



Whitefaced Woodland Sheep Society

Web site: www.whitefacedwoodland.co.uk

Newsletter 85 – August 2013

Chairman's Mumblings

Dear All

Hope all is well

What a difference 12 months makes. I think this is the best summer in my memory. Plenty of weather for both haymaking and silage, no excuses this year for not getting it in well.

All the shows have gone ahead, no washouts. Paul's representatives and friends did a good job in his absence at the Great Yorkshire. A good entry for Ryder to judge. Thank you to all for your efforts and support.

A large entry at Ryedale. I was not there but told Jeff's eye fell the same way as his father-in-law. Some compliment to his stockmanship.

I wish all exhibitors well for the later shows.

I have met the lady from the Ministry and Bretton Mill is to be held on Saturday 28th September 2013, but not in the same field, as brussel sprouts have taken over the old field. The new field is at the other side of the motorway, same junction. Hope to see you there.

Best wishes Karen on your forthcoming event, hope it doesn't clash with the shows and sales!

Thank you Ann, Geoff and Rachel for hosting my last AGM on 6 October. Three years doesn't seem a long time when you're getting old!

Paul Dixon

AGM and Open Day

This will be held on Sunday 6 October at Plover Hall, Gilmonby, near Barnard Castle. The plan is to assemble around 11 o'clock to start the Annual General Meeting at 11.30 and finish it in time for lunch. This should leave you the afternoon to look at sheep. The idea is to try your hand at assessing and judging Woodlands. No compulsion to participate, but every encouragement and assistance will be given!

Those of you who have visited us will know that Plover Hall is very much a 'work in progress'. We can certainly offer a barn, some sheep and food, but no guarantees beyond that!

Papers for the AGM will be circulated in due course, but in the meantime, any suggestions for discussion, nominations or offers will be most welcome.

Ann Godschalk

Please note that from 15 September, our Secretary will no longer be at North Park Cottage.

She can be contacted at:
Plover Hall
Gilmonby
Barnard Castle
Co Durham
DL12 9LU

Mobile and e-mail are unchanged:
07962 152242

RachelGodschalk@whitefacedwoodland.co.uk

Late summer & autumn shows

The next Show on the calendar is **Mottram**, near Glossop on 18 August. Please do try and give it your support. Tessa Wigham will be judging, and the Sheep Secretary is: Angela Oldham 0161 351 1263.

The Woodland Champion of Champions will, as usual, be determined at the **Hope Show** on August Bank Holiday Monday. Breed Champions and Reserve Champions from all the previous 2013 shows with Woodland classes are eligible to take part. Judging will follow the regular WFW classes, which will be judged by Craig Bradbury. Entries close on 15 August and forms can be downloaded at www.hopeshow.org.uk. Otherwise contact: Mrs H Morris: 01663 750318.

Bilsdale Show is a relatively new one for Woodlands but unfortunately clashes with the Skipton Sale this year. Entries close on 15 August and the Livestock Secretary is George Allison 01439 798295.

Neville Belfield is due to judge the Woodland classes at **Penistone** on 14 September. Contact: Mrs Earnshaw 01484 766542.

The last show of the season is at **Hayfield** in the High Peak on Sunday 22 September. Contact: Sarah Mellor 01663 746580 or sarah.mellor4@btopenworld.com.

Autumn Sales

31 Aug - Rare Breeds Show & Sale at Skipton. Craven Cattle Marts: 01756 792375. www.ccmauctions.com

21 Sep - Show & Sale of Rare & Minority Breeds at Carlisle. Entries close 12 August. Harrison & Hetherington : 01228 640924 www.livestock-sales.co.uk

28 Sept – The **Annual Whitefaced Woodland Show and Sale** is back at Bretton Mill, near Barnsley. It will probably be in a different field, but still right on Junction 38 of the M1. For more details, or to enter, contact Paul Dixon at William Sykes 01484 683543 or 07720 765094.

4-5 Oct - Show & Sale of Rare & Minority Breeds York Livestock Centre 01904 489731 www.ylc.co.uk Entries close 4 Sept

Show Results

Honley Show - Judge: Karen Dowey
Aged ram: Paul Thorp
Shearling ram: Paul Thorp
Ram lamb: Paul Thorp
Aged ewe: Chareen Kaye
Shearling ewe: Chareen Kaye
Ewe lamb: Casey Campbell
Group of three: Chareen Kaye
Breed Champion was Chareen's aged ewe and Reserve was Paul's aged tup

Harden Moss – Judge: John Jones
Aged ram: Chareen Kaye
Shearling ram: Karen Dowey
Ram lamb: Chareen Kaye
Aged ewe: Paul Thorp
Shearling ewe: Chareen Kaye
Ewe lamb: Casey Campbell.
Casey's ewe lamb was Reserve Breed Champion. Congratulation to Karen, whose shearling tup was Breed Champion and then went on to win the Interbreed Championship.

Great Yorkshire – Judge: Rider Howard
Aged ram: Paul Thorp
Shearling ram: Dave Wardell
Ram lamb: Chareen Kaye
Aged ewe: Dennis Stott
Shearling ewe: Dennis Stott
Ewe lamb: Casey Campbell
Champion male: Paul's aged tup, Reserve: Dave's shearling tup
Champion female: Dennis's aged ewe, Reserve: Casey's ewe lamb
Breed Champion: Paul's aged tup, Reserve: Dennis's aged ewe.
Deidre Halsall won the Woodland fleece class once more and was Reserve Champion in the overall fleece classes.

Royal Three Counties
Although the Three Counties has no advertised Woodland classes, the breed was well represented this year. In Any Other Native Breeds, Windrush Farming Partners (Peter Harkness and Ben Stayt) came 4th (of 10) with their ram.
In the Rare Breeds show on Sunday, Results were:
Ram: 1st Windrush, 2nd Steve and Francine Burns
Ram lamb: Robert and Jean Price
Ewe: 1st Robert and Jean Price, 2nd Chris Sully
Ewe lamb: 1st Robert and Jean Price, 2nd Steve and Francine Burns
The Champion was Robert and Jean's ewe Pentrenant Zara, Reserve was Chris Sully's ewe.

THE ALMOST COMPLETE AND UTTER HISTORY OF SHEEP AND MAN III THE BIOLOGY OF THE FIRST SHEEP TO BE DOMESTICATED

All domestic breeds of sheep belong to the species *Ovis aries*. This species has been developed by man from domesticated sheep that have at some point been bred from, or crossed with several wild species all of which will interbreed in captivity. It is widely believed that the first species of wild sheep to be domesticated was *Ovis musimon*, remnants of which species still exist today. Of course the modern examples of *O. musimon* are not exactly as they were 11,000 years ago and they too may have evolved or had their genetic purity contaminated with the genes of domestic sheep that they may have come into contact with along the way (leading some scientists to want to reclassify *Ovis musimon* as *Ovis aries orientalis*). So we may not be able to say with complete accuracy, 'this is what those original sheep looked like', never the less it is not an unfair point to start from.

Classification

Kingdom: Animalia

The Animalia are mainly multicellular organisms that move to collect nutrients, as opposed to the Plantae or plants that synthesise sugars using photosynthesis or the Fungi and Bacteria, which are unable to synthesise their own nutrients. The biological definition of the word refers to all members of the Kingdom Animalia, encompassing creatures ranging from insects to humans.

Phylum: Chordata

Animals having a notochord or dorsal nerve, in the case of sheep this is carried through a spine, which makes them **vertebrates**.

Subsection; quadrupeds: these are four legged vertebrates.

Class: Mammalia

Air breathing animals that are characterised by the females feeding their young through mammary glands and with the exception of the monotremes (see below) all other mammals give birth to live young.

There are three subsections, monotremes lay eggs and come from Australia (such as the echidna and platypus), the marsupials (kangaroo and koala) and the placentals, which use a placenta during gestation (such as sheep).

Subsection: placental

Order: Artiodactyla

The even toed ungulates (ungulates are hoofed animals); in the case of sheep, they carry their weight on the third and forth toe.

Family: Bovidae

The Bovidae are cloven-hoofed mammals. They are a wide-ranging group of mammals that can be subdivided into three broad groups, the cattle (buffalo and bison), caprinae (goats and sheep) and antelope (gazelle and deer). They are all herbivores and ruminants. Ruminants have a four-chambered stomach for the digestion of cellulose from coarse vegetation using micro-organisms to break down complex cellulose from plant material.

Subfamily: Caprinae

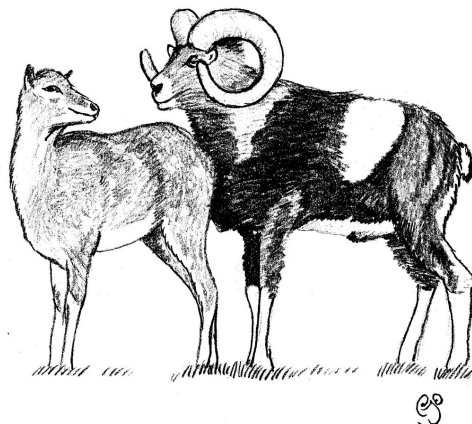
This subfamily includes sheep and goats.

Genus: *Ovis*

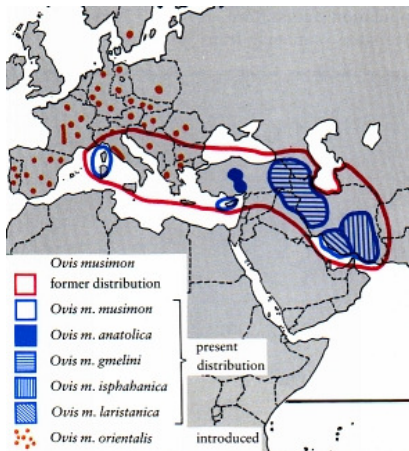
These are the sheep. The family include *Ovis musimon*, *Ovis ammon*, *Ovis canadensis*, *Ovis dalli*, *Ovis vignei*, *Ovis nivicola* and *Ovis aries*.

***Ovis musimon* the European Mouflon**, sometimes reclassified now as *Ovis orientalis orientalis*, or even *Ovis aries orientalis*

Rams of the species *Ovis musimon* have heavy spiralled horns used in fighting. The Female or ewe has much lighter horns that are somewhat goat like or even no horns at all. The coat is a coarse brown hair with a much softer undercoat of wool. Males often have white patches on their backs near the loin and white bellies. The wool can be



almost black on the chest. The ewes are more fawn coloured with white bellies and like the rams have white flashes on their rumps. Most species of wild sheep remind one of both goats and deer, to which they are of course related.



Today *Ovis musimon* inhabit very small areas of the world and in particular certain islands in the Mediterranean such as Cyprus, Sicily and Corsica, but it is thought that after the end of the Ice Age they inhabited large areas of Southern Europe and Asia including those parts of the Middle East in which farming sheep first happened.

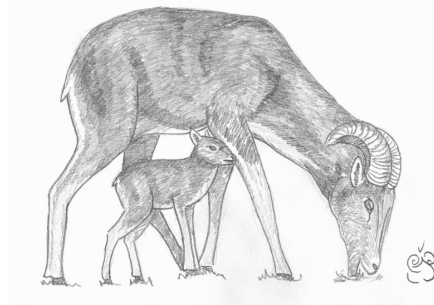
As the domestication of sheep spread out from the Green Crescent, these tame flocks of sheep would have almost certainly come in contact with, and bred with another local species of wild sheep, *Ovis ammon*.

Ovis ammon
ram and
(below) ewe
with lamb



Ovis ammon rams are more evenly brown than those of *O. musimon* and their horns are if anything, even bigger. They too have short stumpy tails and pale almost white rumps and bellies. The ewes are also horned and often the horns of *O. ammon* ewes are more developed and stronger than those of *O. musimon*.

Some scientists have reclassified *O. ammon* as *Ovis orientalis* as they have reclassified *O. musimon* as *Ovis*



orientalis orientalis or *Ovis aries orientalis*. Indeed if we define a species as a group of animals that could potentially interbreed with other members of the same group, then *O. aries* and *O. musimon* may just be sub species of the same species, which would indicate that *O. ammon* was another branch of the same species. The reason why they were not originally classified as one species was because they differ a little in appearance and greatly in geography, so wild members of each species could not interbreed simply because they are so far apart nowadays.

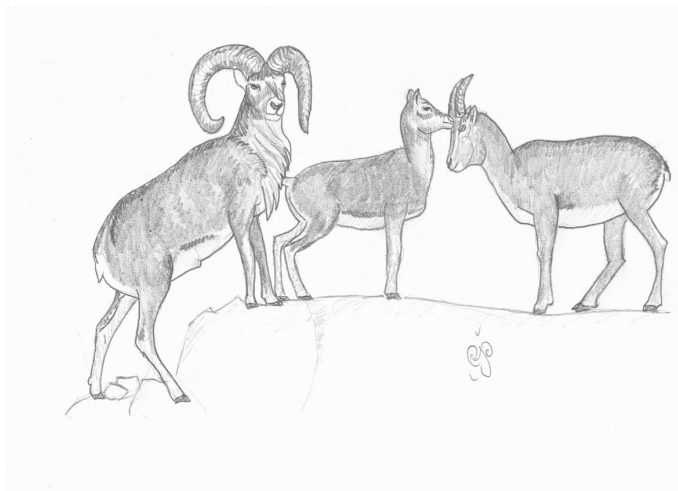
Modern distribution of *Ovis ammon*

The modern distribution of the species *O. ammon* is in higher, mountainous parts of Central Asia, but in prehistoric times much of Asia would have accommodated the species as the Ice Cap moved north at the end of the Ice Age. As sheep farming moved east or north from its roots in Green Crescent, more and more argali sheep genes would have been introduced and as those sheep farmers moved west into what is now Northern Europe, *O. ammon* genes would have dominated their genes more than those of *O. musimon* in Southern Europe giving distinctly different features to those breeds in the south of Europe.



All groups of people who domesticated sheep tended to breed sheep with smaller horns and so all species of *Ovis aries* tend today to have smaller horns than those of wild sheep, but the progression of breeds of sheep being moved into Southern Europe were much finer horned than those moving north through Asia. Eventually our ancestors in Europe were breeding sheep, which were completely without horns or polled, where as the ancient tribes that crossed into Northern Europe from Asia, favoured sheep that were horned in both male and female.

Perhaps at this point I should introduce you to a new bloodline of argali sheep, the Punjab Argali *Ovis vignei*.



***Ovis vignei* the Punjab argali**

O. vignei is closely related to *O. ammon*, with horns in both sexes and only the lambs are polled at birth. Brown coated like *O. ammon*, with a white belly *O. vignei* is only really differentiated by two features, it is slightly larger than *O. ammon* and the males have a long haired mane like that of a lion, it is not so much a beard as it does not grow from the chin as goats beards tend to, but forms under it on the throat and chest.

Only in *O. aries* has the coarse outer hair of the coat been almost entirely replaced by the finer, softer inner hair or wool, but still we see the kempier hairs of

the outer coat appearing in some of the hill breeds and indeed in some hill breeds, we sometimes see the coarse hairs of a mane perhaps of *Ovis vignei* appearing with age, in particular breeds such Swaledales, Scottish Black faced, Rough Fells, Herdwicks, Lonks and Whitefaced Woodlands.

How strange it is then to think that all breeds of sheep originated in the Middle East, but that some also have ancestors that came from the Punjab, especially when we think of these breeds as quintessentially British! But then we must remind ourselves that all white people have evolved from black Africans, so is this as hard to believe as all that?

Philip Onions

Stock for Sale or Wanted

Jo Taylor in Lakenheath, Suffolk has two nice shearling rams for sale but needs some new blood in her flock. Is anyone willing to exchange a ram? The shearlings are Christmas Hill Hobbit UK226903 00193 and CH Horcrux UK226903 00194. Full pedigrees can be accessed via the Combined flock book. Contact details: Jo Taylor 07733 258494 or email johannataylor@btconnect.com.

Judith Hawkhead in North Yorkshire has an RBST registered shearling ram for sale (W11910) from her Glebethorn flock. Contact: 01347 824534 or e-mail: judith.hawkhead@york.ac.uk

Registered tup for sale - Keresforth Ronnie, born 2010 and first prize winner in the tup lamb class at Hope Show that year. He's a handsome, virile chap and very placid, but having sired almost all our flock he needs new horizons. Ronnie's sire was a James Gill ram - and we know he has some of the best! I also have two shearling tups which look promising but which are surplus to our requirements. Both are sired by Ronnie. I can email pictures of all tups and can deliver by arrangement. Call Peter Harkness on 07970-850573 or email peter.harkness@pmh.uk.com

New Supporters Group

We have recently set up the Rare Breed Survival Trust Peak District Supporters Group where we are looking to meet new people, share ideas and create a network of information for our members. We meet in Bakewell on the third Thursday of the month and our recent activities include a talk on rare breed cattle and a trip to the Chatsworth Estate Farm. Our first autumn meeting is a trip to the farm at JCB on Thursday 19th September. Please could pass our details to your members in the High Peak/ Derbyshire area.

Anyone interested in finding out more information on the group or wishing to

attend the farm trip at JCB, please contact me on g.gosney@hotmail.co.uk or 07708 560238.

Gemma Gosney

Defra has announced that in future we shall be able to report sheep movements on line. The database which underpins the system will also allow you to keep your Holding Register electronically. The operators, South Western Business Processes UK Ltd., will provide a paper service for those who cannot use the electronic arrangements. The new system is planned to start in April 2014.

C O N T A C T D E T A I L S

Chairman: Paul Dixon

C/o William Sykes & Son, 38 Huddersfield Road,
Holmfirth, West Yorks HD9 3JH
Phone: 01484 683543, mobile: 07720 765094,
e-mail: PaulDixon@whitefacedwoodland.co.uk

Vice Chairman: Rob Ford

Parkside, Park Road, Leek, Staffs ST13 8JT
Phone: 01538 398290,
e-mail: RobFord@whitefacedwoodland.co.uk

Treasurer: Karen Dowey

Pikenaze Farm, Woodhead, Glossop, Derbyshire
SK13 1JD Phone: 07787 241960

Secretary & Membership: Rachel Godschalk

Plover Hall, Gilmonby, Barnard Castle Co
Durham DL12 9LU Phone: 07962 152242;
e-mail:
RachelGodschalk@whitefacedwoodland.co.uk

Newsletter Editor: Ann Godschalk

Plover Hall, Gilmonby, Barnard Castle, Co.
Durham DL12 9LU Phone 01833 628130, e-
mail: AnnGodschalk@whitefacedwoodland.co.uk

Committee Members:

Neville Belfield, 69 London Road, Macclesfield,
Cheshire SK11 7RL Phone: 01625 425426

Jeff Dowey, Pikenaze Farm, Woodhead, Glossop,
Derbyshire SK13 1JD Phone: 01457 861577

James Gill, 6 Green Acres, Hoyland, Barnsley,
Yorks S74 0HL Phone: 01226 743663

John Jones, Cefn Gwyn Farm, Aberangell,
Machynlleth, Powys SY20 9QG
e-mail: johnjonesbenjamin@yahoo.co.uk

Philip Onions, Keer Falls Forest Farm,
Arkholme, Carnforth, Lancs LA6 1AP Phone:
01524 221019, e-mail: philip@keerfalls.co.uk

Paul Thorp, Stott Hall Farm, Rishworth, Sowerby
Bridge, Yorks HX6 4QY Phone: 07712 232087

Tessa Wigham, Riggshield Farm, Irthington,
Carlisle, Cumbria CA6 4PS Phone: 01228
675304, e-mail: Wighamtessa@aol.com

Chris Wray, Westfield House, Marton Road,
Gargrave, N Yorks BD23 3NL Phone: 01756
749303 e-mail: wray.westfield@googlemail.com