

# WILD STALLION WHISPERING

Dawn Westcott

The real-life story of a wild and tempestuous Exmoor colt foal who was rounded up from his moorland home and – after being weaned and multiple hot branded – found himself unwanted and facing a bleak future. He was offered a lifeline by Dawn who faced the formidable challenge of taming him. This is the story of how 'Bear' becomes a magnificent registered stallion – taking the showing world by storm, winning two world championships in horse agility – and how he conquers his fears and learns to build a bond of trust with Dawn.

The book is a candid account of the highs and lows of their journey – how they both strive to learn and find the resilience to overcome adversity to succeed – with amusing anecdotes throughout. It offers fascinating insights into the characters and behaviours of stallions, the wild Exmoor ponies of Exmoor National Park and their quest for survival. There are invaluable tips for empathetic trust-based horse handling – including backing to saddle – with a practical section detailing the Core Connection Warm-up Exercises that Dawn uses to establish the foundation skills for liberty, agility and ridden work. The book explores riding bitless and the ethics of competition. It will appeal to people interested in better understanding the equine mind and developing trust and connection with any horse or pony. Most of all, it is the captivating story of a charismatic wild-born Exmoor stallion that will resonate with anyone who loves horses.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

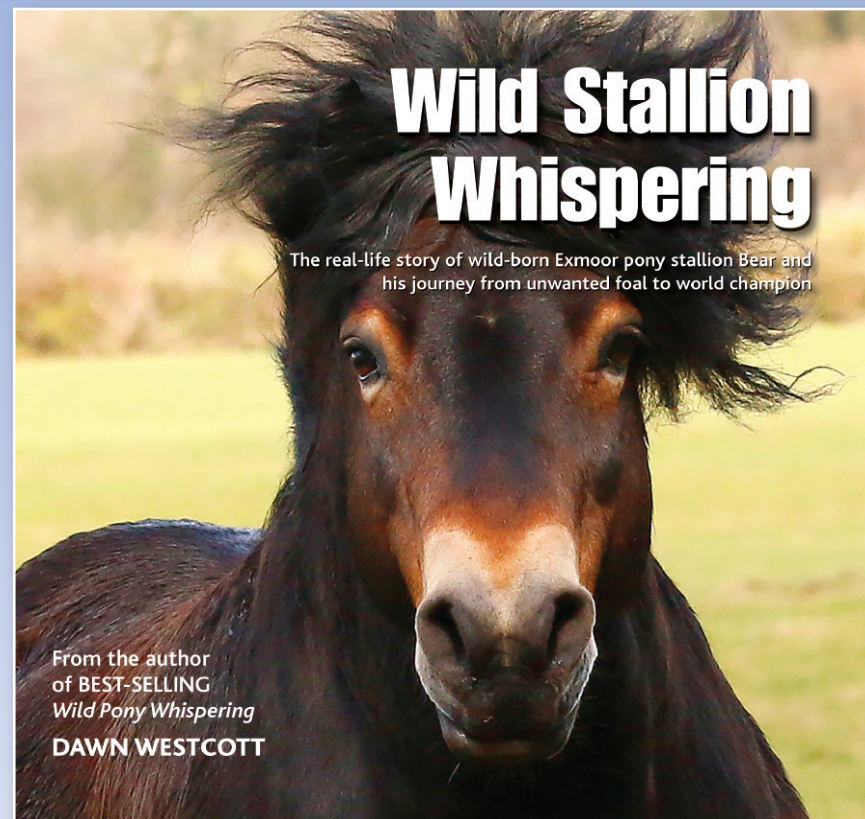


Dawn Westcott is the author of best-selling *Wild Pony Whispering* which tells the heart-rending story of rescued orphaned wild foal Monsieur Chapeau who highlights the plight of the moorland Exmoor ponies. After a career in glossy magazine publishing in London, a move to the West Country re-ignited Dawn's childhood passion for the wild ponies of Exmoor and, after marrying Exmoor farmer Nick Westcott in 2008, the couple re-established the family's ancient Herd 11, one of the three herds originally founded by Nick's great-grandfather and his two brothers early in the twentieth century. The Westcott family have lived and farmed on Exmoor for over 500 years. The couple are co-founders of the Moorland Exmoor Foal Project and the Moorland Exmoor Pony Breeders Group. Along with pony training, writing and being a farmer's wife, Dawn is a portrait artist and Reiki Master.

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Imprints: Halsgrove, Ryelands, Halstar, PiXZ Books & Halswood Journals. Halsgrove® is a registered trademark. Copyright© 2016

# HALSGROVE TITLE INFORMATION



**Format:** *Hardback, 144 pages, 214x230mm, including over 150 illustrations*

**Price:** *£14.99*

**ISBN:** *978 0 85704 293 4*

**Imprint:** *Halsgrove*

**Published:** *August 2016*



Halsgrove Publishing, Halsgrove House, Ryelands Business Park, Bagley Road,  
Wellington, Somerset TA21 9PZ Tel: 01823 653777 Fax: 01823 216796  
[www.halsgrove.com](http://www.halsgrove.com) e-mail: [sales@halsgrove.com](mailto:sales@halsgrove.com)

# WILD STALLION WHISPERING



Above: Bear showing the interactive role stallions love to play with their foals

Left: Magnificent Bear



Above: Bear demonstrating his liberty agility skills

Below left: Winning the NPS Gold Medal Rosette Below right: Bear navigating a liberty weave



Example of a double-page spread.

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It takes enormous courage for a horse to let you in.

Below when you turn a horse loose, you are left with the truth.

**Authenticity and Courage**

Building a successful horse/human relationship for agility therefore requires a willingness to be authentic. For a lot of people – including myself – this takes a degree of self-development and personal adjustment – and honesty.

For the horse, it takes enormous courage to allow a human into his heart and mind, and to reveal that he does indeed understand you, and is making the conscious choice to engage in the activities requested. Because through taking part, the horse reveals himself. Concealing and therefore protecting these aspects of his true self from humans is very much part of the horse's survival instinct. So despite knowing each other well, Bear and I both still had an enormous amount of personal development to do – and trust to build – in order to progress at horse agility. I was asking a wild-born Friesian stallion to open up his heart and mind to me – and work as a willing partner, at times loose and free of restraint.

There were some lessons to be learned and some truths to be faced if I wanted to be good at this exciting new equestrian sport.

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