



# The Newfoundland Pony



## Quick Facts

### History

As long as there have been Newfoundlanders, ponies have been assisting them in their labours. As people have struggled to survive inhospitable weather, harsh conditions and a changing society, so the ponies have struggled to adapt to the changes brought on by a modern, mechanized world.

The pony breeds brought over to Newfoundland with early settlers that primarily influenced the development of the Newfoundland Pony were the Exmoor, the Dartmoor and the New Forest. Significant influence also came from the Galloway, Connemara, Welsh Mountain and Highland Ponies. Individual ponies today can bear a resemblance to one or more of these ancestors. The pony has evolved into a breed type and reflects the historical needs for an all round, multi-purpose work animal in the North Atlantic island environment.

The pony that has emerged is perfectly suited for the rough Newfoundland environment. These hard working and loyal ponies hauled firewood, timber, kelp and rocks. They transported their owners by cart, sleigh, saddle and wagon in times before the car.

Perhaps the best attributes of the Newfoundland Pony are their good temperament, their intelligence and their ability to survive a harsh environment and subsistence conditions. They can withstand severe winters due primarily to their thick winter coat and low set tail.

In 1935, it was estimated that there were just over 9,000 Newfoundland Ponies on the island. Healthy numbers existed into the late 1970s and early 1980s. After that, the population dropped dramatically due to a number of factors. These included mechanization, by-laws restricting free roaming and the encouragement of castration. As a result, thousands of unwanted Newfoundland Ponies went to the meat trade and ended up on dinner tables in Belgium and France.

As of June 2005, there were 307 Newfoundland Ponies registered with the Newfoundland Pony Society.

### The Newfoundland Pony Society

Founded in 1979 and incorporated in 1981, this Society has worked hard for the preservation of the Newfoundland Pony in a number of ways. It has established a registry to record Newfoundland Ponies, distributed information and publications about the Pony and successfully promoted the Heritage Animals Act of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Society was recognized as the organization to oversee the Newfoundland Pony under the legislation.

The HAA designation order authorizes the Society to define those characteristics that identify the Newfoundland Pony, to maintain the legal Registry, to advise governments regarding the future of the pony, to be involved in the restriction of pony exports for non-legitimate purposes and to support the needs of the pony in many other ways.

Please visit our Newfoundland Pony Website at:  
[www.newfoundlandpony.com](http://www.newfoundlandpony.com)