has been confronted with many new experiences and takes them in stride. He has just begun working under saddle. After a brief review of ground manners, Tejo readily accepted a pad, saddle, and was riding in just a few days.

The Sorraia was originally used for light farm work and herding of bulls. Over the past few decades the Sorraia has been used in dressage, pleasure riding and driving. A primary discipline has yet to be determined for Tejo to compliment his career in propagating the breed.

About Karen Dalke:

She is a PhD candidate in Anthropology doing her dissertation on "The Real and the Imagined: An Ethnographic Analysis of the Wild Horse Controversy." She completed her anthropology courses at Purdue University and is currently at the University of Wisconsin.

Ellie and Juanita



Ellie

Texas Horse Slaughter Bill Defeated

According to the Texas Humane Legislation Network, HB 1324 and SB 1413, decriminalizing horse slaughter for consumption, died in the Texas state legislature. This was a wonderful victory for the horses. The grass roots effort to stop the legislation created massive numbers of letters and responses to the 150 House and 31 Senate members. Approximately 1 million people responded to the legislature to stop the slaughter in Texas where the last two horse slaughter plants remain in our country. We thank all of our members who took the time to respond.

To keep the momentum going we must work hard to stop the slaughter on a national basis by supporting a federal bill to end slaughter permanently. (See American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act)

Plans to Reopen Cavel Slaughter Plant in Illinois to Kill Horses

Stop the slaughter in Illinois before it begins

On January 7, 2004, several Illinois State Representatives and Senators were hopeful that the horse slaughter plant, Cavel, A Belgium-based food conglomerate located near DeKalb, would not reopen. Sen. Pamela Althoff (R-Dist. 32) was advised by the Department of Agriculture that Cavel had returned the license to open the plant and would not reapply in the state of Illinois. According to Cavel's Project Manager, Jim Tucker, Sen. Althoff has the wrong information. The plant is proceeding with construction and Cavel has reapplied for a license. Cavel plans to fight the horse slaughter for human consumption bill introduced in Illinois.

On November 6, 2003, Rep. Bob Molaro's bill to ban horse slaughter for human consumption was added to Senate Bill 1921 as House Amendment No.1. On November 18, 2003, the House Executive Committee recommended that House Amendment No. 1 to SB 1921 be adopted. The bill was to go to the full House. Days before the bill was to come to a final vote, appearing that horse slaughter would be defeated, State Rep.

David Wirsing, whose district includes the Cavel site, suddenly died. Republican supporters of bill indicated to sponsoring legislators that they would decline to vote for the bill during the period of mourning for Wirsing. Prime sponsor, Rep. Bob Molaro decided to hold the proposed new law until the next regular session in January.

In the meantime, Cavel plans to be in operation in the next few weeks. To voice your opinion, please call the congressional people in your district if you are from Illinois or if you are from out of state, call the Senate President at 217-782-3905, House of Rep. Speakers Office at 217-782-5350 and or write to Governor Rod Blagojevich, Office of the Governor, 207 State House, Springfield, IL 62706. Phone 217-782-0244.

The bill has been rescheduled for a hearing in early spring. Your call is important.



Shackelford Foals

Catching Burros

By Marla Bennett (USFWS)

Three employees of Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), located in northwest Nevada, have been trapping wild burros this winter. Seventy nine burros have been caught in traps baited with alfalfa hay, and triggered by trip lines. All but 8 burros have been placed with small rescues to be adopted out. The 8 are going to a retired ranching family in Nevada to be enjoyed as pets.

Burros were brought to the high desert of northern Nevada by Basque sheep herders and miners during the 19th Century.

When people left the country, they often turned their burros loose. These domesticated donkeys were joined by donkeys that escaped their owners.

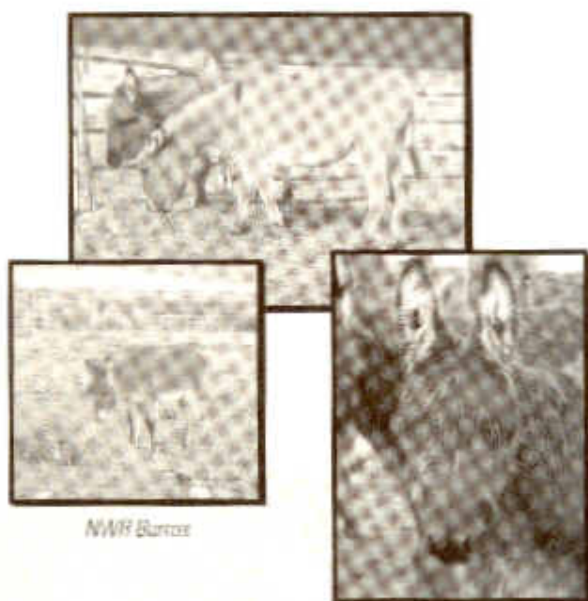
Burros flourished in this region of hot summers and cold winters, sagebrush, and greasewood. Because most of the land in Nevada is public, and managed by the BLM, burro numbers have been controlled under the Wild Horse and Burro Act (WHBA). Sheldon NWR, a pronghorn antelope refuge, is an island of over 1/2 million acres surrounded by BLM land, and is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The wild horses

and burros in lands managed by the USFWS are not protected by the WHBA. Sheldon NWR has agreed with a wild horse advocacy group to leave 30-60 burros on the refuge. Very little has been done in recent years, to remove the horses and burros on Sheldon NWR because of a lack of funding.

In 2002, burros moved into territory that borders the main State Highway 140, and 8 burros were killed in vehicle accidents over 2 years. Amazingly, no people were injured. Refuge employees decided that the burros near the highway needed to be removed to prevent more accidents. In winter 2002-3, refuge workers experimented with different types of traps, and captured 22 burros. In winter 2003-4, the traps were perfected, and nearly all the burros located along the highway have been trapped. It is not known exactly how many burros live in the fractured, unroaded landscape of Sheldon NWR.

In future winters, more burros will be removed. All will go to good homes. Though

the employees who have been gathering the burros are relieved that burros will no longer be standing on the roads, they miss seeing these shaggy, long-ears as frequently as in the past.



NWR Burros

ISPMB Meeting Scheduled for March 20th

Due to weather conditions the annual meeting of ISPMB for 2003 was cancelled last November. It will be rescheduled for March 20, 2004 in Hortonville, Wisconsin. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. The meeting is open to members of ISPMB. If anyone is interested in attending, please call ISPMB's office at 605-964-6866.

America's Scant Remaining Wild Horses

Being Obliterated by Public Servants Charged with their Preservation

By Craig C. Downer, Wildlife Ecologist
P.O. Box 456, Minden, NV 89423.
Email: ccdowner@yahoo.com

Wild Horses as Scapegoats

In November 2002, BLM announced that it was about to round up thousands of wild horses in Nevada. This falls within its plan to half an already unfairly reduced number of these once magnificent herds, taking it from a little over 40 to a little over 20 thousand nationwide. The short articles covering this story, such as that put out by AP in late November (e.g., Reno Gazette Journal, 11/29/02) have fallen dismally short of revealing the whole truth and were grossly unfair to the wild horses and the public who appreciate and support these beautiful free spirits.

Today, the political machine that operates on the public lands is an unwholesome marriage between vested livestock interest and their puppets in government, including BLM, USFS, state departments of agriculture, and local officials. The result has become a mockery of the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act, Public Law 92-195, because of an insidious monopolization of our public lands by livestock interests who lack perspective on the issue because they are "possessed by their possessions." A truer perspective on this issue is not being revealed by a largely controlled and beholden media today whose values are suspect. If the real proportion of livestock grazing pressure being suffered by the public lands ecosystem in relation to wild horse grazing were known, a gross inequity would be revealed. It would then be plainly seen that the wild horses are being brought to crippling low, non-viable population levels even though they have the legal right to live in their legally designated areas in the West. These are

places they do not overgraze but which humanly imposed livestock too often do. The livestock interests conveniently blame the wild horses for their own abuses, thus making them scapegoats. Because of this Machiavellian backstabbing, the public herd areas have been largely emptied of wild horses and burros, even though the vast majority of the U.S. public wants to see them occupied with viable and truly free-roaming wild horse herds. I am quite disgusted by the excessive BLM-approved roundups in the Owyhee, Jackson Mountain, and Monte Cristo wild horse herd management areas that are about to take place in northeast Nevada. Drought is their convenient excuse for perpetrating this gross injustice toward the wild horses and the public citizenry that supports them!

These wild horses are not as stressed, as the PR machine would have us believe, as attests their healthy condition. The horses could survive in most cases if our public servants simply but firmly assured their legal rights to adequate habitat, including water, shelter, foraging areas for both hot and cold seasons, etc. - and gave them a chance to display their amazing survival instincts! While the vested livestock establishment is perpetrating its stranglehold on the public lands and scapegoating and targeting the wild horses for practical elimination, I see people here in the West wasting water through the lavish and inefficient irrigation of alfalfa fields, golf courses, and lawned subdivisions, etc., as well as through the destruction of highland watersheds by livestock overgrazing and trampling, slob mining and ORV abuses! A more than adequate supply of water should and easily could be shared with the wild horses if some modicum of good-willed conservation were employed.

Hard Figures

Hard mathematical analysis using BLM's own figures reveals that in most of the legal herd areas, our public servants are planning to allow only one individual wild horse per one to two thousand or more acres of legal herd area, as per the Appropriate Management Level that has been set! Nationwide, the federal Bureau of Land Management is planning to allow only about one individual wild horse or burro per individual public lands grazing permittee, each of which has hundreds or thousands of livestock that strip the most nutritious vegetation. It bears mentioning that the livestock are

not permitted to become integral components of the public lands ecosystem, since they are removed for human consumption and do not contribute their remains to the ecosystem that sustains them - as the wild horses and burros and other wildlife species do, if so allowed. Such natural integration was and remains the original intention of the Wild Horse Act, but is not being followed.

After each drastic herd reduction, the dominant, vested livestock grazing levels usually continue unabated or even increase. And far too many ranchers are unsatisfied with already possessing the monopoly, the pig's share, on 92% of BLM lands and on 69% of US Forest Service lands as well as a substantial portion of our national wildlife refuges - for a total of roughly 300 million acres! They seek to impose yet more of their abusive will upon an ever-greater portion of the public lands and upon the public-at-large who derive immense ecological and spiritual benefits from these vast and wide-open places when they are left largely to God and Nature. The public lands livestock industry is economically non-viable and supplies only 2% of livestock feed nationwide, yet these operations cause enormous damage to wildlife, watersheds, water and air quality, soils, and ecological well functioning.

Our ecosystems are vitally needed to restore planetary health in this era of global warming and ecological imbalance that we have blindly created. To support a relative handful of Western livestock operations, the public taxpayer delivers many millions of dollars each year in down-the-drain subsidies. Totalling both economic subsidy and ecological damage, the cost of maintaining this 19th century anachronism is around a billion dollars per year! In order to remedy this situation, we must first ascertain exactly where the wild horses and burros have a legal right to live. Factually, only 13% of the federal lands are included as legal herd areas under the 1971 Wild Horse Act. Yet, 40% or more of these 41-million acres of public lands in 303 legal herd areas have been "zeroed out" and declared "horse free areas." This has occurred in spite of their legal status and the legal requirement that they be "principally" managed for the wild horses and burros so as to preserve their free-roaming life-style and long-term viability and integration into the natural ecosystem.

Consider: There are only 22,000 public land livestock operators, the wealthiest small minority of whom control the great majority of grazing permits. Taken as a whole, these represent only one tenth of one percent of the

U.S. population! If their stranglehold were released upon the public lands, a true implementation of the Wild Horse Act could be achieved. And wild horse herds could be reinstated to truly viable population levels - and prove their ecological harmony as they did in centuries past. The public lands would again blossom and restore their vital ecological services.

Reforms Needed

Concomitantly to this reform, new and ecologically benign occupations by people are called for. We need to develop and support non-polluting alternative energy sources, such as wind and solar with which the West is abundantly endowed. In general, a diversified and soundly planned harvesting of natural goods that are taken in a way that does not overly alter the ecosystem, could solve the present predicament. In this restoration of ecological harmony, we could often emulate ancient and time-tested Native American traditions, complementing these with modern, particularly ecological and holistic knowledge. In this way we can learn to live with a fairer number of wild horses and burros - and the cruel and deadly roundups that are employed today will become a thing of the past!

The "new age" model for wild horse conservation will involve the establishment of herd areas that, in terms of size and habitat composition, are adequate to the year-round needs of viable populations, each with at least one-thousand inter-breeding adults. Each individual wild equid herd will be allowed to stabilize its population level according to the natural carrying capacity of the herd area it inhabits. And as key to this strategy's success, each herd area will be limited by natural boundaries such as rivers, mountain ridges, and cliffs, wherever possible, and, where necessary, by artificial boundaries established to keep the horses from coming to harm outside their legal herd areas.

Within each contained herd area, each given equid population will be allowed to stabilize through a process of natural adaptation and selection, involving biologically balanced age and sex-ratio stabilization and social accommodation, both within and among bands, among other factors. Incidentally, these worthy processes are precisely those that the drastic helicopter roundups by BLM contractors violently counteract and set back. These are callous guttings of the herd populations and

condemn the gathered wild horses to much trauma, ill adjustment to a life of captivity, illness and often death! Roundups have also cost the taxpayer many millions of dollars over the years.

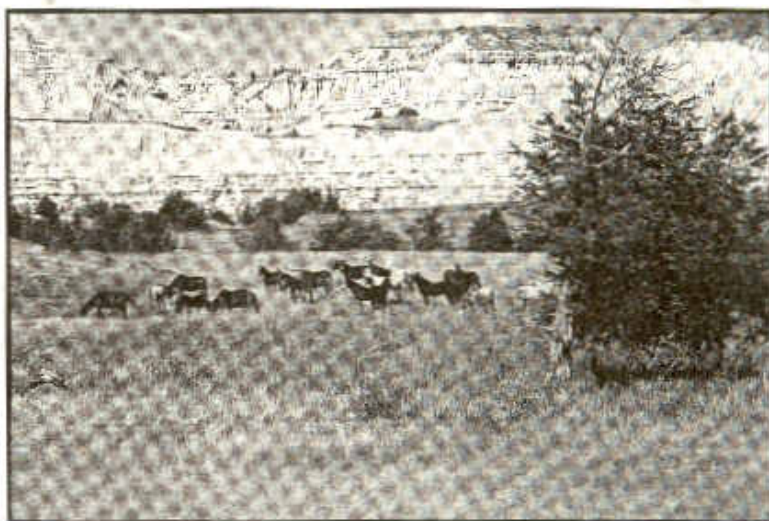
The new management strategy I propose will allow natural predators such as puma, bear, and, where present, wolf, and natural, intrinsic limiting factors such as winter and summer die off, old age attrition, etc., to fully operate. Also, the natural spacing that wild horse and burro bands demonstrate when left for longer periods of time on their own, will serve to prevent the overcrowding of their habitat. After the horse population has reached its ecological carrying capacity within its herd area boundaries, reproductive self-limitation will be observed. This is to say that within each legal herd area, the horses will be allowed to define their own carrying capacity, rather than having an artificial population limit imposed upon them by politically pressured and livestock-beholden land managers who too often have "no use" for the wild horses. The wild horses will naturally do this because they are a "climax species" capable of limiting their population growth and belonging to and evolving out of a geologically "Recent" climax life community here in North America - where the horse species has evolved practically continuously for thousands of generations past.

A Plea to Conscience

Let us respect these our precious wild horses whose very presence contributes so much to our and other's quality of life. Let us respect and protect their right to be free in truly viable numbers, in truly viable wide-open spaces and habitats. In so doing, we will bless not only these wild horses, but our very own lives. We will, thus, set ourselves free from petty, mean-spiritedness and the tragedy of selfish, inconsiderate, and dis-attuned life-styles. By learning to share with the wild horses, we will attain a greater fulfillment, both individually and as a species. We will cease acting as estranged invaders of Planet Earth. Instead of being a curse for the "Rest of Life," we will become benign presences who enhance the lives of others and, thereby, derive life's greater joy and meaning ourselves. Ceasing to focus exclusively upon human kind and our unlimited material self-aggrandizement, we shall refine our approach to living as we expand beyond those dark ways that are best left behind. We shall perceive ourselves in the wild horses - as eventually in all diverse Creation - ever One in uplifted Spirit - and the free-living wild horses shall help to lead us along this blessed way.

The Place of the Wild Horse

As "returned natives" and as ecological and evolutionary "mutualists" in North America, wild horses contribute to the plains, prairies, deserts and even montane ecosystems they inhabit, if so allowed. As integral ecological components, they are excellent reducers of fire hazard and excellent seed dispersers of native plants through their feces, that also help to build a nutrient-rich humus in the soils. Additionally, these herbivores are prey species valuable to the food chain, as their mortal remains are re-cycled among puma, bear, coyote, wolf, and bird, rodent, reptile, and insect scavengers, as well as many minute decomposers.



White Sands Wild Horses

Photo Credit: Bob Willis

ISPMB

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION (PLEASE PRINT AND MAIL IN)

Date: _____
Name (first): _____ (M.I.) _____ (last) _____
Street: _____ Home Phone: _____
City: _____ Work Phone: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____ Cell Phone: _____
School/Employer: _____ E-mail: _____
Male: _____ Female: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
Language Spoken: _____

Drivers License : ☐ Yes ☐ No

Education Level: ☐ High School ☐ College ☐ Professional

Are you volunteering as ☐ an individual or ☐ in a group

Please check any activities you have experience in:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting/Bookkeeping | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory Board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction/Carpentry | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Processing | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund-raising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Information - Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Mailing/Envelope Stuffing | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Assisting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office Assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Video Production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Web Designing | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping | |

List other interest you may have that is not mentioned here: _____

Qualifications Skills and Trade: _____

Please List interest & Hobbies, Sporting/Social, or Community involvement (affiliations): _____

Volunteer Experience: _____

Reason for volunteering:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work/Study related | <input type="checkbox"/> Serving the Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Explain) _____ |

Time Commitment: ☐ Two Weeks ☐ One Month ☐ Two Months

☐ Winter ☐ Spring ☐ Summer ☐ Fall

☐ Other (Explain): _____

Volunteer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please Mail To:

ISPMB - Volunteer Services
PO Box 55
Lantry, SD 57636 - 0055

For Further information e-mail:

ispmb@lakotanetwork.com

Wild Horse and Burro Diary

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