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EXMOOR PONIES: SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

A NATURAL HISTORY

SECOND EDITION

Sue Baker

with a Foreword by Desmond Morris

The moors and commons of Exmoor National Park are home to most of the free-living Exmoor Pony population. Here is an animal living in relative obscurity which holds the secrets of Nature's design for a wild pony and is the key to understanding the history of ponies in Britain.

Exmoor Ponies: Survival of the Fittest by Sue Baker takes the reader on an expedition back through time to discover the prehistoric British Hill Pony and explore where it came from. Tracing the history of ponies on Exmoor, she assesses whether the Exmoor Pony is a surviving population of this early coloniser. The reader then accompanies her on a tour to Exmoor, Cornwall, Cumbria and Scotland to meet groups of free-living Exmoors. The book also explores how they survive unaided by Man; the partnerships they form with humans in domestic circumstances; their important role in managing nature reserves. Finally, the future conservation of Exmoor Ponies in their natural habitat is considered.

Exmoor Ponies: Survival of the Fittest is the culmination of the author's total fascination with the Exmoor Pony. Copiously illustrated with photographs and exquisite line drawings, *Exmoor Ponies: Survival of the Fittest* tells the story of a truly remarkable survivor. This second edition has been updated with new photographs wherever possible and includes a fresh look at the Exmoor herds today, the genetic status of the breed and the challenges of the future.

Sue Baker (néé Gates) was born in London in 1953 and moved with her family to Somerset at the age of nine. Educated at Ilminster Girls' Grammar School, she then went to Leeds University where she gained a First Class Honours degree in Botany and Zoology. This was followed by a three-year research study of the ecology of free-living Exmoor Ponies for which she was awarded a Doctorate in Biological Sciences in 1980. With a complete change of career, she spent the next ten years as a marketing manager, continuing her studies of the history and origins of British ponies and writing *Exmoor Ponies: Survival of the Fittest* in her spare time.

In 1994 Sue and husband Ian moved from the New Forest to Exmoor, a few miles from Dulverton. At the time of this 2nd Edition, they have six Exmoor Ponies, some living at home and some living free.



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Charles Miles, Church Warden of Berkhamsted photographed in 1898 with one of his children and an Acland Exmoor Pony



William Crockford (right) and Bill Western at Dunster Show in the 1920s



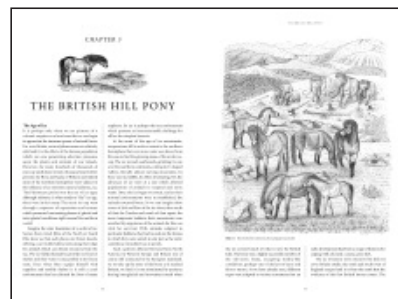
Isolated by inhospitable conditions, a different type of wild horse had to evolve.



Photo from the Etherington Collection showing the Acland herd around 1900 with two "grey" individuals



Mare and foal fleeing on Winsford Hill



Example of a double page spread.