

Winter 2022

The Journal of RMLA



RMLA
Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association

Welcome to RMLA!

--- Mission Statement ---

The mission of the Association shall be to educate the members and the public as to the breeding, raising, care and use of llamas and alpacas.

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About the Journal

The Journal of RMLA[®] is a quarterly publication of the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association (RMLA). The RMLA Journal Committee and the Board of Directors reserve the right to select and edit all articles and advertisements submitted.

The information in The Journal is not intended to be a substitute for qualified professional advice. Readers are encouraged to consult with their own veterinarian, accountant or attorney regarding any questions concerning their animals or business operations.

RMLA is not responsible for any losses resulting from readers' failure to heed this caution. The views expressed by the authors of articles are not necessarily those of the Rocky Mountain Llama and Alpaca Association, Inc., its officers, directors or members.

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Cover Photo: Linda Schlenker’s alpacas, Robin and Barry, getting ready for the Veterans Day Parade.

From The Editor

Kathy Stanko, Editor, rmlaeditor@gmail.com

I like Winter. It is a time to rest, relax, reflect, and plan for what is next. In this issue we have a number of articles about the RMLA events that have occurred during the past few months. Enjoy the articles and the stories and perhaps think about community events you could plan or participate in. And these articles are full of tips of things that work, or not, as well as insights to what it takes to get yourself and your animals ready for an event.



Agritourism is big business and it is growing. It is the new name for what many of us have been doing for years. Perhaps by re-labelling what we are already doing, we can expand our market and the camelid industry as a whole. And, if agritourism is something you are involved in please share your story with all of us.

Learning to dye your fiber using the sun and plants in your area is fun and full of surprises, like a yellow flower might produce a red dye! We have an article to get you connected with this art. You will also find additional articles on fiber.

Are you ready to start hiking or packing with a llama? Please check out the fantastic articles we have, including a trip to an ancient place and what to consider when looking for a pack llama. Not all llamas are packers.

Thank you to everyone who has submitted an article for this Journal and to all of you who read and learn from the many topics included.

Journal Submission Dates, Ad Rates & Specifications

Issue	Submission Deadline	Publication Date
Spring	February 28	March 31
Summer	May 31	June 30
Fall	August 31	September 30
Winter	November 30	December 31

Ad Type	Width x Height	Member Rate	Non-Member
Business Card	3.5"x2"	\$ 7	\$ 15
¼ page horiz.	7.5"x2"	\$ 12	\$ 24
¼ page vert.	3.5"x4.5"	\$ 12	\$ 24
Half Page	7.5" x 5"	\$ 24	\$ 48
Full Page	7.5"x 10"	\$ 39	\$ 78

Ad rates are quoted per issue. Lock in the current rate by purchasing an ad for four consecutive issues and receive a 5th ad for free. You may change your ad once during the year.

To submit articles, ads or photo:

- All submissions go to rmlaeditor@gmail.com
- Documents in MS Word format
- Camera ready ads as a pdf or jpg file. **NOTE:** What you send is what we publish.
- Images/photos as .jpeg (.jpg) or .tiff files. Photo from a camera or phone are sufficient. Please check the background and lighting. RMLA will only crop for fit and/or enhance the lighting.

Instructions for advertising payment:

You may pay for your ad at RMLA.com using a credit card. Payment and ad copy must be received prior to submission deadline. See the table above for dates.

President's Message

Welcome 2023! Happy New Year to our much appreciated membership!

2023! So how does that *ring* with you? It is a reminder to me that I need to get up and get going as I still have lots to do. There are wonderful fun things to learn and see and many valuable things to appreciate.

The new Board completed its first meeting a couple weeks ago. The *seasoned* Board members generally take extra time to bring up our newly installed Directors with care and speed at their first meeting. Historically, we want to make sure each understands how RMLA works, and what the Board is charged with according to RMLA Bylaws.

The item we begin with is the RMLA Mission Statement. If you haven't thought about the Bylaws, which include the Mission Statement right up front, you will find this governing document on RMLA.com. As your President, I soundly believe that if the entire Board understands the Mission Statement and the Bylaws that support it, then we have the best tool to govern accurately on behalf of every member.

Quite often, the Board may have in front of it an unusual issue at which we must take a good, tough look. We can kick it around and consider our choices. I always say every side of a box can be seen from a different perspective, but which one is the best? That means what is the best for RMLA and its members. With that in mind, when the Directors focus on the Mission Statement, even the answer to the most difficult issues becomes rapidly apparent and the best answer is before us. This is what makes a Board work well, get along with each other and move forward, working the best we can for each member. This style of thinking eliminates politics. It is you, the member, at the heart of all decisions.

Should you ever be concerned about a Board decision or want to know about how we manage financial decisions, or why we are where and what we are today, please contact me. I have been at this post a delightfully long time and take great pride in RMLA's healthy direction.

There is something else to think about. Make 2023 a year to sponsor an RMLA event. Events are at the heart of educating about llamas and alpacas. RMLA will be happy to work with you in planning an event, getting liability insurance, and publicizing your event. Check out the event application on RMLA.com and then give any Board member or Mary Wickman, RMLA Event Committee Chair, a call or an email.

Winter months can be the peaceful time to rest and a wonderful opportunity to plan. When you find yourself in the barn enjoying your critters, take some time to spiff up their home, shine up the pack saddles and tidy up the show harnesses. And give them a hug for me!

Know that you are appreciated. I am honored to serve as your President.
Lougene

Welcome New Members!

RMLA is always growing! We welcome the following new members:

Dorothy McClure, Riverton, KS
Karen Miller, South Fork, CO
Lynn Williams, Larkspur, CO
Tom & Mette Goehring, Prescott Valley, AZ

Upcoming RMLA Events

By Mary Wickman, Events Chair

National Western Stock Show Llama Show

January 6 – 8, 2023 National Western Stock Show Llama Show, Denver, CO. Halter, performance & fiber. Alpacas may participate with the llamas in performance. Afternoon with llamas and alpacas. Contact Judy Glaser, <mailto:judy.glaser@yahoo.com> for more information about this great event.

Save the Date:

Pacabuddies Show, March 4 – 5, 2023, Douglas County Fairgrounds, Castle Rock, CO. Contact Gary & Patti Jones, silverjranchalpacas@gmail.com
<mailto:silverjranchalpacas@gmail.com>

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Ask the Vet – Choke in Llamas & Alpacas

By Rachel Oman, DVM, MS, DACVIM Assistant Professor
Colorado State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital

Why do llamas and alpacas cough or choke? What is the difference between the two? How can I prevent or treat this issue? What are the long-term consequences associated with coughing and/or choking?

Choke is a common emergency in llamas and alpacas, so it is important to recognize the clinical signs. Choke is the common name for a complete or partial obstruction of the esophagus. Sometimes it is possible to feel an obstruction in the esophagus by running your hand down the animal's neck and feeling for a bulge, but other times the obstruction is so far down the esophagus that one cannot feel it with external palpation.

Animals that become choked are often in distress and the condition can become life-threatening if it persists. Choked animals may show clinical signs that include drooling, coughing, gagging, raising, and lowering the head or extending the neck, open mouth breathing, bloat, or partially chewed feed coming out the nose or mouth. A camelid showing any combination of these signs without resolution within a few minutes should be evaluated for possible esophageal obstruction or choke.

Sometimes camelids will cough or gag while eating without being choked. In these cases, the animal will not be overly distressed and will continue eating and drinking normally after the bout of coughing is over. Simple cases like this may be caused by irritation from dust or a transient esophageal obstruction that the animal was able to relieve without any human intervention.



Complete, persistent obstruction of the esophagus is an emergency. A severe choke makes it impossible for feed or saliva to pass down into the stomach (or first compartment in camelids) and prevents the animal from eructating gas or bringing up a cud. As a result, saliva or feed can collect in the esophagus and the animal may become bloated with gas that is trapped below the obstruction. The choked animal may inadvertently inhale some of the saliva/feed mixture and cause an infection in the lungs called aspiration pneumonia.

An unrelieved choke can also cause damage to the lining of the esophagus where it sits tightly against the esophageal wall. In some cases, the damaged and weakened esophagus can rupture and in other cases a scar can form resulting in a narrowing of the esophagus. This narrowing restricts feed passage and may cause repeated episodes of choke and may eventually lead to a condition called megaesophagus. Animals with megaesophagus have a dilated or expanded esophagus that lacks the tone to help push feed down when they swallow. Affected animals slowly starve because they cannot effectively eat and there is no good treatment for megaesophagus.

Risk factors of developing choke in camelids include eating pelleted feed, eating feed rapidly, and having poor dentition that makes it difficult for them to fully chew their feed before swallowing. Animals that have been choked before may have one or more risk factor and be at risk for developing an esophageal scar with narrowing that makes them more likely to choke again. It is important to have your camelid's teeth checked regularly by your veterinarian during annual examinations, but you should always be vigilant for signs of teeth trouble. These signs can include abnormal chewing pattern, finding partially chewed balls of cud near the feeder, swelling on or around the jaw, weight loss, and poor appetite. Animals that eat pelleted feed and/or are prone to bolting their feed should be given pelleted feed just small handfuls at a time. You can get creative with ways to slow their consumption of the pellets with tricks like placing some rocks in the feeder or putting the pellets on top of hay rather than simply placing them in a dish for easy consumption.

It is important for camelid owners to recognize the signs of choke and be on the lookout during and shortly after feeding. Understand that llamas and alpacas that eat pelleted feed are prone to eating rapidly and those that have bad teeth are at higher risk of choke. Finally, remember that choke is a true medical emergency. If you think your camelid may be choked, contact your veterinarian right away so they can evaluate the situation and safely relieve the esophageal obstruction before it becomes life-threatening.

<https://howtocatchallama.com/>

Animal rescue site for people who need to catch llamas and alpacas.

Designed for people who know absolutely nothing about llamas and alpacas.

The site gives those who need to catch llamas the tools to do so. It has links to locals who can help.

A joint effort of the International Llama Foundation and the International Lama Registry

Northern Arizona 2022 Veteran's Day Parade

By Sandy Schilling, Linda Schlenker and Karen Freund, Arizona

A small group of members joined forces to represent RMLA at the 2022 City of Prescott Veteran's Day Parade in northern Arizona. Linda and Brent Schlenker drove up from Scottsdale, AZ with 2 of their young alpacas while Karen Freund and Sandy Schilling, from nearby Chino Valley, brought a combined 6 llamas with them. Long time RMLA member and former RMLA Board member, Llama Linda Hayes, was also there to lead a llama in the parade. Three horse friends also joined the group to carry the large flags. A great time was had by all. The llamas did a fantastic job of entertaining the crowd.

All three families had plenty of preparation to do before the parade with their animals. There are many different obstacles to think about (or stress about) when taking your animals to an event. Are my llamas halter trained? Will my alpacas get in the trailer? How will they react to loud unfamiliar noises? Will they wear costumes? How will they react to this or that?? Who's going to help me when I get to the event grounds? Did I bring the treats? Where's my pooper scooper? All these questions need answers to be prepared.



Linda and Brent's alpacas are only 2 years old and have never been in a parade. The entire day was full of new experiences: loading in a trailer, being around new horses, llamas, dogs, and people big and small. Linda and Brent saw the alpacas switch personalities at the parade. The brave boy at home became the shy one, not wanting to be away from his sister. The shy girl seemed much more confident and did well.

Karen and Sandy both hit the famous John Mallon training videos, borrowed from our very own RMLA Library, to get some helpful tips and hints about leading and halter training.

Sandy's two llamas are both close to 2 years old and are halter trained, but have never been exposed to the hustle and bustle of a city street with loud noises and vehicles all around. Sandy spent time with her girls out on their street watching the cars go by, meeting the neighbors, the Amazon delivery person and even the garbage man to desensitize them from noises and activity that they have never experienced. Trailer training was next as the first and only trailer ride for these girls was when Sandy and her family traveled to Colorado to get them. Both girls were fast learners and decided to hop right in. Next was desensitizing the girls to wearing banners on their



backs. Sandy added weight to the flags after she watched them sail off of their backs from the strong winds during training. All was well after modifications were made.

Karen and her llamas have extensive parade experience. She was blessed with 2 crias this spring and she had her hands full halter training the babies. The female was a fast learner and afraid of nothing, while the male earned the nickname “Spider Monkey” with his little wild legs flying everywhere at any new item around him. The crias were also trailer trained and the Mama llamas were a big help with that. After the moms got in the trailer, the crias followed timidly. The crias

walked beautifully and were perfect angels during the parade.

A special shout out to all of our family and friends who helped this team lead the animals, keep banners on the animals' backs, built signs and even pooper scooped! These events would not be possible without them. And a big thank you to RMLA for sponsoring our great event.

RMLA’s mission is all about educating the public about llamas and alpacas. To help further that mission, Sandy made special banners for a few of the animals to wear showing the difference between a llama and an alpaca. (Actually, Sandy did this because it made her crazy to hear people calling the llamas and alpacas by the wrong species name.)



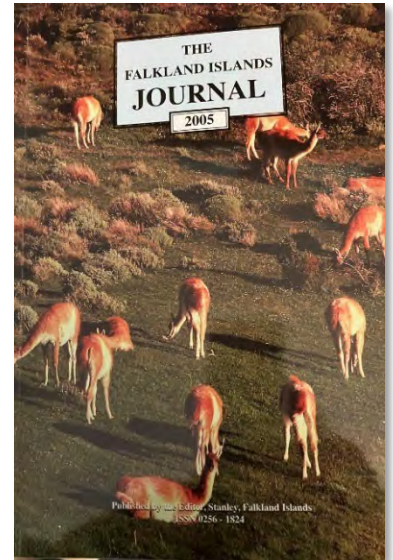
New Book in the Library

RMLA member Chris Switzer has donated a new and fascinating book to our library. *The Falkland Islands Journal*, 2005 edited by Jim McAdam is a collection of historical articles about the Falkland Islands from 1793 to 2004. An article or two even talks about guanacos.

Check out a few of the articles:

- The Discovery Expeditions & Reports, 1928 – 1980
- The History of Staats Island in the West Falklands: Its Guanacos, Foxes, Shanty and Sojourners
- Anthony Hunt and His Encounters with Spanish Vessels, 1768- 1770
- Catholic Education in the Falkland Islands

Members can check out this book, and many others, from the [RMLA Library](#).

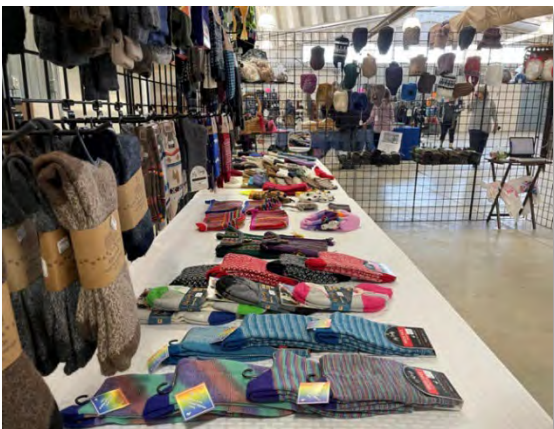


RMLA EVENT

Pacabuddies 2022 – September 10 – 11

By Ron Hinds – el Zorro Colorado Alpacas – *For PacaBuddies*

We had a full house of participants and a good showing of visitors. Sales were good and visitors came in with high expectations and they were not disappointed. We sadly didn't have any llamas there but the handful of young alpaca crias helped make up for the absence. Henry Rivera and his wife Jan had a booth selling Henry's wonderful llama and alpaca sculptures. PacaBuddies sponsored the part one of the SUNY Cobleskill Certification Course - Basic Sorting, Grading and Classing workshop with Wini Labrecque on Saturday. It was well attended.



As usual, Pacabuddies had a sign-in sheet for visitors. In addition to address and email, we asked visitors how they found out about the event and why they came. Over the last 16+ years, we send postcards out about 3-4 weeks before the events as a reminder to previous visitors. As usual, Pacabuddies has a sign-in sheet for visitors. In addition to address and email, we ask visitors how they found out about the event and why they came. But analysis of the marks visitors made ranks the top 'How' as friends, Google, social media, Pacabuddies website and signs-on-the-road. Ironically postcards are only rated the 6th top reason how they found out about the event. However, we figure the postcard mailing is very important despite the ranking. We get a handful of contacts through the website contact page. Pacabuddies has a loyal following of visitors that receive the postcards. Visitor lists have been kept since 2006.

Our next event is March 4 – 5, 2023. We moved from the weekend before Valentine's Day to after Valentine's Day, hoping for better weather. A **Big Thank You** from Pacabuddies to RMLA for providing the insurance Douglas County Fairgrounds requires.

My Favorite Hike With A Llama

A Trip back in Time: Grand Gulch Primitive Area in Utah

by Bob Riley, Boulder Ridge Ranch, Lyons, Colorado

Editors' Note: This article is a reprint from the March 1995 RMLA Journal. The author, Bob Riley, now lives with his wife, Jo, and family in Paola, KS. The Riley family owns Stillwater Minerals. This article is timeless. However, It is recommended that those interested in hike/packing into the area first, contact the Bureau of Land Management, Monticello Field Office, Monticello UT for current signage, conditions and entry requirements (435-587-1500 or utmtmail@blm.gov)



- **Distance:** 29.3 miles from Ranger Station to Government Trail. Alternate Route: 22.8 miles from Ranger Station to Bullet Canyon Trailhead.
- **Starting Elevation:** 6,080'
- **Canyon Elevation:** 6,080' to 5,040' Over 22.2 miles (flat) then a 620' rise for one-half mile to the Government Trailhead at 5,660'
- **Time Required:** 4 days ... take your time. (6 days would allow more time to explore side canyons.)
- **Season:** Fall and Spring - Never in the summer with llamas.
- **Difficulty:** Easy, downhill or flat except one-half mile of steep grade coming out. Some parts of the trail are narrow, with trees on either side.
- **Special Features:** Remains of Anasazi dwellings, pottery, and petroglyphs. Excellent llama support at Recapture Lodge in Bluff, Utah.

- **Topographic maps:** Trails Illustrated "Grand Gulch Plateau" map number 206. Available at backpacking stores or Recapture Lodge.
- **Permit required:** Contact the BLM Office in Monticello, UT for permit to hike with llamas.

Bluff, Utah is located in the Southeast corner of Utah on Highway 191. The Recapture Lodge, operated by Jim and Luanne Hook, should be your first stop. It is a nice, clean motel, with an area to stake your llamas out for the night, plus maps and books on the area. They have a llama leasing business for hikers going into the desert.

After dropping me off at the Ranger Station, Jim shuttled my car and trailer to the end of the trail at the Government trailhead. An alternate route to consider would be to start at the Bullet Trail, which puts you about half way down the canyon and return to the same trailhead.

To reach the trailhead, drive West from Bluff on Highway 163, 18 miles to the intersection of State Highway 261 then 23 miles North to the Ranger Station. Sign-in at the Trailhead and pay a \$5.00 fee in the parking lot. Water is not available at the Trailhead.

The trail begins on the West side of the highway. This hike heads Southwest into the upper end of the canyons losing 400 feet over four miles before reaching the canyon floor. The trail is easy and scenic with a few switchbacks. Once you are in the canyon, the real fun begins. For the next 22.2 miles, the canyon is winding and virtually flat with numerous side canyons worth exploring. Water is available about every 1/4 mile in the upper end and becomes a stream as you walk Southwest.

The earliest known inhabitants in the canyon were known as Basket Makers. They were a nomadic hunting and gathering culture who lived here from 200 to 600 A.D. Indian ruins are scattered all over the canyon floor, up on ridges and under ledges. The first big site shown on the map is the Junction Ruin at the 4-mile marker. This ruin is up on your right and above the canyon floor. Six major archeological sites are marked on the Trails Illustrated map and this only represents a fraction of the sites you can find exploring on your own. Marvel at the stone work in the building. Look at the pottery shards with their varied, painted designs. The ground is littered with small corn cobs, preserved by the dry air for 1,400 years.



I had taken grain for the boys, expecting little forage, but grazing was abundant in April. Camping spots were plentiful and, regardless of where you pitched your tent, you were never very far from an archeological site. Finding an area with sufficient scope to picket llamas was a challenge and required a little ingenuity. My favorite camping spot was at the 15 mile mark, 0.6 of a mile before reaching the Bullet Junction Spring. You reach the spot by turning right (North) and following a faint trail for about 300 yards with a 75' elevation gain. Enter a crescent shaped side canyon with a large overhang that will shelter you from rain. There are numerous ruins to explore in the area.

The next day I reached the Bullet Canyon trail at mile marker 15.6. Most people looking for a shorter hike will exit here. The trailhead is 7.2 miles up the canyon to your left (Southeast) and the highway is just 1.2 miles beyond. The government trail that I came out on is at mile 26.2, then 3 more miles to the trailhead, then a drive of 8 more miles to the highway.

The last night in the Canyon, I camped across from the entrance to Step Canyon at mile 19.5. It was one of those nights that was so dark that the light from my little oil lantern seemed to be absorbed by the blackness. There was not a breath of wind and the only sound was water dripping from the Canyon walls. I sat cross legged on the soft sandy ground in front of my tent. All the Indian dwellings, shards, and miniature corn cobs brought me to feel very close to the Old Ones that lived here not so very long ago. Why did they pick this Canyon to live in? Was it for protection or was it something more? At that moment, I could feel a strong spiritual presence, a peace, and a depth to life, maybe they felt it, too.



One word of caution: The Government Trail is incorrectly marked on the 7.5 minute Polly Pasture Quadrangle map. The trail can be found 0.2 miles past the Polly's Canyon Stream. The 15 minute Trails Illustrated Grand Gulch map shows the correct location of the trail.

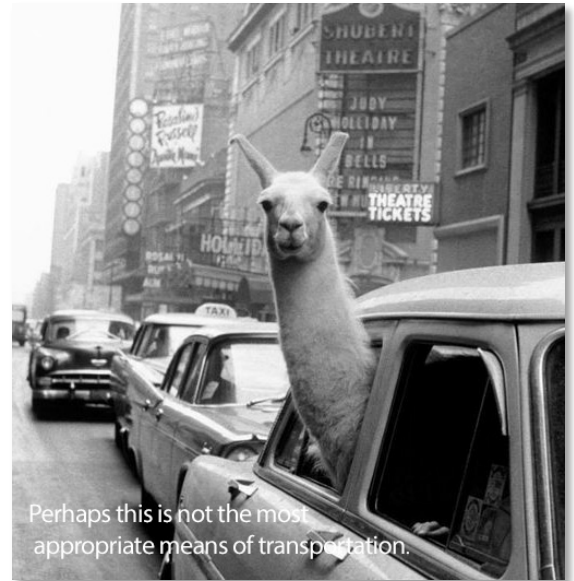
Those of you wishing to take this hike back in time need to respect the many sites you will come upon. There are no Park Rangers, fenced in areas, or signs telling you to keep off. So use your best judgment and respect the area.

Transporting And Loading Camelids

By Marty McGee Bennett
CameliDynamics

Early in the morning on clinic days as I wander around organizing my equipment and preparing for the weekend, I watch as the animals arrive. I have seen llamas and alpacas arrive for their weekend with me in all manner of vehicles and in varying states of mind. It could be that my animal student was loaded the morning of the clinic and is experiencing motorized travel for the first time in his life. Other students are problem animals that are difficult to work with and may very well be difficult to halter, lead and load! The process of getting to the clinic could have been unpleasant for both the animal and his person. This article is meant to help you get your alpaca or llama wherever you may be heading, as comfortably as possible and with a minimum of drama.

I believe that traveling for an alpaca is much more frightening than we probably realize. From an alpaca's point of view, getting in a small box and jumping out into a totally new environment must be pretty weird. There is nothing in their lives that would prepare them for the sensations involved in traveling in a trailer, van or car. There are ways to ease an alpaca's fear and reduce the stress of travel without investing an unrealistic amount of time.



Transporting

First of all, just because your alpaca will fit in it doesn't mean the conveyance is appropriate. A feeling of safety and security is very important to an animal under new and frightening circumstances. The back seat of a Volvo may be great for the kids but is probably not a great way to bring your first alpaca home from the fiber fest. Ideally you are hauling your alpaca in something he can stand in (even if he must keep his head down when standing). The good news for us humans is that it is natural for most alpacas to lie down when they are traveling. However, when an alpaca is lying down he has a small area on which to balance and little opportunity to create a stable platform. Nature has not designed an alpaca for balancing while lying down in a moving vehicle. You can help your animal relax more fully while traveling if you consider the issue of balance as you plan for his trip.

Car seats, uneven flooring and wide expanses of flat area and of course movement all pose problems for an animal trying to keep his balance. Orienting your alpaca at an angle to the line of travel will help. Using hay bales or partitions to orient the way your alpacas position themselves will guide them into lying down in a way that contributes to their ability to balance as well as giving them something to lean against. If you must transport your alpaca in the back seat of a car, fill up the leg room area with some sort of firm filler- foam covered with old towels, flakes of straw wrapped in a tarp. Your alpaca will feel much better if he doesn't have to worry about falling off the seat.

Unnecessary noise and sudden movements will all contribute to a feeling of anxiety. Wrap metal parts that clank and bang with cloth or duct tape and drive with an awareness of your passenger, brake gently and early and take corners slowly and smoothly. In order to imagine what it would be like the first few times your alpaca is transported, think of yourself being hustled into a new carnival ride - a roller coaster, for example. Now imagine riding it for several hours!

Ideally your llama or alpaca's first trip is going to be a very short one up the driveway and back home. First impressions are really important. Your animal will learn to relax while traveling if his first few excursions are short and sweet.

Comfort is obviously important when it comes to your animals attitude about traveling. Dense padding is probably the most important factor that will contribute to a comfortable ride. Your llamas' legs and under belly are designed to rest on the ground for long periods; however, under normal circumstances the ground wouldn't bounce and shift nor would your animal be denied the opportunity to stand up and shift around.

In addition many trailer floors are much harder than the ground. Thickness is not the same as shock absorption. Density is much more important. A two-inch dense rubber mat will provide more in the way of comfort than a ten-inch piece of non-dense foam. Whatever you use in your conveyance along with any ramps or steps the surface should provide good footing even when wet. An old piece of carpet thrown on top of some dense rubber matting works great.

Wind is another factor to consider. Asking your alpaca to endure four hours of a 50-mile per hour wind in his face is a bit much. A windscreen is a fairly easy addition to most conveyances. Wind blowing around inside an open sided stock trailer is a very good reason to avoid bedding with hay or straw. Chaff blowing around inside a trailer is no good for your fleece or your animal's eyes.



Your alpaca will do his level best not to go potty in a van or trailer so visit the dung pile before you load. Otherwise your alpacas may spend hours in discomfort trying **not** to go to the bathroom. Before leaving home pick up a bit of poop in a small airtight container and take it with you. That way when you stop at a rest stop, you can off load your alpacas, open up the poop container and the urge to go will hit.

Llamas and alpacas feel safer with a buddy around. When possible take at least two animals. If you are delivering an animal to a new home and you have room, take three and bring two back. Ideally one will be an experienced traveler and can transmit his calm attitude to his more inexperienced traveling companions.

Your alpaca will be using new muscles to keep his balance while traveling and might very well be sore the next day. If you are traveling to a show, it might be smart and kind to take a nice walk to help loosen up the kinks before settling your alpaca into his small show stall.

Many people feel it is safer to leave a halter on during transport. If you decide to leave a halter on, it is very important to make sure that it fits properly. A properly fitting halter is one that is comfortable and doesn't interfere with your alpaca's ability to ruminate and eat. A properly fitting halter fits well up on the nose bone and has enough slack in the nose band so that your alpaca can easily move his jaw enough to both eat and ruminate.

Loading

In an ideal world we would all have time to train each alpaca to understand how to step up into, or over or to crawl into their particular chariot. Reality is that there are lots of times when the travel day arrives and the alpaca has never seen the inside of a trailer. There are several ways to approach loading a novice; techniques that make it much easier for all

concerned. If possible, physically organize the loading process so that you can herd the animal in to the conveyance by exerting loading pressure from behind the alpaca rather than trying to pull him in from the front.

Back your vehicle up to the barn or pasture opening. Create an aisle way that leads into the vehicle if you can and then herd the alpaca from the back. Creative use of panels will compensate for a lack of help. Most alpacas would rather not get in a confined space with a human and will load much better if they can get into the trailer by themselves.



Look at your watch and be willing to wait 10-15 minutes. You would have used that much time haltering a wild inexperienced alpaca and dragging and fighting him into the trailer anyway. Time is a funny thing; it seems to go by faster when you are busy fighting than when you are waiting quietly for your alpaca to figure out that the thing you want him to climb into is a safe bet. It will help immensely to load two or three animals together. An inexperienced alpaca will gladly jump in a vehicle with another alpaca that knows how to do it. Then you can offload the ones you don't need. Alpacas are very agile and can figure out how to climb into small spaces if they can think and act on their own. Attach a lead rope and you complicate the process five hundred percent.

Trying to pull the alpaca in from the head is almost certainly going to take longer and may result in injury. The tendency of an animal when pulled from the front is to either lie down...(you have now just taught your alpaca to lie down instead of load) or to throw all the weight to the rear quarters and balance off of the lead rope. When your alpaca is physically organized in this way, it is not possible for him to jump forward. His only physical option is to rear up and back, against the lead. If you are quick, you may be able to pull him forward into the vehicle when he is balanced on his two rear legs. This is not particularly safe for you or your alpaca and is a very scary way for your alpaca to find himself in a strange container.

Try this physical test yourself. Hold on to the end of a lead rope and lean back against pressure provided by a second person. Instruct your helper to keep steady pressure on your hands and then try to jump forward while you have your weight against the rope. You will find this to be next to impossible. This is exactly the position we put our alpacas in when we try to pull them into a trailer.

If you find yourself loading a reluctant alpaca by leading him in from the front, try this.... First work your way close to the trailer or van. Get inside, getting as far into the vehicle and as far away from the animal as you can. Use your lead rope only to keep the animal's nose and attention oriented toward the vehicle. Aside from insisting that your alpaca look directly at the vehicle in question, offer NO pressure on the head. No pressure means that the hook attached to the halter is dangling freely. Often handlers don't think they are pulling on the head when in fact they are. Look at the hook attached to the halter. If the hook is not pointing at the ground, you have not taken all pressure off of the lead rope.

If the alpaca tries to back up, set your hand and resist. Tell him with your hand, "I am not going to pull you into the trailer but ... **no backing up!**" When the alpaca tries to back up, use intermittent signals on the lead rope and do your best to transfer the animal's weight from the rear end back to the front end. As soon as possible, put slack in the line again and check that hook to make sure you are not putting any pressure on the lead! Look at your watch and wait a

full two minutes before giving any signals to the head. BE QUIET. Your alpaca needs time and quiet to think about the trailer. Every time you let loose with Come on, Teddy, Come on, Come on you can do it, you distract your alpaca from the issue at hand. Be totally quiet. Each time you give a signal on the lead, you distract your alpaca from inspecting the trailer and making the decision to try getting in. Just be still and quiet and look at your watch.

Each time the alpaca takes a step forward, your timer is reset and you must wait a full two minutes before giving signals on the lead. Alpacas hate a vacuum and they are very uncomfortable standing still and doing nothing. Your alpaca wants to move. As long as you don't let your animal either lean backwards on the lead or back away from the vehicle he will move, and the only way is forward into the vehicle. I have used this method when loading animals when it is time to go home and it works very reliably and quickly. I have very seldom waited more than 5-10 minutes for an alpaca to figure out how to load himself; it is not very long when you think about it. Using this technique rather than picking your animal up will make subsequent loading a breeze. Your 15-minute investment will give your alpaca a chance to actually figure out how to load.

When you have the luxury of time to teach your alpaca to load before the day, he will actually be traveling; think of your trailer or van as just a new and different kind of obstacle. Plan how you would work your way up to it. Trailers or vans are simply something scary to walk under, and something scary to step up on. In the case of a small van you must teach your alpaca to jump and duck at the same time. Work up to loading by walking your alpaca over and under other natural obstacles in the out of doors. Accepting something low overhead seems to be one of the most difficult aspects of loading in a van. Walking under low hanging branches is a very good way to get your alpaca accustomed to having something over his head. Jumping over logs or deadfall outside is easier for most alpacas than human made obstacles and serves as good practice for jumping into the back of a van or a step up trailer. A big log under some branches does a very good job of teaching your alpaca how to get the hang of the jump and duck maneuver.

When it comes to homemade obstacles, the most useful ones are those that can be taken apart and made easier. Low jumps leading to higher jumps, platforms that can begin on the ground before being raised off of the ground allow you address challenges incrementally rather than all at once. Pulling your alpaca over an obstacle may get him across, but it will also compromise the trust he will feel for you, his handler. It is better to make the obstacle easier and work back up to the sticking point. All of these obstacles will pave the way for loading in a vehicle.


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Shearing Multiple Years of Fleece Growth

by Cath Lukin | [Braidwood Alpaca Farm](#) | Larbert, New South Wales, Australia
Reprinted with permission from the author.

We sometimes get the question, “Why do I need to have my alpacas shorn each year?” It is most concerning, of course, when new alpaca owners are asking! Shearing is a critical requirement of alpaca care. Alpaca fibre retains twice the warmth of sheep wool. Would you wear wool jumpers, adding one atop the other for every year not shorn, throughout a hot—and in some locales, humid—summer? I’m guessing that is a “No!”



Shearing also reveals occasional skin conditions such as rain scald, eczema, fungal issues or abscesses. Shearing allows the skin to heal by exposing it to dry air and sunlight for vitamin A absorption. Sometimes, bits of wire discovered in the fleece have bored holes into the skin. And sadly, at an outside shearing job this year, a young alpaca had horrendous fly-strike in his leg and needed to be euthanized.

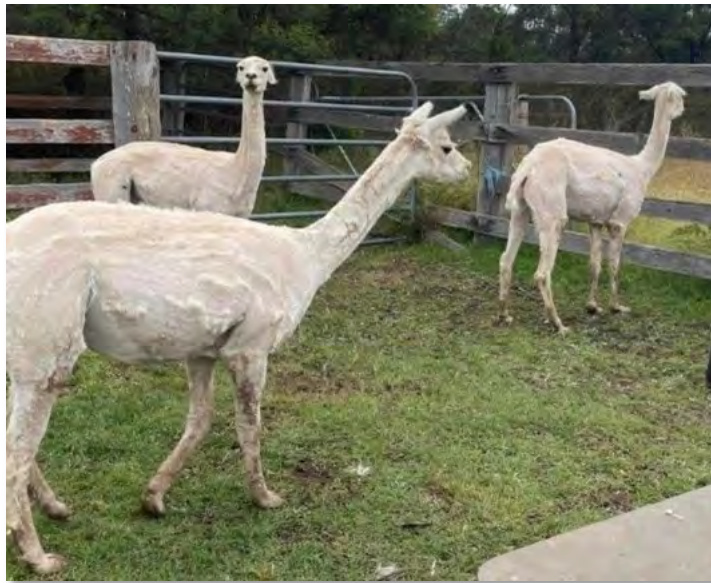
I’d like to share what it was like to shear the alpacas pictured here in their multiple years of fleece growth. Before I relate their story, let me say that we were affected by Black Summer bushfires in New South Wales, Australia, which caused the delay in shearing. The owner did care for his alpacas and was so grateful I could fit him into my schedule.

I had to change my shearing style because the weight of the fleece was pulling the skin even when they were lying on the table.

Happily for these three alpacas, there were no abscesses or hidden wounds from sticks and barb wire digging into their flesh—as I expected to find in fleece not shorn for over two years.

It was a cool day shearing these three; but often, on a warm day, only the shearer experiences the heat leaving the fleece as it is being clipped. It is surprising how noticeable this is, but it is only felt by the shearer. This gust of heat reminds me every time how important it is to shear every year.

My reward every time I shear is to see the blissful relaxation of freshly shorn alpacas. Rolling in the grass, having a good scratch to relieve impossible-to-reach itches, and then followed by a good sunbake! Once out of the yards, these three couldn't be seen in the long grass as they enjoyed themselves.

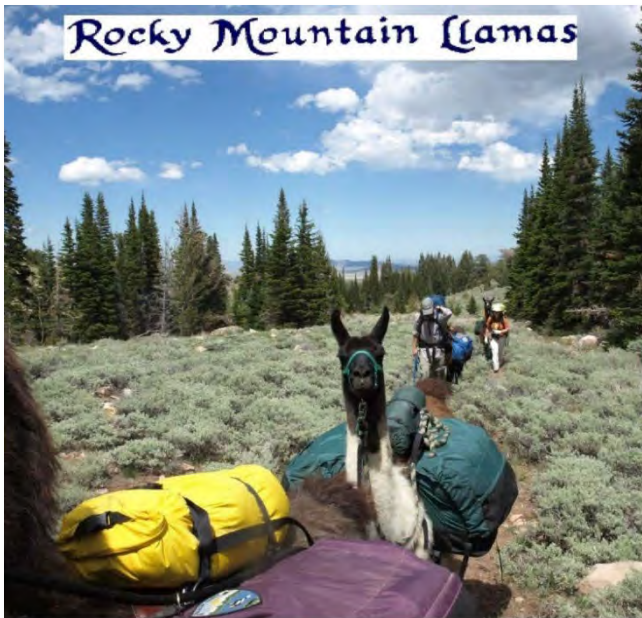


Self-shedding is nonsense. Clumps of fleece that break off a multi-year fleece actually occur because of weak points in the fibre caused by stresses such as weaning, overheating or illness. If the clumps are found along a fence, it is because of the discomfort the alpaca is experiencing and trying to relieve.

After 5000 years of selective breeding by humans, fibre production and shearing is a natural... and necessary...part of the domesticated alpaca's life. Your alpacas have used precious energy in our environment to produce fibre.

Alpacas must be shorn each year. This is not their natural environment. Honour their efforts by harvesting the fleece and making it into something useful, while also caring for your alpacas.

About the author: Cath has been a member of the Australian Alpaca Association since 2009. She breeds llamas and both Suri and Huacaya alpacas.



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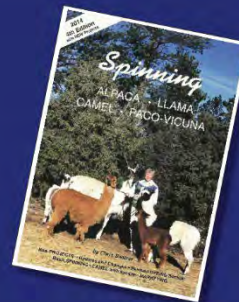
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Structural Guidelines for Pack Llamas

by Wes Holmquist

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I have recognized ten structural guidelines by seeing llama types that work well on the trail. These guidelines were developed by hindsight, not foresight of the brilliant. I love all my llamas and admire them for their spirit but have found that a packer cannot work on heart alone. The fact is that some are not physically capable of making the grade. In the llama world we can help our llama offspring make the grade by breeding to select studs and structural types that have proven themselves on the trail.

Notice I said structural types. These llamas don't have to be classic llamas. What is a classic llama? It doesn't matter here!!! Our concern is selecting llamas of certain structure; wool length is unimportant. What does it take to shear a llama-about 20 minutes? So if they have longer wool, 20 minutes of shearing every other year is not much of an investment in a pack llama that happens to have long wool. Of course, many llama breeders do not pack but they can benefit by following structural guidelines of selection developed by llama packers. I only expect my guidelines to be references, not God's word. They are one man's opinion based on experience and will give you a place to begin.

Any llama can pack and any willow stick is a fishing pole—right? But after we've fished a few times our taste in poles changes dramatically. There are lots of in's and out's in fishing pole types just like there are different llama types. For instance, a pole for fly fishing is built differently than a bait pole and a deep sea pole is different still. Similarly, a tall llama works better in places like getting over logs and creeks and has a great advantage in endurance over a heavily built shorter llama. A medium sized llama may be less intimidating than the larger muscle llama. Muscle llamas don't hold up as well in the heat as the tall or medium sized because of their bulky inefficient muscling. Just as there are over 80 different horse breeds there are also different types of llamas.

Llama conformation is something often talked about but it's hard to find strong guidelines as to what type suits a particular need. Given straight enough legs and top line and good general conformation, where do we go from there? I have tried to answer this question with my Ten Llama Selection Guidelines and Ten Identifiable Llama Structural Types. In my opinion learning what works mechanically in a llama or any kind of animal or machine has to be learned in the field by testing and trial and error. There is no other way.

Certainly there are many reasons to have llamas other than to pack with them. Historically their primary use was and is as a pack animal. One way to determine ideal structure is by testing llamas by working with them in the mountains. Long wool certainly should not deter a llama from being used as a packer. Fancy llamas can be packers too but they need adequate structure to perform adequately. Neither will a large llama be good just because he is big. The bigger the llama is, the more critical the structure because of the extra mass he is carrying. One of the biggest pitfalls I have been through is buying llamas just because they are large. I've owned several llamas over 500 pounds, and today I wouldn't give you a nickel for them. I have certainly seen many long-wooled llamas that fit the requirements for a pack animal. I have also had many big llamas that were big heavy slugs.

Llamas are worth owning just to have and are wonderful to have around. They fit the bill much better for a suburban farm than larger livestock because they are quiet, safe and inexpensive to care for. If you keep in mind the ideal llama types and establish breeding goals your llamas will be healthier, happier and be worth much more in the future. If you want to raise fancy llamas for show be aware that wool is desirable on the neck and legs with some color variations and blood lines bringing higher dollars. While you're looking for wool, keep in mind the ideal structural types detailed below.

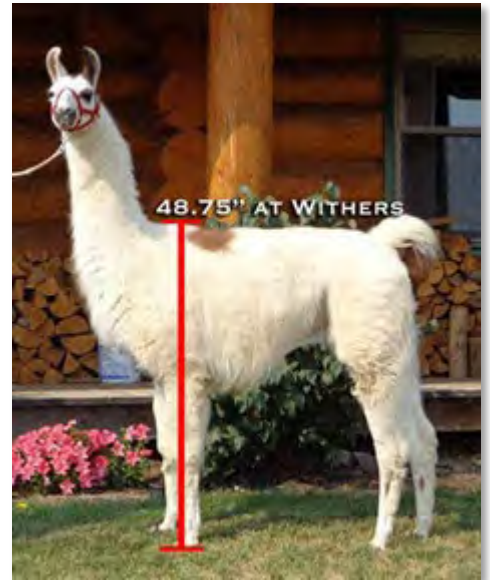
Guidelines

1. Llamas should be over X inches at the withers.

To develop a long stride and get over logs and not continually be snagging packs on downfalls llamas should be over X inches at the withers (shoulder). I have chosen 43" as the magic number to assure an adequate performance. Certainly there are good pack llamas under this number.

2. Llamas should have longer legs than depth of body. Deep wide bodies are not a plus.

Short legged llamas don't have a chance of keeping up. Deep bodies limit limb movement and add unnecessary weight. I quote Murray Fowler DVM, "Natural pacers, such as camelids, have relatively long legs. This allows the animal to develop a long stride." It is this long stride that allows the good packer to work efficiently.



3. Llamas should have a level topline. It is common but not desirable for a llama to be lower at the shoulder than the hips.

Llamas that are excessively short in the front legs have a difficult time negotiating downhill trails with a load. Longer legs in the front are a distinct advantage which allows him to develop a longer stride. Mules are higher in the withers than the hips which give them a noticeable advantage over horses in the mountains. Some wild animals such as wolves and mountain goats are noticeably higher in the shoulders. It follows that llamas should not be lower in the shoulders compared to their hips .

4. Llamas should be under six inches between the forelegs. It is an obvious disadvantage for the llama to be wide between their front legs because of their natural pacing gait.

Llamas that are wide in front usually have weak shoulders or just a big wide body that produces a weak and waddy gait.

5. Llamas should have a narrow to medium width frame.

There is no functional advantage for a llama to have a wide body, and it means he is packing extra bulk that will bog him down, shortening his endurance and causing a waddy, inefficient gait.

6. Llamas need evident chest muscling to tie their forelegs to the chest.

Chest muscling is a well-recognized necessity in horse breeding. Good chest muscles complete the shoulder attachment and keeps these tissues from sagging and getting fibrous, stiff and sore.

7. Llamas should not be gelded before 1.5 years. It's preferable to wait until their fighting teeth are fully mature (around three).

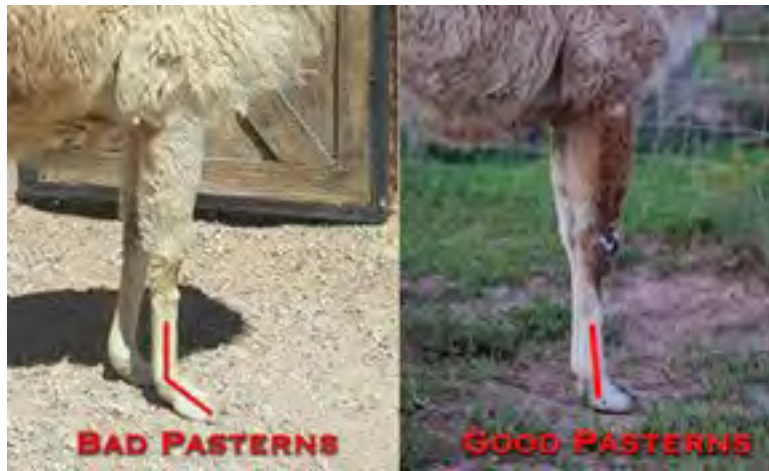
Many llamas gelded early get sore and stiff joints and develop lameness. I've seen it many times and don't care to buy a llama gelded too young.

8. Llamas should have a long free stride with their front legs in order to have endurance on the trail.

Avoid llamas that have a short stride in the front end and often need to trot to keep up with a normal pace. This forces the animal to work harder than necessary and they will tire quickly on the trail.

9. Llamas must have good general conformation with strong ankles (pasterns).

Weak pasterns is a common failing in llamas. Watch them when they walk and trot and make sure their ankles do not have a spongy weak action.



10. Llamas should be under 400 pounds. Extra weight is a disadvantage for pack animals not a plus. Bragging about a llama's weight does not indicate that he or she is an excellent packer.

A small obese llama can easily weigh over four hundred pounds. A llama's weight needs to correspond with its height and build. My personal goal is to keep all llamas under four hundred pounds. I own a 49" llama that will pack 110 pounds and weighs about 340 pounds. I have also owned several llamas over 500 pounds that could not keep up on the trail even without a load.

Llama structural types

Ideal Types

- 1. Tall** Narrow frame, long legs, medium bone, medium length back, chest muscling evident. Tall llamas must have a shorter back proportionally than medium sized types.
- 2. Full Sized** Big bone, but narrow frame and excellent ground clearance. Medium length back.
- 3. Muscle llama** Medium width frame, big bone, big muscling with good ground clearance and medium length back.
- 4. Medium** Narrow frame, medium height, a lot of ground clearance, medium bone but longer back.
- 5. Compact** Shorter wither height, medium to large bone, longer legs than depth of girth. Can be big muscled and wider proportionally between the front legs and still be light, athletic and have good endurance. Many of the good compact llamas fall into the medium llama type too and do well in the mountains. The shorter llamas are limited in the weight they can pack but do well if they are structured as outlined here.

Undesirable Types

- 6. Tall weakling** Chest muscling not evident, tall and skinny, may have been gelded early. It is easy to mistake this type for the Tall ideal type.
- 7. Bulldog** Deep body, wide body, long body with short legs and neck. Big bone.

- 8. Duckwalker** Wide body, wide between front legs, waddling gait and weak shoulders.
- 9. Long Back** Long saggy, weak back
- 10. Heavyweight** Giant llama, deep and long bodied, labored stride, wide body, obese.

Summary

All llamas come in variations of these ten distinct body types. The distinctive type recognition is important because of how the change in one of the elements of structure will affect another. For instance a taller llama should have a medium length back but a small or medium sized llama will be structurally sound with a proportionally longer back because shorter limbs lessens the stress on the lumbar area. Observe in nature that animals like alligators and badgers have longer backs in combination with shorter legs. Giraffes on the other hand have very long legs and short backs. These various animals function well because their mechanics are correct for their structure.

There are in's and out's to selecting a llama but it is not as complicated as it seems. Keep in mind the structure guidelines and watch your animal move. If the llama moves effortlessly it will most likely have what it needs mechanically. Movement and function are the result of excellent structure. If you have experienced dragging a llama up the trail a few miles, you quickly become a connoisseur of structure and function. When breeding for show it is hard to bypass beauty for a slight structural defect. The ultimate goal in llama raising is to have beauty and function. This is a tough order to fill but I believe it is possible and can be an attainable goal.

RMLA HISTORY

From The Beginning: The National Western Stock Show Llama Show

By Lougene Baird

Reviewing the earliest documents that reside in stored RMLA files, I discovered a tattered, expandable folder with all sorts of communications and notes concerning the first days of the NWSS Llama Show. Stories have been told through the years about llamas first being exhibited at the Stock Show. No inside stalls were made available: llamas were stalled in pens outside alongside the railroad tracks in freezing (or below freezing!!) January weather. Grooming took place outside and the animals were only allowed inside during the llama show.

Correspondence tells that Stock Show officials did not allow RMLA to sponsor or manage the 1988 llama show as RMLA had previously. The RMLA Directors that year submitted a list of seven qualified individuals from which the Stock Show officials could select three judges. Two judges from the list were selected and the third judge selected by the Stock Show was an animal science professor -- who ended up judging the halter classes. The highly qualified and experienced llama judges were only used to judge the pack trail and driving classes.



At that time, the show association (ALSA) was also new and getting its feet on the ground. It was striving to develop ethical standards and show classes for the display of llamas to the public.

Several exhibitor letters dated in 1988 complained that the Stock Show management had seen fit to de-emphasize the llama displays and exhibitions. The llama events were held before the Stock Show's actual published time. Another writer challenged Stock Show management for combining long and short woolled weanling halter classes, stating that was an inconsistency neither owners or the public could comprehend.

Following the 1988 show, letters began to reflect the llama show beginning to improve for all. Llamas were brought inside out of the below freezing cold and the timing of llama show events in the arena began to be held when most of the public was present.

Grace Shaddeau was named llama superintendent and held that position for many years. The NWSS management had started to see the llama show as a forum for the promotion of llamas to large numbers of people. It also realized llamas were, in actuality, a huge public draw to the entire livestock show -- as they are today. After Shaddeau's retirement, other talented RMLA members have held the superintendent position.

However, there was an unspoken *livestock stigma* concerning llamas. Even in the later 90's, RMLA Board members went to the inside area to check out the condition of the stalls as llamas were to arrive the next morning. The livestock exhibitors who had left that day had not cleaned the stalls. About 12 RMLA volunteers worked until 3:00 in the morning to shovel, sweep and sanitize each stall. The next morning, llamas arrived to nice clean stalls. At departure, the stalls were left spotless by llama exhibitors for the next livestock arrival.

Today, we are thankful that RMLA member Judy Glaser continues as an outstanding superintendent for the NWSS Llama Show. Judy is one who sees the beauty, usability and importance of llamas and alpacas and the importance of our youth who participate in the show.

RMLA will again this year support the National Western Stock Show Llama Show with a continued endowment and our members will continue to volunteer and be a part of the event for today and into the future.

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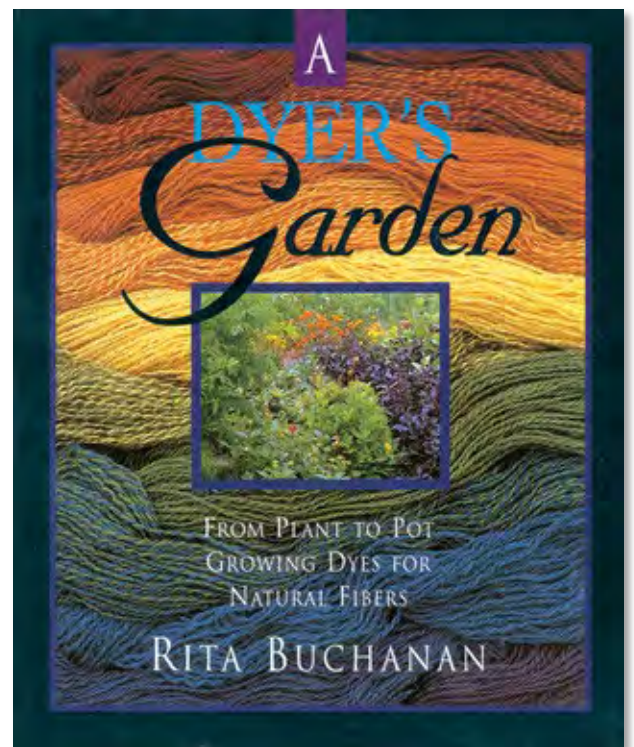
Natural Dyeing

By Nancy Wilson, Camp Verde, AZ

Editors' Note: *Natural dyeing has always fascinated me. The plant or flower color does not necessarily directly transfer to the color of the dye. Then, as with any dye product, the final color of the fiber can depend on what fiber you use.*

Now that the temperature has cooled down a bit (even here in Arizona) and if you're a gardener or fiber enthusiast, you may find yourself thinking about what to plant in your garden next year. Perhaps you've even thought about planting a dye garden and decided now is the time to do it. Whatever your reason, now is a good time to think about it and start planning. I highly recommend a handy little book available from the RMLA library: *A Dyer's Garden*, by Rita Buchanan.

The book starts with an FAQ section about natural dyes. If you are new to dyeing and perhaps a new gardener, it will help you decide whether this is something you really want to do. The introduction, combined with the first chapter on choosing plants, will have you ready to start the actual planning process. Rita has some simple suggestions on choosing dye plants, such as planting items that you would want in a garden regardless of whether they are a dye plant or not. If you're going to put in the effort to plant a dye garden, you might as well have something that's pretty to look at with a lovely fragrance, right?



The second chapter of the book talks about getting dye plants and/or purchasing seeds. There is a list of plants that you can harvest in the first year when planted from seeds. While not instant gratification, I'd be sure to include some of these plants so you can get from plant to dye faster.

The third chapter is the real meat of the book. This is where you'll plan your dye garden. Rita includes diagrams along with number of plants for each section of the garden. Samples are for a 5' diameter round garden, a 5' x 12' raised bed garden, a 6' x 20" garden, and a 26' x 23' production garden.

While you're waiting to harvest your dye plants, read chapter four about the basics of natural dyeing. You might even want to read this section before you start your garden so see if the natural dye process appeals to you. You'll learn about mordants, which are metallic compound (aluminum, tin, copper, etc.) that help with colorfastness of the dye.

Chapter five talks about color. Natural dyeing has many variables, such as: the soil, when the plant is harvested, how you prepare the dyestuff, etc. Chapter six that follows gives clear color photos of the results from different dye plants. Plant information is on the left-hand page and the results on different yarns with different mordants is on the right-hand page. This chapter will be helpful in choosing your plants.

My recommendation on using this book would be to give it a quick overview then look at the plant colors, decide what you want to grow, decide where you want to put your garden, and get the soil ready. Your local Extension office (CSU in Colorado, NMSU in New Mexico, U of A in Arizona) is also an excellent resource to help put you on the path to success.

For further information, here is a list of other books in my personal library on natural dyeing:

- Bryan, Nonabah. *Navajo Native Dyes, Their Preparation and Use*
- Colton, Mary-Russel Ferrell. *Hopi Dyes*
- Dean, Jenny. *Colours from Nature: A Dyer's Handbook*
- Cannon, John and Margaret. *Dye Plants and dyeing*
- Lambert, Eva and Kendall, Tracy. *The Complete Guide to Natural Dyeing*

Happy dyeing!

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The mission of the Association shall be to educate the members and the public as to the breeding, raising, care and use of llamas and alpacas.

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Caring for Llamas and Alpacas
A Health and Management Guide

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Fairplay Llama Lunacy, July 30, 2022

By Mary Wickman, RMLA Events Chair

It was another beautiful day in Fairplay, Colorado for the Llama Lunacy event. Llama Lunacy is just one of the events put on by the Town of Fairplay in conjunction with Burro Days. You can Google *Burro Days Fairplay, Colorado* to see some of the other llama events and other activities going on that weekend.

Llama Lunacy is a free event for people, especially children, to take llamas through a very simple obstacle course. Each participant receives a ribbon and a coupon for free ice cream, donated by Silver Scoop Creamery of the Town of Fairplay. The course for the Llama Lunacy is located at the West end of Front Street – out of the main stream of events. As hidden as we are, people seek us out to interact with the llamas. This year we had 124 children (and a few adults) go through the course. Everyone seemed to have a



good time. The event is truly a tool for teaching about llamas. The event gives people hands on experience with llamas and answers questions.

As with most llama events, it would not happen without great volunteers and sponsors. I would like to thank everyone that by volunteering and sponsoring the event made it so successful. RMLA supported us with advertising and insurance. The Silver Scoop Creamery supported us with coupons for free ice cream. Julie Bullock, event planner for the Town of Fairplay, helped with advertising and finding an appropriate place to have the event. Fred and Taylor Huggins let us use two llamas (Playboy and Danny).



Volunteers included Jim Roller and family-Nicole Brue (daughter), Mia Brue (granddaughter), Cody Brue (grandson). They helped with set up and take down, taking kids through the course, brought obstacles, and 1 llama (Duke). Jim's grandchildren smiled through the whole event and were talking about coming next year. My sister, Diane Turner, came with me to volunteer; she has been volunteering at the event for nine years. The young man who helped us last year (took a llama through the course and stayed and helped the rest of the day) came again and asked if he could help and spend the day with us again. He is planning to get an alpaca or llama as soon as his dad builds a barn. We also had several people who were helping with the Llama Rama event come over to lend a hand when they were free from their other duties. It was truly a love of llamas and alpacas. Come join the fun next year on July 29, 2023.



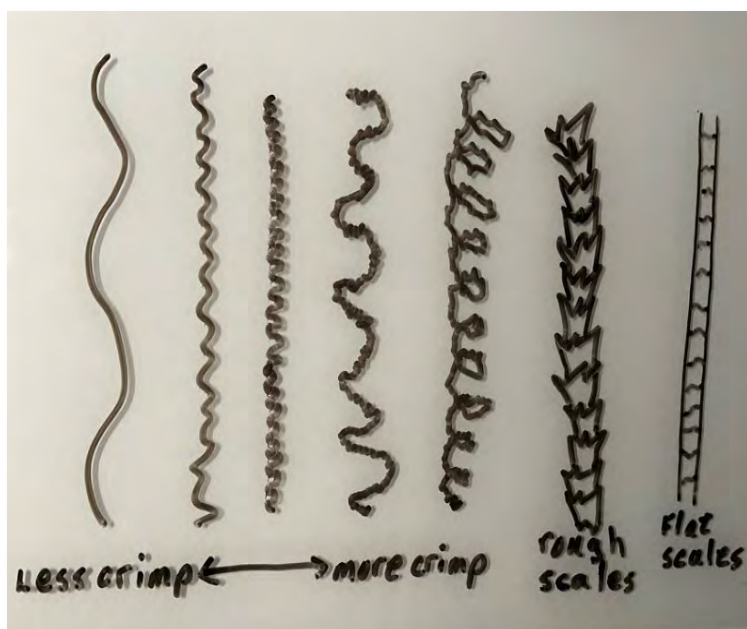
Experiments Using Alpaca Fiber

by Diane Bluhm, Hersey, MI

First let's talk about fiber basics common to all natural wools.

- Diameter in microns - Finer (smaller diameter) individual fibers are softer, more flexible, and more delicate. The coarser (larger diameter) the individual fiber, the stronger.
- Hand or feel - How the fiber feels next to your skin.
- Luster - Ability to reflect light, found in smooth fibers with less or no crimp and flat or no scales.
- Drape - How the finished fabric hangs or covers its wearer. Something that has drape flows; it is not elastic, and does not have memory. Alpaca and Llama fiber has drape, particularly the Suri Breeds. Here is another surprising Suri property; it feels cool to the touch, good for summer wear. Huacaya fiber feels warm to the touch, good for winter wear.
- Crimp - Bends along the length of the individual fiber that look like waves, sometimes like corkscrews, and sometimes a combination of both.

Crimp gives you memory, elasticity, durability, and shape retention. Generally the finer the fiber diameter, the smaller and more frequent crimps it has. You can see the crimps in raw unwashed locks. Water brings the crimp back to a commercially prepared combed top for spinning, but it will not be as organized as in the raw locks. You can test crimp by observing the change in shape from compressing it and then releasing it, or by measuring the difference in length of the fiber when stretched and relaxed. Alpaca fiber has crimp only in one direction, and does not corkscrew. Its crimp gives you only a little elasticity and memory. It does not bounce back like sheep wool. Some things like socks require memory and elasticity, so they will stretch as you put them on, but fit snugly once on.



Crimp from left to right: low crimp, moderate crimp, high crimp, high crimp and waves, high crimp and corkscrew.

Rough scales are dull, and don't reflect much light, are easy to spin because they attach to the fibers next to them while adding twist, but will felt easily with the addition of heat, water, and agitation.

Flat scales are shiny and lustrous, but also slippery. They can be hard to spin. The fibers slip through your hands before you can add much twist if you are not careful. This is especially true of Suri alpaca and Suri llama fiber.



The fiber on the top right is wetted combed alpaca top. You can see the crimp starting to come back, even though it is not fully dried.

The fiber on the far left is raw alpaca locks. You can see the lock formation and the crimp. The crimp is very organized in each lock, the fibers are close together and the crimp is consistent along the lock.

Lower middle is the Clun Forest Batt, the crimp is very tight along the individual fibers and it also corkscrews. If you squeeze it, it goes right back to its original shape.

Bottom right is silk lap with fibers aligned lengthwise but crossed along the length of the lap.

My challenge: To create a natural fiber yarn containing alpaca, to knit a soft, warm, strong, well-fitting pair of socks. Alpaca fiber is warmer than wool. However socks need memory or bounce back, which is found in wool, particularly the breeds from the Down area of Western England; Clun Forest is one of the Down breeds. Another manufactured fiber usually found in commercial socks is nylon, giving memory and strength.

I used alpaca combed top for softness and warmth. Clun Forest sheep wool in the form of a carded batt for incredible crimp in multiple directions, gives lots of memory and strength, but yet is still comfortable next to the skin. One of the downsides to highly crimped short fibers from the Down breeds is the ease of forming neps when carding. There were some neps in my Clun Forest batt. I wanted to use silk in place of the nylon found in commercial socks. Silk is a natural fiber, and has way more luster than nylon! It also can keep you warm. I used silk lap, which is a large blanket of many silk fibers going all different directions, for strength, warmth, softness, and high luster (shine). Silk lap is made commercially from the silk fibers that cannot be reeled, and is stretched over a blanket sized rectangular wooden frame in multiple layers, similar to a very large and thick silk hanky. These are sold commercially for batting in high end quilts/duvets because of their insulating properties. Because the silk fibers are intertwined, I thought they would also create some neps when drum carded, to go along with the neps in the Clun Forest batt, resulting in a tweed yarn.



Here is a closer look at the raw alpaca locks on the left and the alpaca combed top on the right after it fully dried.

I decided to blend 53% alpaca, 27% Clun Forest, and 20% silk lap on my drum carder. First I weighed out sections of fiber to make layers so there would be an even mix throughout the first pass on the drum carder. Then I carded small amounts evenly of each fiber across the drum carder. I then separated the resulting batts into strips, and pulled off small sections from the strips and fed them back through the drum carder for the second pass. I was happy with the blending after two passes, and because I was working with some fine and short fibers also did not want to risk more neps forming.



Fiber ready to go onto the drum carder. Left is alpaca combed top. Middle is silk lap. I cut the silk lap into lengths of about 3-4 inches and fluffed it up to separate the fibers to get it ready for the drum carder. Right is Clun Forest.



Feeding fiber onto the drum carder.



Finished batts.

Then it was time for spinning. I made eight strips from 1 batt, spun them with a short forward draft with some twist in the drafting zone, to make a semi-worsted yarn. Strong enough for socks, but still soft. I chain plied the singles to get a 3 ply sock yarn, working from one single you get three plies, by starting with a loop, pulling the single through the loop, plying to near the end of the loop, pulling more single through the end of the loop and repeating the process.



Finished yarn wound onto the Niddy Noddy

I am planning to dye the finished yarn, and am undecided right now about which color. I know the silk will absorb the dye to a deeper color than the Clun Forest or Alpaca, but I am not sure if there will be any tone difference between the Alpaca and Clun Forest.

Sources:

- The Practical Spinner's Guide: Rare Luxury Fibers, by Judith MacKenzie
- The Fleece & Fiber Sourcebook, by Deborah Robson & Carol Ekarius



Finished skein of sock yarn after washing in hot water, agitating and dunking from hot to cold water twice, to full the yarn and make it bloom. It has just a little bit of halo and is soft and a little squishy.

Hybrid Vigour And Breeding Llamas

by Keith Payne

Cheviot, North Canterbury, New Zealand

Photos by Jo Millar

The term *HYBRID VIGOUR* can in itself be a bit misleading as by definition a hybrid is the offspring of different breeds or genera; for example, a llama and a camel or a llama and an alpaca. Of interest to llama breeders is termed *topcross hybrid vigour*, the result from crossing a superior quality male (ideally purebred) to a lesser quality female to improve the quality of offspring. And *hybrid vigour* which is more correctly known to camelid breeders as *heterosis*, can have very positive or very negative results depending upon how it is managed.

Let's take a hypothetical llama breeder to illustrate this. A breeder is seeking to increase the overall quality of his/her herd and to produce strong well conformed animals. The breeder has invested in several quality males. Each male has five or more progeny available for viewing, the quality of which clearly suggest the sires to be dominant gened. Such a male could be termed *homozygous dominant*. Now to the best of my knowledge there is currently no clinical test available to determine if a llama is homozygous dominant (possessing all dominant genes) or heterozygous (possessing both dominant and recessive genes) and therefore the only reliable test available is to view and assess the quality of progeny.



Dolores and Winnifred

Now the females in this breeder's herd are your typical llama, having a mixture of positive and negative traits (heterozygous). For sure there can be some females which are also homozygous dominant, but this article does not concern them immediately; they will enter the equation a bit further down the track.

So the plan is to put the homozygous males over the heterozygous females. The resulting progeny will express *hybrid vigour*. Of course, the male will contribute his 50% of the genes, in this case all dominant, and the female will contribute her 50%, say 25% dominant and 25% recessive. These recessives result in a deviation of the male's dominance and the heterozygote achieves the same value as the dominant homozygote.

The results of this will be a superb cria; all the perfect phenotype expression of the sire without any of the conformational faults which may be expressed in the dam. In other words, we have produced a heterozygous llama which has the phenotype of a homozygous llama! This cria will grow and become taller than either parent (frequently will have long ears) and just simply be an excellent llama period! WOW!

BUT, let's remember that these offspring carry recessive genes (25%) which have not expressed themselves in the llama's phenotype. But they most certainly can express themselves in the next line of offspring. If, for example, a male progeny from this exercise were to be mated to a heterozygous female, then the resulting increase in recessive genes will

result in a sharp fall off in offspring quality. In order to maintain quality this progeny must be mated to a homozygous dominant gened partner. This will further reduce the percentage of recessive genes, thereby further strengthening

the genetic health of the herd, and also be expressed in the phenotype. A female progeny showing *hybrid vigour*, must also be mated to homozygous dominant males just as the males must only mate with homozygous dominant females.

Hopefully the above is an understandable explanation of a risk which can be encountered by a potential llama buyer. It underlines why a buyer should always insist upon viewing both parents (and grandparents if possible) as well as progeny from each. A llama offered for sale should express traits similar to those already on the ground. If the llama is taller, has longer ears and is phenotypically superior to both parents, then *hybrid vigour* should be suspected. If you happen to have homozygous dominant llamas in your herd, then you could be on to a very good thing, if not then take care and be prepared for quality reduction. If you are not intending to breed the llama in question, then this will not concern you.

Dolores (top photo) and Winnifred (bottom photo) are both progeny from a mating between a purebred male and a heterozygous female. Both are 2” taller than their mothers and 1” taller than their fathers, at the withers. Now 3 years old, they have been mated to unrelated purebred males. Both have longer than average ears. Both are considered to express hybrid vigour (heterosis).

Author’s Comment – genetics is a fascinating yet extremely complex subject. It gives me a head spin. I have tried my best to take a topic, the explanation of which could make most llama folk dizzy as well, and present it in a way to be as accurate as possible and hopefully informative so llama breeders can make more knowledgeable decisions for their herds. I apologize to all students of genetics who feel my approach is too simple, in which case I will have achieved my objective.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Our “Officially Amazing” Mama Mananita

By Kate Blackburn
Antelope Alpacas, LLC
Elizabeth, CO

I’m pretty sure they laughed all the way to the bank when we bought her back in 2005. She was just eight years old, part of our starter herd, and boy, was she a handful. One of the local vets even categorized her as a wicked wa-hee-nee. It took at least two people to wrestle a halter on to her and when she kicked, she really packed a wallop. I used to say that she was the Karate Kid’s mama. She’d always try to knock your head off your block and THEN ask questions. But what did we know? My husband and I were newbies and just getting started as alpaca breeders. We had made a pact. When we bought our starter herd of four alpacas, we agreed that they would never be sold. They would live out the rest of their lives with us.

Mananita came to us with her six-month-old baby boy by her side and a free breeding. That breeding gave us the first cria born on our ranch in 2006, a beautiful baby girl. That’s when we started calling her Mama. Her next two crias were also baby girls. Ironically, they were both actually born on the Labor Day holidays in 2008 and 2009. What are the odds of that? Everyone was always hopeful to get a female cria and we





got three in a row. She was an excellent protective mother and took very good care of all of her babies.

Over time with some training, patience, and understanding, Mama learned to trust me. I was eventually able to get a halter on her without anyone's help and was always respectful of her back kick. I even taught her some key words like stand, touch, get dressed, coat, and walk.

Those words would prove to be most helpful in the years to come. She lost the vision in her left eye first and a couple of years later she lost the vision in her right eye. I found out when one morning she was bumping into the others and they were all spitting at her. We set up her own stall next to the others right away. She learned that her hay was always here and her water was always there. We also set up her own pen within a pen outside so she

could get some fresh air and sunshine and still be with the others too. I would tell her to stand and get dressed, put a halter on her, then take her on a guided walk around the property to exercise her legs. With my elbow resting on her neck as we walked, I would tell her that I would help to be her eyes and would always take good care of her. After her right eyeball disintegrated and she was left with an empty eye socket, I would flush it out with warm water and put a dab of lubricating ointment in it on a regular basis. Mama learned a new key word, medicine. The vet told us that alpacas will often just quit eating and die after they lose their eyesight. Not Mama. Our special needs routine continued for another three years.

They say the lifespan of an alpaca is 15-20 years. As Mama was approaching her 24th birthday, I checked the Guinness World Records for the oldest living alpaca. I found a record for the oldest living Llama but nothing for the oldest living alpaca. So, I paid the fee and applied to have a new category approved for the "Oldest living alpaca in captivity." Three months later the new category was established. After carefully reading through the guidelines for collecting and submitting the evidence needed to become a Guinness World Records title holder, we established the date for conducting our formal record attempt and invited our vet and two independent witnesses to participate. The entire process was captured in photographs and video. The vet performed an examination that was observed and documented by our two witnesses. Her physical health was evaluated, her microchip number was validated, and a blood sample was drawn from her neck for DNA analysis by the lab. Her certificate of registration was documented evidence of her July 29, 1997 birth date, the microchip numbers were matched, and the blood DNA results positively confirmed her identity. It took three days shy of one full year to accomplish getting Mananita the Guinness World Record title for the "Oldest living alpaca in captivity". I could have paid a hefty fee to expedite the process but opted not to. We were so proud that our Mama was now and forever in the record books and declared "Officially Amazing."



Mama turned 25 in July of 2022. One morning in September, she was found lying down in her stall and she wouldn't get up. She didn't appear to be in any pain at all, her breathing was normal, and she seemed to be resting peacefully. Her ears twitched when we talked to her, and we were confident that she knew when we were there. It really didn't make any sense to load her into a trailer and drive a few hours to get her to the CSU emergency room. She didn't need to be

put through any unnecessary stress or procedural trauma. If she was going to leave us, it seemed to be by her own choice. I didn't want her to be alone so I spent 15-1/2 hours in the barn with her that day. We made her a soft bed of hay and covered it with an old bath towel for her to lay on. She was kept comfortably warm and I used a syringe to get a little water into her mouth. Our vet advised us that it could take 7 to 10 days and then paid us a somewhat strange compliment. She said that we were now paying the price for taking such good care of our animals. We had no idea that it would take so long.

Although in nearly 20 years our herd had grown to 21 alpacas and 3 llamas, we had never gone through losing an alpaca naturally like this before. We cleaned her up, changed her bedding, and frequently checked on her every day for the next nine days until she finally passed. She was privately cremated and is now back home with us where she has always belonged. Over the years we learned a lot from each other and it's comforting to know that she lived a very long and happy life with us. Our pact remains unbroken with Mama and now includes all the others too.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

A Good (Hair) Day

by Susi Hülsmeier-Sinay



As we know, Lewis the llama is always up for an adventure. He is at home as much in the wilderness as he is in the city. Last year, we staged an event at Wild Birds Unlimited at a strip mall in Bozeman, Montana and drew quite a crowd. So after this year's long summer season in Yellowstone with picnic hikes and pack trips, it was time for another adventure in the city.

It was a gorgeous autumn morning as we pulled into the parking lot in front of Capelli's, a hair salon I frequent in Bozeman. The trees lining the parking area dazzled with flaming fall colors on this bright and sunny day. It was Customer Appreciation Week, and Lewis and his two llama friends, Candido and Alicia, were going to bring smiles to the ladies and gentlemen coming to have their hair done, their nails manicured, and their feet pampered. After

leaving the salon with their spirits lifted and their hair a little shorter or a different color, customers had their pictures taken with the llamas who were munching the fancy grass out front. There were smiles all around.

Lewis's interest was piqued in particular by the announcement of a wine tasting that was going on inside the salon as well. As I wandered around



with him outside of the enclosure I had set up for the three llamas, Lewis checked out the open entrance with its Halloween decorations. Next thing I knew, we were stepping inside the salon. Located in a roomy warehouse, Capelli's is a very interesting and fun place with high ceilings, huge mirrors, dreamy curtains, and fantastic decorations. There are a number of doorways and turns and corners, a fireplace, antlers on the walls, and huge garage door windows.

Lewis followed me around and then checked out the wine stand. It seemed they did not have the wine he preferred, so I took a sip of Pinot Noir while he looked in the mirror to check his hair. In the meantime, the customers in different stages of miraculous transformation voiced their delight at Lewis' surprise visit. I was impressed as well. This part was actually not planned, I just thought I would try. It seems that Lewis is willing to follow me anywhere after his rescue a few years ago. I tried to encourage Candido and Alicio to walk through the doorway into the salon as well, and they flatly refused. They looked at me with round eyes. Are you kidding?!

Employees from neighboring businesses arrived and wanted to learn about the llamas. They brought their phones, took pictures and received fleece samples and brochures. They were excited to lead the llamas around. We were spreading the word about llamas and showcased their wonderful personalities in a completely different situation. It has been my experience that businesses will welcome events such as this one to draw customers with something out of the ordinary. It is a great opportunity to spread the word about our animals.



Lewis was having a good time. He likes being photographed and exploring new places. I received a gift card for future haircuts, so it was a win-win for all. The whole team came out onto the lawn and had a group picture taken with the llamas, then we packed up and rolled back home. Another pleasant experience for llamas and people, and I had the opportunity, over and over again, to gently but firmly refute the myth about llamas spitting at people.

It was a good (hair) day.

HIKING/PACKING

Packing With Llamas

by Niki Kuklenski, JNK Llamas

Originally published in American Livestock Magazine, Spring 2010

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You can haul wood with a VW Bug, but why not use a truck? A friend once pointed this out to me when discussing the fact that some people utilize less-than-appropriate llamas for packing.

I frequently have people contact me wanting more information about packing with llamas. They always want to know what makes a good packer. How much can they expect to pay, where do they find them, and much more? There are so many things that go into selecting qualified packers that are a good match for your individual needs.

The first thing you need to know about packing with llamas is that your animals should be at least four years old prior to putting weight on them. Llamas do not physically mature before this, and if you pack them early, you will only ruin

their conformation, compromise their long-term soundness, and you will have no pack llamas and, instead, pasture potatoes to support.

Secondly, don't assume every llama will pack. Some potential buyers foolishly believe because it is a llama, it will pack. That is like assuming every one of us would like to be a plumber. I would venture that about two out of ten llamas are good for packing. This number may even be a bit high.

What is the definition of a good packer? That depends on what your needs are. Are you going out for a day, a week, or longer? Do you carry a lot of equipment? Realistically, most llamas carry comfortably 65-80 pounds, but some top out at 40-50 pounds. A few really do carry more, but promises of more are usually made by people that do not pack and do



not breed pack stock. You have to test for yourself. You also always have to keep in mind where you are going. Elevation gain, distance and factors of this nature change how much weight you can expect your llama to pack.

Because everyone's needs are individual, it is foolish to think that a llama's ability can be assessed without unbiased, third-party trail testing or long-proven packing bloodlines. Currently, many long-term packers prefer llamas with "classic" coats (abundant guard hair over a very short, sparse undercoat that sheds out heavily each year) for packing. These animals, if kept raked out, can thermo-regulate themselves in heat and cold, stay well-protected from insects, sunburn and rain, and are simply more efficient in all different types of weather. True classic-coated llamas from proven packing bloodlines are rare. When they are found, you can expect to pay \$4,500 and up for them. Prices depend on quality, bloodlines and more. Training carries the greatest dollar value, and is a good value for the buyer because it means the llama can be trail-tested. Just because a llama has a classic coat, does not mean it is a good packer or built for it. You as a buyer need to assess the traits and qualities of this animal to figure out if it suits your needs.

There are many breeders that say they breed packers, but don't actually pack, and there are also breeders who just want to dump their surplus animals. Try to find long-established breeders of quality pack llamas from proven lines that

have done well in the type of packing you wish to do. Look at their animals and see if you can ferret out obvious conformation issues that may shorten their packing careers (post leg, fetlock issues, angular deformities and more — see “[Llama Conformation](#)” article).

Go out on the trail with animals you are interested in buying. Test them in areas similar to what you will be packing in. Are they slow, out of shape, lying down, stopping for rest or holding tension on the lead? How are they on the trail with the pack? Do they rub their equipment on trees; do they balk at logs; do they refuse to cross water (or leap wildly across); or do they quietly follow you through any of the challenges you come across? Do they “get it” after a simple crossing and after that follow you through the next similar challenge on the trail? Your ideal packer will stand quietly for saddling and loading. Then, while on the trail, this animal will quietly and ably follow you on a slack lead without eating and without stopping for a rest. Good packers will walk at your pace and cross bridges, streams, downfall and anything else you run across without hesitation.

An equally important part of your investment in a pack llama is good pack equipment. There are cheap and old systems sold all the time on Craigslist, eBay and other places. Over the years, there have been lots of improvements in pack saddles and packing equipment. Do your homework before you buy—not only will your llama thank you, but you will have him or her “running on all eight cylinders.” A bad or uncomfortable pack can cause a huge number of performance problems and make a great pack llama seem like a llama that can’t even pack. Some of the older pivot and aluminum frame packs cause unbelievable sores and scarring on llamas. I would highly recommend reading “Evaluating A Llama Pack for Comfort and Function” by Gwen Ingram. It is an excellent source for finding out about the various popular systems on the market from a long-time packing enthusiast.



Happy Trails!

Niki Kuklenski and her husband Jeff are very involved with all aspects of owning llamas. To learn more about Niki’s many endeavors, visit JNKLlamas.com.

FIBER

Woolly Tidbits

by Chris Switzer

The "look" of a Suri llama or Suri alpaca is quite different from that of a regular llama or Huacaya alpaca. When the wind blows, the long fibers of a Suri "flutter."

There are seven types of fiber recognized by the Suri organization: straight as a pencil, spiral, S-curved and others. Suri is lustrous, silky, and comes in many colors: white (most common), black (most rare), several browns, golden, beige, and even pinto (two colors -- brown & white or black & white).

Another physical feature is the top knot. Hair hangs down over the eyes. We have always trimmed this so that they could see and weren't skittish or fearful. Also, we hand clipped rather than using electric shears. Living at high altitude (8,000 ft. in Estes Park, CO), we found that the backline (along their back) needed to have several inches left for

protection against sunburn. We also would hand clip the blanket area to about 4 inches. We did this yearly or every two years. The lower leg wool and belly plus around the tail area was discarded as it is coarse and dirty.

With a true black stud male (Marcos) and two white females (Lilly & Lilly Ann), we had a variety of colors of offspring : dark brown, golden, pinto (brown & white -- never black or gray). Later, in our forty years of breeding, we had "surprise Paco-vicuna Suri" with a gorgeous beige color.

Preparation for spinning Suri is quite different too: opening locks from the cut end towards the tip end takes time, but it is necessary. Yes, it can be dyed. Pricing is dependent on what the market will bear. I sell a 2 oz. bag of white for \$10. Colors should get a higher price. Hand carding is possible, with opened up locks. Lengths should be similar and yes, it is okay to cut. Sending a clean, skirted, hand-picked Suri fleece to a mill for carding is the best. Some mills also spin yarn.

I consider Suri to be an advanced fiber. I teach a regular beginning spinning alpaca class, plus a second intermediate class, before I teach spinning Suri. Try spinning some Suri....you might like it !

What is your experience and preference? I'd love to hear from you. Contact me at chrisalpaca@aol.com. Also, I'd love some llama Suri to spin. I've seen the animals, but never had their fiber to work with. Is it different from alpaca Suri?

YOUTH

Llama Gingerbread Barns

On December 4th, Wunsapana Llamas 4-H Club gathered at member Emma Hunt's house to make gingerbread barns. We also had cookie cut-outs of llamas and alpacas to decorate the barns and paddocks with! It was a wonderful and messy time with a lot of candy and frostings.



Agritourism And What It Can Mean For You

By Kathy Stanko

My explorations into agritourism on the web led me in many interesting directions. This industry is growing.

From the Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

Agritourism—Any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, ranching, historic, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions.

I expect that many of us are engaged in agritourism, but we have not labeled it as such. For example, at our ranch, friends come out with trailers or trash bags to collect llama beans for their gardens. They always ask what we charge and we always say “whatever you want to pay” so it is more like a donation. While they are here they always ask questions about llamas and we educate.

We could also charge for the several ranch visits we have each year from people who want to see the llamas. We usually spend several hours with each group. Among RMLA members, I do know of several who charge for farm visits or ranch tours. And, perhaps you lease your packers to people for their trips. All of these examples are Agritourism. It is the new name for what many of us have been doing for years. Perhaps by re-labelling what we are already doing, we can expand our market and the camelid industry as a whole.

Click [here](#) to read an article from the U.S. Department of Agriculture about the growth and importance of Agritourism. Additionally, the links below will connect you to other agritourism resources.

- The California AgritourismUSDA News e-newsletter, produced by the UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (UC SAREP) Agritourism Program <https://sarep.ucdavis.edu/sustainable-ag/agritourism>
- In Colorado try starting with this link <https://www.coloradoagritourismassociation.org/>
- [Harvest Host](#) can help you bring travelers to your ranch or farm.
- This link connects you to a database for a state-by-state look at the [rules and regulations](#) regarding this industry.



Introducing an exchange student from Japan to the world of camelids.

In Parade Mode, Again

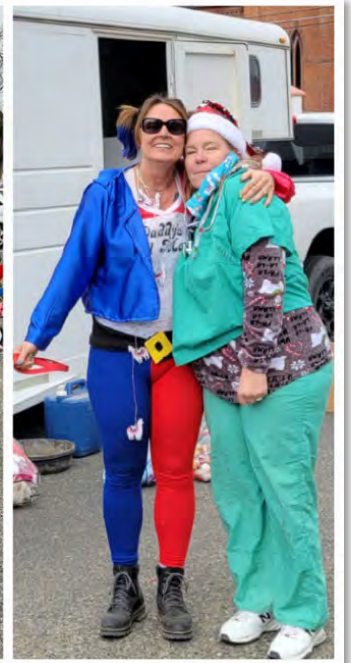
By Sandy Schilling, Chino Valley, AZ



A short three weeks after the Veterans Day Parade, some of the Arizona RMLA team were again in parade mode. The team attended the 2022 Prescott Superhero Christmas Parade. All of our animals were full of color and spirit.

Karen Freund brought her jailbird llamas with the Llama Patrol Section of Sheriff's Department keeping them in line. While Mette Goehring (our newest RMLA member) came in her scrubs to help with the llama wrangling.

Sandy Schilling brought Batman and Robin to the parade along with the lone alpaca of the group, Flash. Everyone was so colorful and full of spirit on this cool overcast day. Thanks to all of our families and friends for all of their support and help during this awesome event. RMLA was a crowd favorite at the parade and we are grateful for the organization's support.





Robin, Batman, and Flash are looking forward to more fun in 2023!