

SOUTHERN COUNTIES HEAVY HORSE ASSOCIATION

Heavy horse breeds and their survival

Please help us to secure their future



All proceeds from this leaflet will enable us
to continue promoting Heavy Horses.

£1

www.schha.co.uk

ARDENNES:

The Ardennes is a heavy draught breed with great muscular development. Good posture and conformation with plenty of quality bone.. All colours are permitted, except piebald/skewbald. No white markings are permitted on the head of stallions although a little white below the fetlock is allowed for Mares. They have an intelligent expression and docile nature. They are still used in commercial forestry and farming whilst also regularly used for competitive private driving.



A number are being used by the Riding for the Disabled Associations as well as general, sturdy riding horses in the UK. They are surprisingly fast, nimble, strong and good tempered.

For more information about the Ardennes please visit www.theworkinghorsetrust.org

CLYDESDALE:

The Clydesdale is the native horse of the Clydesdale area (Lanarkshire). At first glance, the Clydesdale bears a marked resemblance to the Shire, with its long silky hair or 'feather' on its legs. The colours most common are bay and brown with white markings, but blacks, greys, roans and chestnuts are occasionally seen. The white markings are characteristic and it is the exception to see a bay or brown Clydesdale without a white face and considerable white on the feet and legs. Although there are only approximately 700 registered brood mares in the United Kingdom and about 100 registered stallions, more and more people are using Clydesdales not just for showing and driving, but for farm work, horse logging and even riding. The Clydesdale is currently listed as 'Vulnerable' on the Rare Breed Survival Trust's Watchlist 2008. For more information about the Clydesdale please visit www.clydesdalehorsesociety.com



The Rare Breeds Survival Trust

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust is working closely with breed societies to encourage more heavy horses.

Their current Heavy Horse watchlist is as follows:

CRITICAL
Suffolk

ENDANGERED

VULNERABLE
Clydesdale

AT RISK
Shire

<http://www.rbst.org.uk/watchlist/equines/clydesdale.php>

COMTOIS:

The Comtois is a very old breed from Franche-Comté and the Jura Mountains on the border of France and Switzerland. In the sixteenth century, the Comtois became famous as a cavalry and artillery horse. Louis XIV's used this breed in his armies, as did Napoleon on his campaign into Russia. In the 1800's The Comtois was bred with other draft breeds like the Norman, Boulonnais and Percheron. The Comtois has good qualities of endurance, hardiness and balance, they are also good-natured, easy to train and hard working. The breed is still widely used for hauling timber in the high pine forests of the Jura and for work on the hilly vineyards of the Arbois area. They are a lightly built draft horse with short, strong legs, little feather and muscular hindquarters. They are found in varying shades of chestnut with a light flaxen mane and tail and they stand between 14.2 and 16 hands. For more information about the Comtois please contact janewordsworth@btinternet.com



PERCHERON:

The Percheron is one of the oldest breeds in France. It gets its name from the small province of La Perche in north-west France where they were always bred. It was bred into a massive horse to bear the weight of a fully armoured Knight. The Percheron Horse Society founded in 1882 and the French Stud Book appeared the following year. The pure Percheron was considered highly suitable for military purposes. It was very powerful, short-legged, minus leg hair and capable of a good trot. It combines great strength with docility and is a long-lived horse with a high resistance to disease. The Percheron's feet is a valued characteristic. The British Percheron is a good height (stallions have to be a minimum of 16'3 hands), with great muscular development. The only colours accepted are grey or black, the former found more often, frequently with the typical dapple. For more information about The Percheron please visit www.percheron.org.uk



**To find out more about our rare breeds please visit The Rare Breeds Survival Trust's website www.rbst.org.uk or call them on 024 7669 6551.
Southern Counties Heavy Horse Association would like to thank the RBST Dorset branch for generously awarding a bursary to aid with the production of this leaflet.**

Please help us to secure the future of the Heavy Horse.

SHIRE:

Most familiar of the heavy horses. It is a descendant of the Old English Warhorse, or Great Horse. It became apparent that some rationalisation of the breeding activities was required to improve and maintain the best qualities in the Shire horse and in 1878 the English Cart Horse Society was founded, later becoming the Shire Horse Society. Its aims were to establish uniformity of type, character and appearance and to keep authentic records. The first volume of the Shire Horse Stud Book contained the records of 2,381 stallions, going back to 1770. Enormously strong, intelligent and courageous, it is a patient and docile animal. It often exceeds 17 hands in height and can weigh over a ton. It can be bay, brown, black or grey, with white on the lower legs and the characteristic long, silky hair or 'feather' over the fetlocks. In the modern Shire, the feather is less abundant than it used to be. There are approximately 3000 Shires in the UK today and are currently listed as 'At Risk' on the Rare Breed Survival Trust's Watchlist 2008. For more information about the Shire please visit www.shire-horse.org.uk



SUFFOLK:

The Suffolk Punch goes back to the early 16 century. It was always a native of the county from which it takes its name. Every registered Suffolk can trace its descent in the direct male line from one stallion foaled in 1768 in the Suffolk village of Ufford, a horse known simply as Crisp's Horse. The modern Suffolk has emerged taller but still relatively short-legged, barrel-girthed and low-shouldered horse. The Suffolk is only one colour: 'chesnut' (traditionally spelt), although seven shades are recognised, from pale sorrel to dark copper. A little white on the forehead is just acceptable. It is clean-legged (no 'feather') which makes it particularly suitable for the heavy soils of its home counties. Despite its bulk and short legs, it can trot a fast pace and is also valued as a long-lived horse. There are approximately 300 Suffolks in the UK today and are currently listed as 'Critical' on the Rare Breed Survival Trust's Watchlist 2008. For more information about the Suffolk please visit www.suffolkhorseorganisation.org.uk



SOUTHERN COUNTIES HEAVY HORSE ASSOCIATION

www.schha.co.uk