



2020 SPRING ICHO GAZETTE

International Curly Horse Organization

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SPRING GAZETTE 2020

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Annabelle Keller and Bearpaw's
Bonita, ICHO # 2116-D

Greetings ICHO members and friends! I hope this gazette finds you well and healthy. Just this past week, we started to open our farm up. Above is young Annabelle Keller, leading Bearpaw's Bonita, through the spring grasses for the first time in three months. What a reunion to place hands on a Curly horse again! Our gazette will explore some of the challenges, changes and new normals that you are experiencing on your farms.

Tanea Denault has shared her vaulting program with Curlies as well. And Dr. Mitch Wilkinson shares his travels to study Argentina Curlies.

As we recognize 20 years of growth in ICHO, we are proud of the accomplishments of the registry. **The mission of the International Curly Horse Organization is to preserve, protect, promote, register, and research the Curly Horse and its unique characteristics.**



Happy spring and summer to you, stay safe!

Joanie Henning, ICHO President, and Angel Leggs, ICHO #1263-D

Happy 20 years ICHO!

GAZETTE AD DEADLINE

We now have a new Gazette ad deadline schedule for submitting ads as follows:

WINTER: Dec 15

SPRING: Mar 15

SUMMER: June 15

FALL: Sept 15

Ads that are received after the deadline will be run in the next following issue. Payments must also be made before the deadline. All ads and payment must be sent to the office. Thanks!

ARTICLES- We are always looking for interesting articles for the Gazette. The article could be about training, health tips, an interesting story about a Curly or anything of interest horse related. Please send all articles to the office before the deadlines. Awaken the writer within you!



GAZETTE SCHEDULE

-  **WINTER February**
-  **SPRING May**
-  **SUMMER August**
-  **FALL November**

Submit Ads & Payment to: office@curlyhorses.org

Ad & Payment Deadlines:

Winter Dec 15 Spring Mar 15 Summer Jun 15 Fall Sep 15

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ICHO now offers DNA testing for:

Ancestral only TX A&M	\$25.00
Parentage Only U of KY	\$30.00
CA- (Cerebellar Abiotrophy) VetGen	\$35.00
Genetic DNA Panel Testing	\$99.00

Visit the website for more info or contact the office.

Gazette Ad Specials!

Stallion Station Ad– only \$10.00 per issue, \$40.00 for the year, color ad.

Business Card Ad– only \$10.00 per issue, \$40.00 for the year, color ad

All color Ads at Black and White Prices! All Gaz Color Ad fees reduced!!

Full Page Color \$40.00, 1/2 Pg Color \$20.00, 1/4 Pg Color \$10.00, Classified \$10.00

Submitting ads: *Pay for ads online on our webpage– <http://ichocurlyhorses.org>

All ads must be copy ready in word doc format or jpg, png. Since we have reduced our prices we need the ads in ready to print format. For photos png is preferred since it has the best resolution. We can no longer accept pdf format because it does not insert clearly for the Gazette editing process.

All Ads must be sent to the office with payment. Ads also appear on the ICHO webpage.

Thanks! office@curlyhorses.org

Gazette editor– Joan Henning



Our members respond, "How has the 2020 COVID 19 pandemic affected you and your Curly horse?"

The Covid-19 crisis has taught me many lessons. The two most strong and consistent lessons I have learned are those of patience and flexibility. During mid-February, I started to look forward to Spring Break and the amount of uninterrupted time during that week I could spend with my favorite American Curly Horse, Summer. My thoughts would then drift to the end of my senior year of high school, when I would have time to spend with my horse before we headed off to college together.

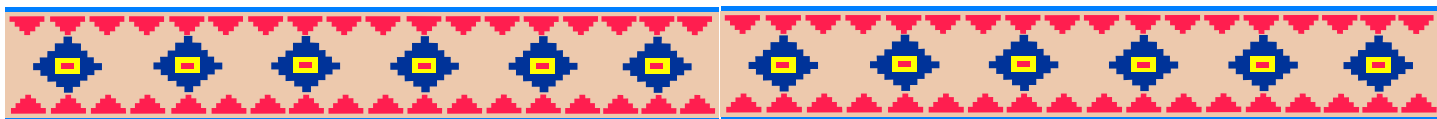
I have learned that although I have not been able to see Summer consistently throughout this pandemic, I have thought about her non-stop, and am grateful she has received wonderful care. I have consistently planned for our future adventures together throughout this challenging time. As a freshman heading to the University of Findlay in August, I will double major in English Equestrian Studies and Equine Business Management. I will be able to ride my horse each day, something that is significantly different than during Covid-19 impacted days.

My goal is that as we transition back into more consistent schedules and a sense of normalcy, I remain forever appreciative and grateful for the opportunity to connect with my horse, learn from her, and continue to grow together as we strive to reach future goals.

Julia Hoffman and Rock Robbins Summer Trouble



Bunny Reveglia on Covid-19. It has not affected my daily life too much except for lack of somethings like toilet paper. LOL Fortunately we have a good supply of hay for the horses and our supply store is nearby for oats and pellets, dog food and hay if needed. We do wear masks when out and I have been making them for friends and family. The ICHO office has seen some slowing down for registrations and transfers, but memberships are still coming in and genetic testing is still ongoing. All the labs we use are still testing samples. Our vet and farrier are still available for our Cushings pony and his special needs, so we are thankful for that. Everyone wears masks when here and so do we. Stay safe everyone.



Covid 19 responses continued....

Good morning from France, we hope every body is well.

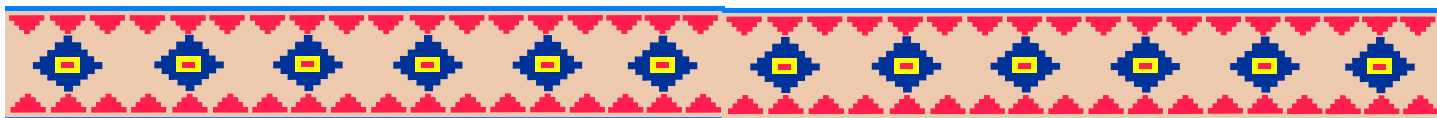
Here some news and pictures from the French curlies from Haras Heiligenmatt during this bad time.

Since march 17, we are in confinement in France because of covid 19. We are fortunate to have our stud farm with a career and so be able to work our curlies. The riding schools are closed. We are surrounded by the forest but its access is prohibited. In spring it is so nice to gallop in the forest. Perhaps will it be allowed after the 11th may.

All equestrian competitions are cancelled. Our daughter Camille is sad not to be able to participate in the championship of France in July although her curly Vitiaz, below, is qualified just like last year. It is the best place to make curlies known in France and theirs qualities because many riders go there. We hope next year will be a better year for all of us.

Best regards,

Sandra Guillemote :)



More Covid 19 responses...

Here at Cozy Nook Curly's, we have been dealing with the Covid-19 issue and recent lay off with much needed work, fencing cleaning up our mountain side. Things that typically take much longer due to working a regular job away from the Farm. Thankfully with planning in advance I usually have all my annual hay in the barn each hay season, so feeding is not an issue for us at this time and things are pretty normal (actually would love to be home 24/7 doing things for the farm if it was financially do-able) , other than limited income from the lay off and staying closer to home. Hoping once we are caught up, this stay at home time will allow for even more riding. These are challenging times, and I do Pray for everyone and their safety and Health. Wishing everyone the best of these circumstances,

Sheryl D'Uva/Cozy Nook Curly's



<http://www.edacurly.fr>

<http://www.ecole-des-sens.com/>



Covid19 responses continued...

The restrictions in Michigan have prohibited riders from accessing their horses unless in emergency situations. Horses can be cared for by barn operators and essential staff, so that means no boarders or riders! As a frequent rider, this time has been devastating! As a frequent show participant, this has felt like the end of the world. What do I do with myself instead of ride and practice my sport that gives me life?

When our Michigan executive orders first came down, it felt like a total loss. I thought about the amount of money I poured into professional lessons this past winter, feeling like it was a total waste. I thought about my curly's muscle mass, imagining that she might look like a giraffe when this is over. I thought about my brand new dressage show coat, imported from the Netherlands, that is going to sit in my closet and not see the inside of a dressage ring until possibly 2021. I thought about my goals of riding a new level by the end of the show season, scoffing at the idea.

Then my mom told me to buck up. Sitting here with all kinds of negative feelings about a sport that brings me an incredible amount of joy is no way to spend my quarantine.

So I instead began watching videos and reading articles to ensure that my investment in lessons doesn't go to waste when my seat can finally sit in a saddle again. I ramped up my yoga routine, so when I get back on I can be a better partner for my curly while she regains her muscle. I wore my new dressage coat at home because it's gorgeous and inspires me to still pursue my goals.

Now quarantine doesn't feel like such a huge loss, just a new challenge. My horse career has been full of challenges. Why should this one make me lose all hope?

Jill Simpson and Mocha Baby Twist "Babydoll" ICHO # 1222-D



Vaulting with Curlies The MountainWind Vaulters Coached by Tamea Denault



Mountain Wind Vaulters

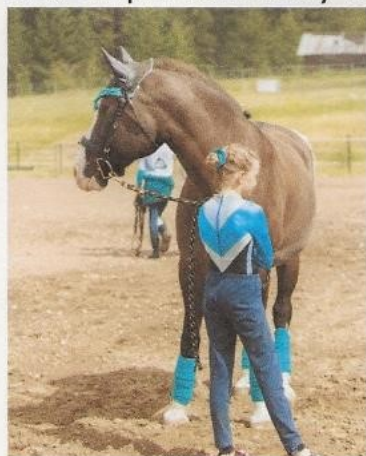
Kegonsa Falls, Washington USA

What does it take to dance on a horse? To feel the horse connect to the vaulter, creating even more lift and energy to each and every move. As with every



Yellow Storm and Keziah, reverse swing

equine sport- the horse is always the other half of the equation (or in our case the other third). Between the lunge, the vaulter and the horse- there is an equal partnership that connects all three creating a team. The horse has to want to be there, they have to want to support and carry the vaulter. If they



DSF Suenami and Anna, is it our turn yet?

understand their job, and the horse understands how important they are to a successful competition (and believe me- they know if it was a good go in the ring), my Curlies will go the extra mile every time. They understand their status in the club (like a herd) and they



DSF Suenami and Lilee, Standing



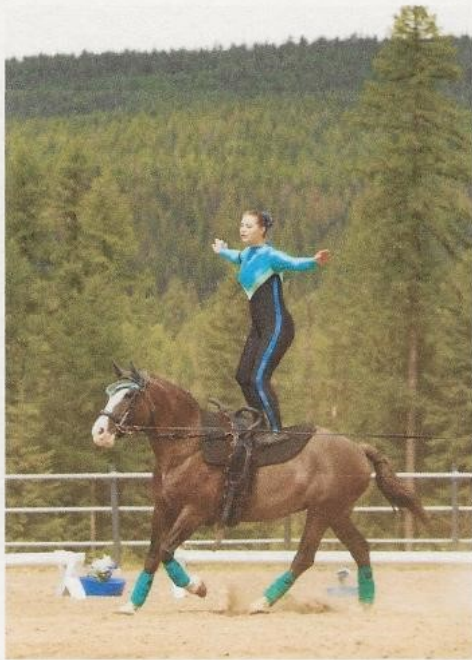
DSF Eclipse and Abby, one of the compulsory exercises, the Flag

Yellow Storm (ABC S-495 ICHO 415-S) a 1994 model is 25 years young this competition season, and is a passported FEI (Federation Equestre Internationale) experienced Vaulting Competitor. She has stepped up to the ring many times, helping out other teams when they have had a horse go lame. As our shortest horse, standing at a hair under 15 hands, she has the biggest heart. She has won many Region and National Championships. Storm was one of the horses featured in Horse Illustrated after our club won the 2001 Trot Team National Championship.

know who their vaulters are. And they can be a bit cranky when they see their vaulters on another horse!



Yellow Storm, all tacked up and ready to go!



DSF Suenami with Ingrid, one of the compulsories, the Stand

DSF Suenami (ICHO 962-D) born in 2006, she is 14 this year and a favorite for Compulsories. Standing at 15' 2", she is our sensitive girl. Sue is always excited about practice and loves to try her hardest. Sue traveled this year to Missouri for the AVA National Championships. She was a big hit there with all her curls, but she said it was very hot!

DSF Eclipse (ICHO 1193-D) born in 2007, she is 13 years old. At 16 hands she is our largest vaulting

Curly. She is still coming into her own and is not sure yet if it is worth all this work!

Vaulting as a competitive sport, has been around since the Roman times. It has been one of the FEI's 10 disciplines since 1983, with the AVA (American Vaulting Association) being founded in 1968. Vaulting is Gymnastics and Dance choreographed to music on a moving horse.

When vaulters start out (competitions are divided up into ability groups rather than age groups), they begin at the walk and work their way up through the trot and then canter. All international



DSF Eclipse with Abby, Freestyle exercise

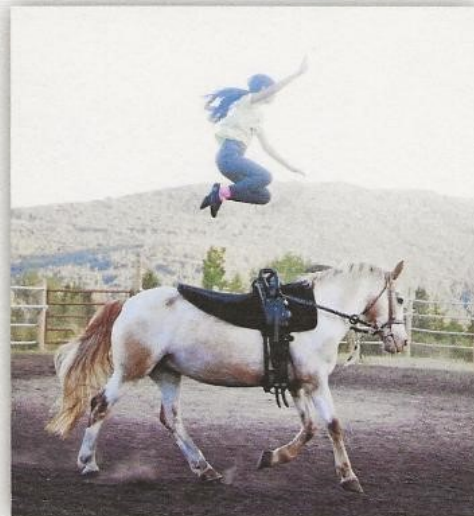
competition is performed at the canter. Vaulting as a modern performance sport, was created in the late 50's-60's. There are three basic classifications; Individual (one person on the horse), pas de deux (pairs), and Squad (or team, with up to 3 people on the horse at any one time). There are two "goes" in the ring: the first one is "Compulsories" and the second is "Freestyle".



DSF Suenami with Shelby, Compulsory exercise, Forward Swing

Depending on your level, during compulsories the vaulter will complete a standard set of exercises for their class.

For the Freestyle go, the vaulter(s) will have a set amount of time to complete a routine with music they have chosen. This routine will be judged on: Harmony with the horse, Variety of



Yellow Storm with Maya, Freestyle exercise, the Jump



Yellow Storm, Everyone likes to get their hair done.

exercises, Choreography, Degree of Difficulty and the horse score (this is based on how well the horse knows it's job, and how well it can carry the exercises of the vaulters).



DSF Suenami, braided and ready to go.

trainers try to get to the finish line too quickly. Our horses last because we always look to the



DSF Suenami, lookin' good.



Copper Billie ABC P-770(F)/ICHO 416-D, at the 2010 Pacific cup CVI/Future Champions with Sara on board from Cascade vaulters. Copper Billie lived from 1988-2018

long term. For instance, we use magnet blankets, massage blankets and stretching for our horses before practice. When we cool out we make sure that the horse is all the way to normal body temperature, and in cold weather we use Irish knit and fleece coolers under their blankets (to be removed

later in the day or the next morning) so that they are able to completely dry out. When needed, they get body work. Like any good athlete we monitor their nutrition, their mind and their physical conditioning. The most important members are the horses!

Argentine Curly Criollo Expedition

By Dr. Mitch Wilkinson

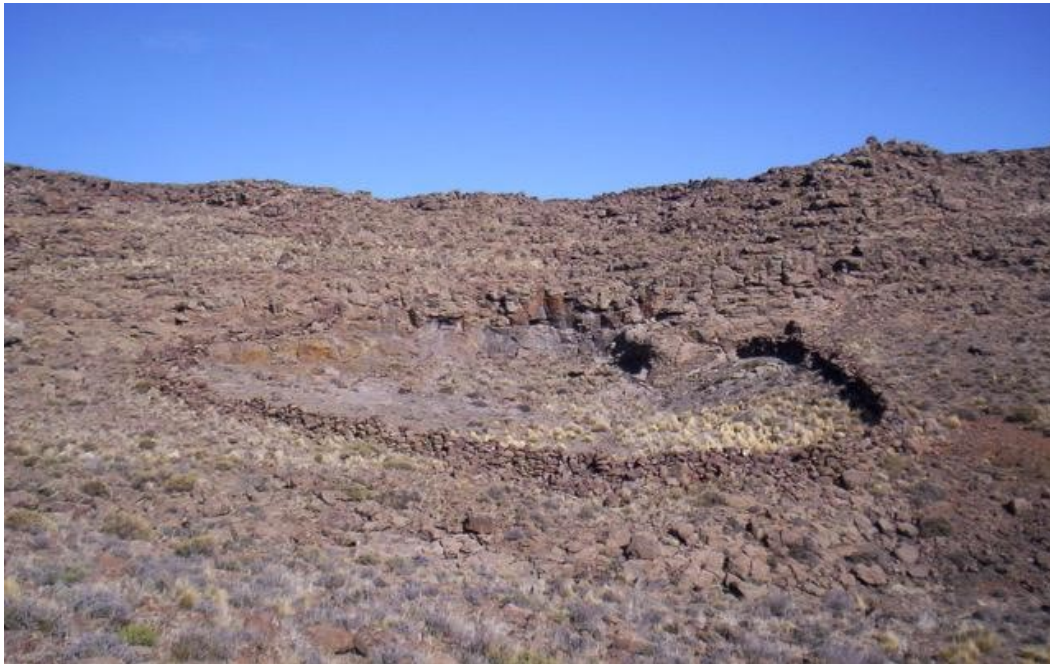
All horses are special and all horses have a fascinating history, but the mysterious curly coated horses around the world have a truly intriguing history and science which I have had the good fortune to be involved with for the past two decades.

I want you to join me on a recent expedition to Patagonia at the invitation of Dr. Gerardo Rodriguez and his wife, Andrea, to gather hair follicle and whole blood samples for analysis by Professor Emeritus, Dr. Gus Cothran at Texas A&M University's Equine Genetics Laboratory under the direction of Dr. Rytis Juris.



We will be going to a remote part of Argentina and staying in the village of Maquinchao in the Rio Negro province of Patagonia. Maquinchao is located near the Somuncura Plateau. This almost completely uninhabited area was declared a National Protected Area by the Argentine government in 1993. The Somuncura Plateau is the home of unique species of plants and animals found nowhere else on earth, and as you have probably already guessed – it is the home of a unique type of wild curly horse. Just to be clear, the gene mutation which causes the distinctive winter curly coat on these Argentine equines is different than the mutations that cause curly coats in North American horses. The two

populations do have a strong Spanish heritage in common, but these wild curly horses of the Somuncura Plateau are unique, rare, and have curly winter coats caused by a different mutation. There is a possibility they are unique to the region and found no other place on earth.



Stone corral on the Somuncura Plateau

Geologists describe the Somuncura Plateau, where these horses live as an “Island of volcanic rock on dry land”. It is approximately 15,000 square Km. It is almost completely uninhabited.

One of the unique animals found on or near the Somuncura Plateau is the guanaco. The guanaco is a medium sized camelid related to the South American llamas and alpacas. It is more distantly related to the Dromedary and Bactrian camels found in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Camels, like horses, began their evolution in North America 35 million years ago. North American camels survived until the more recent geological past, but sadly are now gone. Their extinction in North America is still a mystery like that of the horse. However, four species of camel managed to survive until the present in South America. They are llamas, alpacas, vicunas, and guanacos.



Wild Guanacos

Another animal is a large, flightless bird distantly related to the ostrich and emu. It is called the rhea, and is a native inhabitant to the Somuncura Plateau. In this area, the species of rhea known as Darwin's rhea runs across the volcanic landscape eating grasshoppers and lizards. The gauchos traditionally hunt rheas on horseback with bolas. The rhea is a species native to Patagonia. Both rheas and guanacos share the Somuncura Plateau with the wild horses.



Rheas



Working Gauchos

However, to tell the story of these horses, we must go back several hundred years to the Spanish re-introduction of the horse to South America. In 1535, Don Pedro de Mendoza, the conquistador and governor of the Spanish colony which someday was to become Argentina was given the task by the king of Spain to administer and form a colony within the lands of the La Plata River region claimed by the Spanish crown in central South America. Mendoza's administrative charge included the drainage area of the La Plata River and the new colony of Buenos Aires to which Mendoza brought both work and fine warhorses directly from Spain. Initially there were around 100 horses imported. The stallions were especially fine animals, which came directly from breeding farms in Cadiz, Spain. After half a dozen years of mistreatment of the native people by Spanish colonists, Buenos Aires was destroyed and burned in 1540 by indigenous tribes.



Pedro de Mendoza

The Spanish fled the area and left somewhere between 12 to 45 horses behind. Records do not indicate what type of horses were abandoned. Some may have been common workhorses, while others may have been fine warhorses and gentlemen's mounts. It is thought they were probably a mixture of both. Under such favorable conditions on the pampas, the escaped horses adapted and reproduced portentously. The descendants formed herds of hundreds of thousands of wild horses known as "baguales".

The Spanish did not return until 1580. In the 40-year absence of the Spanish, two remarkable things happened to the abandoned horses. They multiplied and some developed curly winter coats. Current studies of undisturbed wild horse populations in Australia show that a herd of feral horses under favorable environmental conditions have about a 25% yearly growth rate. A very conservative yearly

growth rate of 20% would mean that if 50 horses were left behind in Buenos Aires in 1540, the number would have grown to 91 individuals by 1543 and 369 individuals by 1550. Because of the exponential growth pattern ($P = P_0 e^{rt}$), by 1580, forty years later, the number of horses is estimated to be the thousands. Even if only 12 horses were left by the Spanish, there could have been up to 36,000 free roaming horses upon their return. This is exactly what the second wave of Spanish conquistadors observed upon their return in 1580, but something unusual was also observed. The Spanish observed that some of the feral horses had developed a curly coat. Horses with curly winter coats were unknown in Spain.



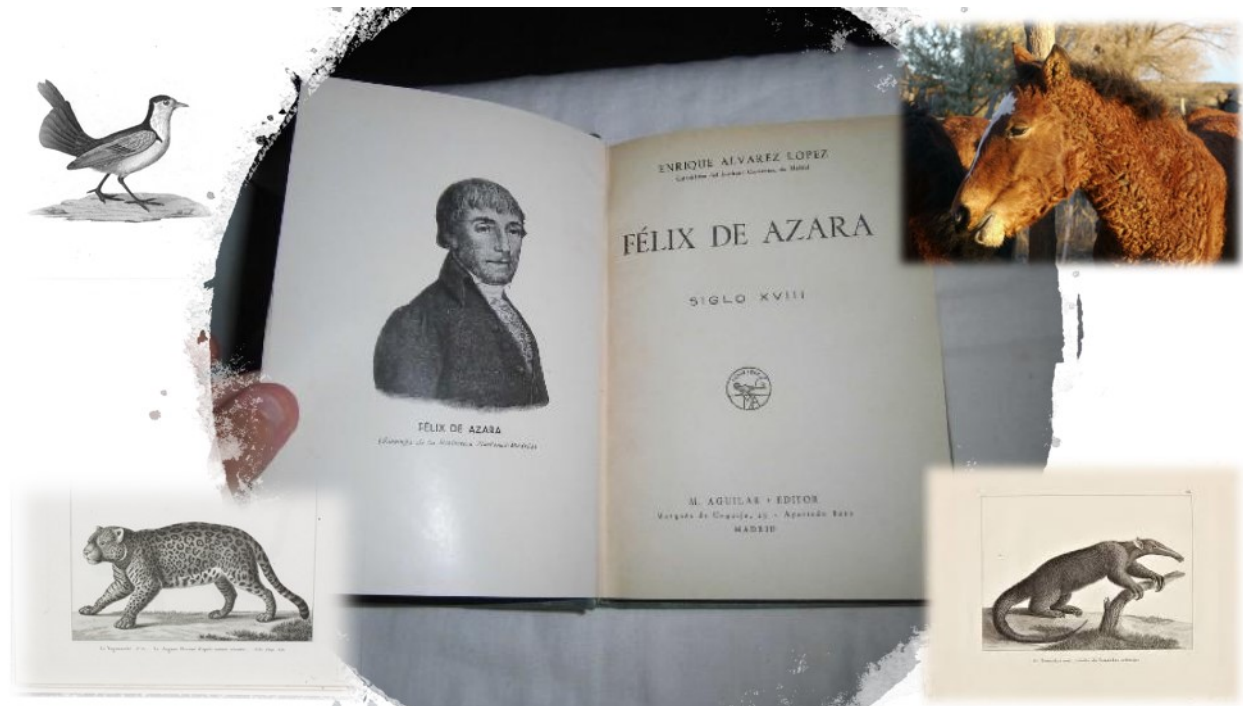
Curly Coated Argentine Criollo of the Somuncura Plateau

The term “Criollo” was applied to humans and animals. It originally referred to individuals of pure-bred Spanish ancestry born in the Americas. With the return of the Spanish to the Rio Plata area, new horses from Spain were imported and these were mixed with the now feral Spanish horses to become the Criollo horse of South America. Both in the wild and in domestication, Criollo horses thrived in Argentina, Uruguay, and Southern Brazil.

Records show that in 1739, the Spanish explorers Cabrera and Solanet wrote in their journals that they had observed curly coated wild horses mixed within the wild horse populations of Argentina and Brazil. This was two centuries after Spanish re-introduction of the horse to South America.

Forty years later, in 1781, about the time the United States was fighting England for its independence, a Spanish military engineer and naturalist named Felix de Azara was assigned to the Rio Plata area. Azara was to spend 20 years in South America, from 1781 to 1801. During this time, he extensively explored this part of South America from Buenos Aires.

Azara's excellent drawings of plants and animals along with his written accounts were some of the first literary works to reach the general public about the wonders of South America. In 1801, his observations were published in Paris in book form under the title "Quadrupeds de Paraguay". Within the pages of the book, he describes his observations of curly coated horses seen within of some of the wild herds he witnessed.



Quadrupeds de Paraguay

Eighty years later in 1886, Charles Darwin in his publication "The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication" cited Azara's observations of horses. Darwin used the curly coated Spanish Criollo horses as observed by Azara to be a classic example of adaption by natural selection.

Darwin reasoned that a random mutation occurred within the feral population that resulted in a type of horse favored by natural selection to thrive in this New World environment. Darwin was undoubtedly correct. On Darwin's two voyages to South America, he traveled extensively by horseback. Disappointed, he never observed curly coated horses in wild herds. Had they disappeared?

In 2010, a curly horse breeder in Texas, Angie Gaines, was contacted by Dr. Gerardo Rodriguez about curly coated horses he had found and started breeding. Dr. Rodriguez is a former military officer and a veterinarian. He had captured the original horses on the Somuncura Plateau.

Gerardo was introduced to curly horses by an Indian gentleman, Enrique Piehincura, who was living an isolated existence near a water hole on the Somuncura plateau. Unfortunately, due to global warming, the water has disappeared. ----- Enrique was forced to move and the fate of the wild horses that included curly horses is unknown. They seem to have disappeared into the Somuncura.



Enrique Piehincura's Home on the Somuncura Plateau

In collecting samples of blood and hair follicles, there were challenges. Some of the horses had been handled quite a bit while others were quite fearful. Thanks to the excellent horse handling skill of the gauchos present, all the curly horses were sampled without injury. As you can see, there were some intense moments.



Some Curly Criollo Horses were tame and some were not!

Raw blood samples were placed in thermos bottles and shipped by international carriers to Texas A&M University Equine Genetics lab for analysis.

At the time of the writing of this article the gene mutation that creates the curly winter coat in these Patagonian curly horses has not yet been identified.

In early 2020, a preliminary dendrogram was produced using the PHYLIP analysis Program. PHYLIP stands for **Phylogeny Inference Package**. This package of 35 programs was developed by the University of Washington for the purpose of “inferring” the genetic relationships between animals and constructing genetic relationship trees or dendrograms. In this case, 15 microsatellite markers were used to compare the Patagonian curly horses to other known breeds. The results from the Patagonian curly horses were totally unexpected. The limited number of individual horses sampled hampered the results, but these preliminary results show that instead of these horses being related to the iconic horses of Southern Spain like the Andalusian and the Lusitano, they were related to the smaller Celtic type horses located in Northern Iberian Peninsula. The Patagonian curly horses were genetically



Galician Horse of Northern Spain

Current efforts are being made to ask the Argentine government's help in preserving what is left of the unique curly coated horses of the Somuncura Plateau. Let's hope they are successful.

A U-Tube video of this expedition is available at the following link:

<https://youtu.be/okz8By3Evps>

About the Author

Dr. Mitch Wilkinson has been a lifelong horse enthusiast. After receiving a bachelor's degree in chemistry and professional dental degrees, he earned a post-doctoral master's degree from Baylor University in biology. Currently, Dr. Wilkinson is Chairman of the Curly Mustang Association and Vice- Chair of the International Curly Horse Organization's Research Department and the current coordinator of research for the Sulphur Springs Mustang Registry.



Andrea and Gerardo Rodriguez and Dr. Wilkinson





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