

Horse Breeds: Exmoor Pony, Faeroes Pony, Falabella, Fell Pony, Finnhorse

EXMOOR PONY

In southwestern England, the Exmoor Pony are descendants of horses that walked along the land of Britain before it was an island. The oldest native pony breed, the Exmoor pony is evidenced to exist over 60,000 years.

The Exmoor Pony is suited to survive in wet and cold climates, and can do so without assistance from people for food or shelter. The Exmoor breed has hooded-eyes that protect them from rain and wind, and a chute down the tail that channels snow and rain off the bodies of the horses. Exmoor's have shiny and sleek coats in summer, and grow a double layer in the winter for waterproofing and insulation. They are always brown in color, with black points and a ring around the eye and muzzle. Their height ranges between 11 and 12 hands and weight about 750 pounds.

Originally, Exmoor's were horses used for tending and herding to livestock, but they are also great in competition and win events in dressage, jumping, and long distance riding with both children and adult drivers. Exmoor's seem to enjoy working, are intelligent and can jump like a cat!

In the 1950's, Exmoor's were imported into Canada. The breed is still rare, with only about 800 ponies existing around the world, but the foal number is increasing.

FAEROES PONY

Similar to the Icelandic Pony, the Faeroes Pony is of ancient origin and is among the purest breeds due to isolated conditions. The Faeroe breed is found between the Shetland Islands and Iceland on the Faeroe Islands. The climate of the islands is mild and the temperature is quite constant.

Faeroes Pony has a resemblance to the horses brought from Asia to Europe around 200 A.D, and are small in size. Most are bay color, with some black. Their hair grows heavy in winter, but is thick year round.

FALABELLA

The Falabella breed is named after the family who developed the breed during the 19th Century. The origination of the Falabella breed comes from the Andalusian horse, brought with Spaniards during the attempt of a conquest. When the Spaniards were unsuccessful at taking over the human inhabitants, they left the horses to survive on their own.

The horses wandered over vast plains, and with each foaling, the breed underwent biological and structural changes in order to adapt and survive in their new environment. They built up incredible resistance and stamina due to their need to travel long distances in search of pasture and water. They developed sharp instincts to sense danger.

The Falabella family found the horses in a province in Argentina, and began experimenting with breeding. After years of breeding, they achieved a breed of well-structured horses that live to 40 or 45 years of age. Offspring are bred with similar temperaments of the parents, and the Falabella is a gentle animal that enjoys people.

Hair on Falabella horses is silky, and they have short manes. They are energetic and walk with a spontaneous gait. Their colors may be pinto, chestnut and bay, but most are black and brown.

FELL PONY

Courage and adaptability are the characteristics of a classic native breed in England, the Fell Pony. The breed can trot at a steady speed over long distances, has a docile temperament which makes it a good horse for riding.

Present day Fell ponies are about 14 hands in height, have long necks and laid back shoulders.

FINNHORSE

Sometimes referred to as the Finnish Universal horse because it offers Finland horse owners all qualities needed in a good horse, the Finnhorse is a descendant of the European domestic horse. Finnhorses are easy to handle, quick, live long and have good endurance. Most are chestnut in color,

and have white markings on the legs and face. Some Finnhorses are bay or greyish colored, with only a few brown or black.

In Finland, trotting is a popular sport, and about 40 percent of starts for races are Finnhorses. This breed is also used often for riding schools to teach both children and adult riders, thanks to their patience and calmness.

About the Author

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