

Spirit of the SHETLAND PONY

Heidi M. Sands

Standing inches high, when all our other native ponies stand hands, the Shetland has guts and drive – size never stops this little powerhouse. Whether in harness, flying along in a scurry competition or on a lead rein with the tiniest of child riders safely in the saddle, this most northerly of Britain's native breeds never fails to impress.

Bred on the crofts of their native islands the Shetland pony was both necessity and workhorse for his owners. Turning out as weight carrier this little fellow carried home many a load from shore to village, becoming a valued member of his household.

Exported and bred all over the world the Shetland pony is one of the most recognisable ponies on the planet. Coiffured for the show ring, vying for the top awards at the prestigious Royal Highland Show he shows himself to the best of his ability, mane and tail flying, handlers exhibiting for all they are worth.

Today all these qualities make the Shetland the perfect package, and with over sixty fascinating and heart-warming images, *Spirit of the Shetland Pony* captures the essence of these beautiful creatures.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in rural Lancashire Heidi Sands has spent the last 20 years living and working on Speyside in north east Scotland. Her writing career took off in 1995. Contributing more than 300 illustrated articles to UK wide magazines with equine, rural or agricultural themes, she studied art and design, including photographic studies, at Preston Polytechnic and Blackpool and Fylde College in the 1980s. Farming in partnership with her husband, Heidi's interests include native ponies and fell walking in the Lake District.

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SPIRIT OF THE SHETLAND PONY



Smartly turned out handlers complement their charges.



Sometimes ponies and riders need helpers as here at Newtonmore in the Highlands.



Young competitors are always encouraged in the showing.



The breed throws some lovely colour combinations.
Opposite page:
The business of showing can turn into more of a gathering of friends.

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Example of a double-page spread.



In several inches of snow a rug and a friend are good allies.



The escape artist.