

# THE WOOL PRESS

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Telephone +500 27355

Fax +500 27352

sferguson@doa.gov.fk

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## **EDITORIAL**

This month's WOOL PRESS covers many topics for the farmer. Several of the articles have been written by non-DoA staff, which is excellent, demonstrating that not only some read the WOOL PRESS but also get involved enough to contribute. All contributions are always welcome.

Sheep contributions show why trials have to be done. Good theoretical ideas have to be tested and if successful implemented. If unsuccessful, recorded so farmers don't meow 'we did that before and it didn't work then. Why are you reinventing the wheel'.

Ear marks at lamb marking have been used for a long time in the Falkland Islands. There are a limited number of marks which are used on several different properties. The ear marks do not substitute for movement tags and maybe it is time to review the system of earmarking in the Falklands. Any suggestions may make a good starting point for an article in the next WOOL PRESS.

The Fitzroy Sheep Show was a great success. Maybe following on this show someone has some good ideas for FARMERS WEEK, which is the next big event in the farming calendar.

The article by Tex brings up some good points so I don't think anyone will ask him to go to the 'naughty corner'. Unfortunately, this slaughter season had no cases of hydatids turn up until the second last week of slaughter where suddenly 3 cases have been found. So still the fight goes on 15 years after it should have ended. This has at least given Zoe something to occupy her mind which is obviously starting to wander as she produced some 'cat facts'. I see the season is stretching. As the abattoir season draws to a close I congratulate everyone associated with the abattoir on another successful season.

**Mr Vic Epstein**  
**Senior Veterinary Officer**

# WHY DO WE DO WETHER TRIALS?

*By Peter Johnson*

This is a fair question, so I thought I would pen some facts, as well as my thoughts about wether trials in general.

A wether trial is a comparison between bloodlines looking at the animals economic traits. It allows you to compare 'apples with apples'. You are comparing animals being run in the same environment with equal nutrition. It is by no means a perfect comparison, or the be-all and end-all of genetic evaluation, but it is a reliable, simple way to generate useful data about how one line of animals are performing relative to others within the trial.

We are currently undertaking the second major wether trial to be conducted in the Falkland Islands. The DoA ran a wether trial at Goose Green with animals from the 1995 drop of wethers. The current trial is using animals from the 2006 drop of animals, so hopefully we will see an improvement in fleece weights, fibre diameters and liveweight gains, as we have 11 years of breeding and selection under the bridge for everybody on the Falklands between the two trials.

(An interesting article I have been reading about a breeding ewe trial whereby simply selecting animals from within a flock, using objective measurement (fleece weighing and testing) gains of up to 17% in fleece weight or reductions of up to 2.14 microns have been made on the flock average over 8 years. When chasing fleece-weight and finer micron in unison, the resulting flock was cutting 12% more fleece and was 1.19 microns finer. If this is the goal for some farmers, imagine what can be done when new rams are introduced using objective measurement in tandem with sound experience and sheep classing to aid in selection?)

The current trial is also evaluating carcass value, another aspect for comparison at the completion of the trial. This is a new alternative for production in the Falklands, with many farmers selling 'old season' lamb to the abattoir.

The first trial had 9 teams broken into three breed categories of Polwarth, Corriedale and Cormos. The current trial has 11 teams including Polwarth, Corriedale, Bond, and various Dohne cross animals up to half bred. The reason that these breed types and not any others are being evaluated is because they were the breed types voluntarily put forward by farmers.

Wether trials throughout the world are run usually on an annual basis, with many ram breeders vying to enter teams of wethers to prove to their potential customers that the animals from their farm will out compete other animals based on economic returns. At the end of the trial, they then have that published, un-biased information to use as a marketing tool when promoting their animals. They are done on a regular basis to continually benchmark where they are up to and ensure that breeding and selection is leading to economic gain for their clients.

Wether trials are not 'new' science and I hope that there is enough interest to continue running them annually. The opportunity exists for anyone wishing to sell rams to other farmers in the Islands to enter a team of wethers from their bloodline and let the proof be in the pudding at the end of the trial about how they perform, and what gains they have made

with their breeding and selection over the last decade or so, whether it has been with the introduction on new bloodlines, or using the more traditional breeds that have a longer history in the Islands.

If you have any suggestions or comments about ways to improve the format or running of the wether trial I would really like to hear from you, because I can not make amendments if I do not know what issues you wish to raise. If you think they should be run on another type of 'country', then perhaps you might consider hosting next years trial, giving you the first hand ability to witness what combination of genetics performs best in your particular circumstances, or proving beyond doubt that your current stock type is best suited for you and can make the economic returns.

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## **MANY BRANCH SHEEP COAT TRIAL**

*By Peter Johnson*

I have written a number of articles over the last few months about the sheep coat trial at Many Branch. We now have the wool results and have completed an economic analysis of the trial which is outlined below, within a report of the whole trial. If there are any questions, comments or suggestions, I would love to hear from you.

### **Aim**

To determine if it is economically viable to use sheep coats based on any positive change in

- Ewe survival rates
- Lambing Percentages
- Fleece Weights
- Wool Values

### **Method**

Approximately 400 mixed ages ewes at Many Branch were randomly drafted into two groups in April of 2006. One of these groups was fitted with 'wool-over' brand sheep coats, which had an initial cost of £3.17 each, while the other group was tagged as a representative control group. All of the experimental animals were weighed.

All animals were then placed back into the ewe mob of approximately 1200 ewes. The ewes were joined and lambed down as one mob. In December of 2006, lamb marking time, the ewes were weighed and whether they had had a lamb or not was determined by wetting and drying each ewe. Lambs from the trial ewes were also identified and weighed.

In February of 2007, the coats were removed and all animals again weighed. The animals were then shorn, and each animals fleece weight was also recorded. A single bale was pressed from the coated ewes and was core tested as a single lot for comparison to the remainder of the ewe flock 'A' wool.

## Results

The results of the trial are shown in the table below –

	Coated Ewes	Non-Coated Control Ewes
Ewes starting trial April 06	196	194
Ewes Shorn February 07	151	157
Death Rate	23%	19%
Lambs Marked	110	98
Lambs Marked / Ewe Joined	56%	51%
Weight of Lambs Marked	15.4	14.7
Fleece Weight	2.64 kg	2.68 kg
Average Micron (Bale)	23.4 $\mu$	24.0 $\mu$
Average Yield (Bale)	74.2	72.9

## Economic Analysis

The sheep coats were sourced from an Australian company at a cost of £3.19 for each coat landed in Stanley, including freight. This price is similar to the current price (2007) for the same coats, with any small variations due to changes in freight costs.

The coats took approximately 30 seconds to put onto each ewe and 20 seconds to take off. If we average that out with the time to pick up a new coat for the next sheep etc, then we will allocate 2 minutes to each sheep. At £6 an hour for labour, that is a cost of 20p per sheep. Taking the total cost to £3.39.

The manufactures of the coats claim that they are suitable for use for 2 to 3 years, and the coats at the end of the trial were certainly still in very good condition.

No time has been included for gathering to put them on or take them off, as this process was done at a time when the sheep had been gathered for another management function, so there is no additional cost.

A variety of wool price information was used to calculate the value of each of the fleece lines including 'wool cheque' a web based system for pricing wool types, and published information relating to Falkland Island wool, converted to a net Stanley rate.

The price for the coated wool was 309 pence per kg clean. The price for the non-coated traditional wool was 284 pence per kg clean. This equates to £8.16 and £7.61 for a coated and non-coated fleece respectively or a difference of £0.55.

It is difficult to put a price on the difference between number of lambs and lamb weights between the two groups. Based on this data, having coats on sheep produces 112.7kg more lamb per hundred ewes than sheep without coats at lamb marking. This could equate to an extra £0.40 a ewe based on abattoir lamb prices for wether progeny plus the extra benefits of ewe progeny who had a body weight 5% higher than their counterparts.

So the benefit of coating sheep in this trial equated to £0.95 per sheep. At a cost of £3.39

based over 3 years it is still a deficit of £0.18 per ewe for putting the coats on per year. In this instance, sheep coats were not an economically viable option.

### **Future Work**

Many Branch traditionally has an extremely high yielding wool, and the 2007 clip highlights this with an average of 72.9. Future coating work will concentrate on areas where traditional yields are low due to sand and peat.

150 ewe hoggets have been recently coated on George Island in a similar style experiment to the Many Branch. Traditional yields have been in the 50's and 60's so there may be economic benefit from excluding the sand and peat, not only for wool price, but for transport costs of the wool bales as well.

Other future work may look at the survival benefits of coating pre-lamb shorn ewes for a short period until lamb marking, for protection during the critical period post shearing.

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## **BEAVER ISLAND - FARM DIVERSIFICATION**

*By Sally Poncet*

Farm diversification comes in many shapes and sizes these days. Fortunately, we've moved on since the late 1980s, when in order to qualify for farm assistance from Government, sheep had to be the centre of your world 365 days of the year. If there's one thing the last 20 years of farming in the Falklands has shown it's the fact that there are other things besides grass and wool that keep Camp alive.

Cruise ship visits, squidding, imports, trucking, road building, winter jobs in town, summer farm stays, IT commerce, handcrafts, conservation projects, boat hire, inshore fishing, clothing design, knitwear, jam-making, whatever it takes to keep you on the land and inject more life into Camp, it's all good news.

Tourism was the first in the growing line of diversification avenues, starting nearly 40 years ago at New Island, Carcass and West Point. New Island has since expanded its activities into scientific research and conservation and the New Island Trust's research station is proof that 30 years of dedicated investment really does pay off. There are now over 12 scientists and staff working on the island each summer, with research grants coming in annually from various universities and funding bodies.

Beaver Island Farm, 5 miles to the south on the other side of Grey Channel, is about to embark in a similar line of business thanks to a research grant from the FCO's Overseas Territories Environment Programme (OTEP). The farm was awarded two years of OTEP funding to clear rats and Patagonian foxes from eight tussac islands in the Beaver Island Group. The islands include Tea, Little Coffin, Skull Bay, Channel Islands, Governor, Green and Stick-in-the-Mud, and range in size from 4 to 300 hectares. The aim is to restore these islands to as near their original state as possible by removing introduced predators, namely rats and foxes. The project will also provide employment and training opportunities: the OTEP funds include provision for labour costs to employ local people under contract to lay the bait, with training given on the job.

The Beaver Island Group Restoration Project as it's called, got underway last year when an application for starter funds was made to FIG's Environmental Committee. Funds from FIG's Environmental Studies Budget enabled Derek Brown, a New Zealand restoration specialist working with South Georgia Habitat Restoration Officer Darren Christie, to visit Beaver in early April. Derek joined Jerome and Leiv Poncet, FIG Environmental Officer Helen Otley and myself on SV *Golden Fleece* for a two day tour of the tussac islands. A couple of months earlier, I'd been able to survey the island's wildlife pre-eradication, working from SV *Damien II* with Dion Poncet and visiting Canadian scientist Carmen Lishman, and from SV *Porvenir* with Ken Passfield and Leiv.

Eradication is a costly and time-consuming business. We worked out that the project would cost, at a bare minimum, about £63,000. We will receive £36,000 from OTEP and the remaining funds will be 'in-kind' contributions. Falklands Conservation has provided the rat bait and the Antarctic Research Trust is funding the pre- and post-baiting surveys. Private donations have been received to cover shipping expenses (MV *Tamar* delivered 4.8 tons of rat bait to Beaver in February) and local business Synergy Information Systems is offering media and IT resources. Funds will be administered by Beaver Island Farm, and Leiv will be managing the restoration fieldwork, with advice from Derek Brown as required.

Success requires meticulous planning and 100% commitment from coordinators and fieldworkers. Close collaboration with Derek, FIG's Environmental Officer Helen Otley, Klemens Putz of the ART, the RSPB's Invasive Species regional officer Brian Summers and staff at Falklands Conservation, will ensure that this substantial overseas investment in Falklands' wildlife and the local economy is well looked after.

We plan on starting the baiting in late July/August, when rat numbers are at their lowest and food scarce. Channel Islands, Green, Little Coffin and Skull Bay Islands will be done this winter, Tea and Governor Islands in 2008. A team of 4 contractors (with room for volunteers should anyone be interested) will be based on Beaver Island for approximately 12 days, and accessing the islands by boat each day. This is an ideal opportunity for any farmers interested in seeing the far West, and learning how to go about clearing islands of introduced species. With more winter work guaranteed next year, and quantities of first class reindeer steaks from the Beaver Island reindeer herd to fuel the team, this is an opportunity not to be missed!

As well as rats, the project will be looking at fox eradication, first from Tea Island (300 ha), and eventually from Beaver itself (3800 ha). Patagonian foxes were introduced to these islands and also Weddell, Staats, Split and River Islands, in the 1930s from Patagonia. In 1997-99, an attempt was made to clear foxes from Beaver and a section of Weddell Island using 1080 poison. The attempt failed because unlike rats, foxes cannot be eradicated by poison alone. Appropriate follow-up methods involving trapping, shooting and use of tracker dogs, have to be put in place. By dealing with the Tea Island foxes first and trialling the use of tracker dogs in particular, the plan is to develop an effective method for clearing Beaver Island. Ultimately, the lessons learnt may benefit Weddell Island where the owners will be following our small scale efforts on Tea Island as they decide how to tackle their fox problem.

We will be dealing with the Tea Island foxes next winter 2008. Training of tracker dogs is an important part of the project. Two dogs are required, between 12 to 18 months age, obedience trained, and with a near-uncontrollable passion for cats. If anyone out there has two such young dogs and is interested in a contract for training them to the standard of obedience required – or if you'd like to find out more about those reindeer steaks - please give Leiv a call on 42316.

# HYDATIDS & TRACEABILITY

*By M Alazia, Port Edgar*

The March edition of the Wool Press carried two articles on dog pilling & hydatid by the senior veterinary officer & Joe Hollins. The first by Vic seemed to me that although he may have good intentions just basically seems a repeat of his previous articles pointing the finger at the dog owner. His last sentence in bold capitals states "We can't go on pilling for ever!" Well why not, even if we were 99.9% certain that the disease was eradicated.

The second article by Joe was a complete contrast and brought up issues about possible spread by turkey's, insects etc and a complete lifecycle that I and am sure others knew nothing about. For instance Joe says cysts can contain up to 4 million tapeworm heads all scattered about by turkey vultures at a carcass site. Had we known this we could have called our dogs to heel when out gathering & they were rolling in such sites.

I'm sorry if I am being unfairly critical as it's not in my nature, but I think department heads have a desire to leave their mark on a certain issue during their contracts. I remember a succession of Wool Press articles by a previous SVO about animal welfare in the islands & about how far behind the UK we supposedly were. Shortly after I was shearing for the first time in the UK and of the thirty odd farms I was at every one including an agricultural collage had sheep with untreated maggots, some close to death. I also saw other practises that in my mind fell well below the FI animal welfare.

Anyway cards on the table. There were 5 confirmed hydatids found out of the 2006 kill of 33,500 at the abattoir. We were pretty stunned when we were told that one was from our sheep, as we like to think that we are as diligent as possible. We were free from hydatids when Diana checked offal during a large cull kill in about 1997, and were free in 2005 from the sheep sent to the abattoir. As we were this year from the 168 sent this season which were 6 year old wethers all bred at Port Edgar and did not include any bought in stock as in previous years. The hydatid test on our dogs was also negative.

The first thing we asked last year was which sheep the hydatid was from. You know the answer! Not a clue. Well I'll give you the numbers & their origin; 236 left here by Tamar on 6<sup>th</sup> March 06, the first being killed on 15<sup>th</sup> March the last being killed on 13<sup>th</sup> April. 92 were 6 year old wethers bred at Port Edgar the remainder 6 years + came from 4 different farms on west Falkland & one farm on East Falkland plus one animal from Beaver plus 15 that had never set foot on Port Edgar land.

Therefore I think traceability needs sorting out once & for all and should be simple to do. Also to repeatedly say there was X amount of confirmed hydatids all unconnected so therefore it is a case of non compliance is not helping anything. We sent in a suspect liver last winter from an old double fleecer among 12 others that I killed that came in from land & sheep that we had just purchased, they were all riddled with boils which I thought strange (but they were old) The liver sample turned out to be negative, I think, as although I have asked twice for the result we have not been told. Shona asked us if we had been officially told, but to her knowledge she thought it was negative. Well I'll put it down to people being busy but reporting is a two way thing, as I am busy when shearing filling the shed etc etc then pilling & feeding dogs & remembering to ring or email the ag dept to say I have done so. As for hydatids at the abattoir I dearly hope there are never any more from anywhere. But if there is one from here & you can say it definitely originated & lived on this farm all it's life, & was caused by non compliance of pilling & offal control etc then I'll go & stand in the

naughty corner.

**Note:** The figure 4 million for a single hydatid cyst applies to the largest and most mature. The information comes from the Department of Primary Industries fact sheet, Australia. The duration of hydatid eradication campaigns comes from the WHO/OIE (World Animal Health) manual on hydatid. They are: New Zealand 1959-2002, and Tasmania 1960-1996. Both countries are declared 'free' but both still have occasional hydatids in the abattoir (Tasmania at 3 per million sheep, NZ at 0.35 per million sheep – WHO/OIE) Joe Hollins

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## FALKLAND ISLANDS EAR MARKS

*By Nyree Heathman*

The Falkland Islands has a number of different sheep ear marks (station marks) used for animal farm identification. As you will all be aware several of these marks are used on more than one property. By ensuring a border of a minimum of 2 farms between any two properties with the same ear mark, in theory sheep mix ups should be minimised.

The extremely colourful map included with this article shows the ear mark distribution that is currently registered with the DOA in the Falklands. The schematic shows all of the different marks that are currently being used. As you can see there is quite a variety, however, due to some of the ear marks being relatively similar to each other, it is possible for some confusion to arise. It is thought that the following combinations in particular could possibly be confused;

- End Half Penny & End Square
- Fore Fork & Fore Half Penny
- End Fork & End Split

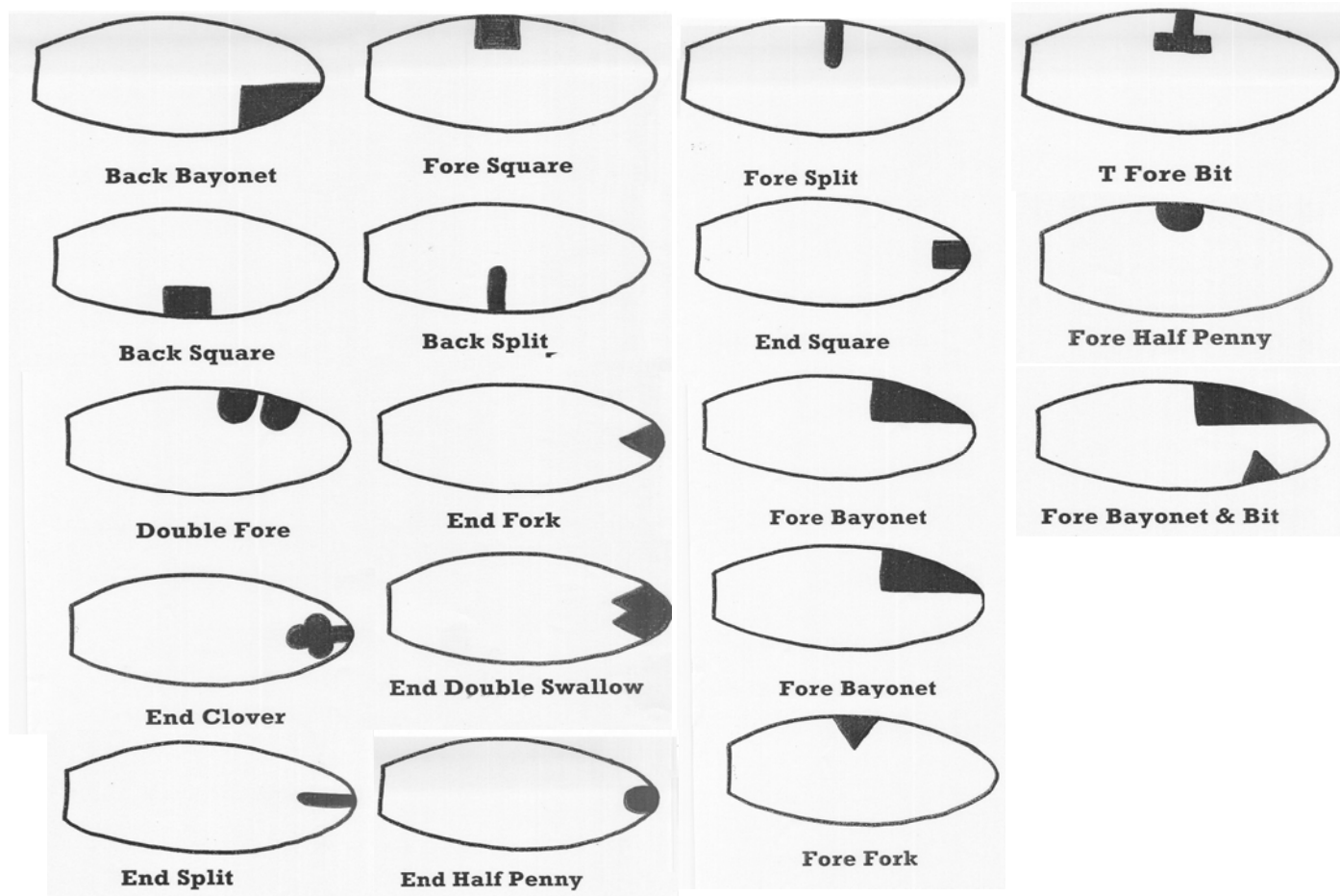
If there are any other combinations that you feel may be confused please let us know. We welcome your thoughts!

Similarly, there are a of couple instances around the Islands where the '2 farm boarder' rule has been eroded through farm ownership/management change and, in some cases, through camp ownership/management change. In these situations it is possible that stock may enter a property from one farm, and be returned to another farmer believed to be theirs. Although the chances of this happening are fairly remote, it is still a possibility.

We are keen to hear your thoughts on this issue. If you think that there is currently a problem, please let us know. In addition, we would welcome hearing your ideas on how potential problems can be reduced in the future. Some possibilities could include having some farms change their earmark or potentially having a wider variety of marks?

Anyone wishing to comment can contact Nyree Heathman or Neil Judd at the Department by phoning 27355.

## Ear Marks in the Falkland Islands



## FITZROY SHEEP SHOW

The 10th Annual Rural Business Association Sheep Show took place at Fitzroy on Saturday 14th April attracting 150 people. Sarah Clement, one of the organisers of the event, said the show this year was excellent and the best year yet.

There was the top number of entries so far from a varied amount of farms. All the sheep entered this year were of particularly high quality, which proved difficult for the judges and there were some very close results.

There were stalls set up selling handmade crafts, the spinners and weavers in action and Bernice Hewitt was on hand with face painting for the children. Michele Evans also kept everyone fed during the day and Dennis Whitney ran a bar in the shed. The bouncy castle was also put into action, which helped create a great family day out, with activities to keep the kids entertained.

Sarah would like to say a big thank you to all their sponsors, Fitzroy for letting the RBA host the Show there and to Ron Binnie for all his help with the organising and setting up.

### Sheep Show Results

**Class 1 – Mature ram over 24 months of age**

1st Cape Dolphin  
2nd Swan Inlet  
3rd Elephant Beach

**Class 2 – Shearling ram over 12 and less than 24 months of age**

1st Cape Dolphin  
2nd Swan Inlet  
3rd Moss Side

**Class 3 – Ram Hogget less than 12 months of age**

1st Home Farm  
2nd Wreck Point  
3rd Cape Dolphin

**Class 4 – Mature ewe over 24 months of age**

1st, 2nd, Mt Kent  
3rd Swan Inlet

**Class 5 – Shearling ewe over 12 months and under 24 months of age**

1st Swan Inlet  
2nd Mt Kent  
3rd North Arm

**Class 6 – Ewe hogget under 12 months of age**

1st Home Farm  
2nd Moss Side  
3rd Blue Beach

**Class 7 – Pen of three flock hoggets (male or female) under 12 months of age**

1st Elephant Beach  
2nd North Arm  
3rd Cape Dolphin

**Class 8 – Pen of three flock shearlings (male or female) over 12 and under 24 months of age**

1st North Arm  
2nd North Arm  
3rd Mt Kent

**Class 9 – Ram of any age suitable for producing prime lambs**

1st Cape Dolphin  
2nd Blue Beach  
3rd Rincon

**Class 10 – Ewe of any ewe suitable for producing prime lambs**

1st, 2nd, 3rd Fitzroy

**Class 11 – Pen of three prime weaner lambs**

1st, 2nd, 3rd Fitzroy

**Class 12 – Under 16's open entry**

1st Darby Newman  
2nd Demie-Rose Greenough  
3rd Ryan Poole

**Most points in classes 1 to 8**

Cape Dolphin

**Campion Ram**

Cape Dolphin

**Champion Ewe**

Home Farm

**Guess the weight of the fleece**

Sheena Miller

**Guess the micron of the fleece**

Iris Dickson

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## **CAT FACTS - SOME LIGHT READING TO FILL A PAGE!**

*By Zoë Luxton*

Many farms/households have a few moggys around because they keep the rat and mouse population down and require limited expenditure on food and maintenance. Some people have cats around because they enjoy the company of a feline, enjoy watching general cat behaviour and let's face it, not much beats a warm furry body on your knee on a rough night. Cat love is earned; you can't just expect it as you would from a dog! I personally find cat behaviour and interaction fascinating, if you don't share my interest you are under no obligation to read on!

Cats survive in many types of organisations, from solitary wanderers to multi-cat colonies. Behaviour problems tend to arise when house-cats are forced into multi-cat situations that they would not normally chose to be in. When cats live in a colony, it has been shown that they pick and chose their preferred associates – like people choosing friends. Preferred associates groom, rub, touch and nose-touch more than with other members of the colony.

Grooming and rubbing occurs between housecats and wild colony cats that are preferred associates. It is a behaviour that shows affiliation between individuals. Touching, for example lying together is basically a passive form of showing affiliation. Cats have been observed to lie together when the temperature was 35°C, so clearly they weren't snuggling up for body heat! My own Gingers are not too fussed with each other and only on the very very coldest of nights will they even consider sitting on the same armchair – with at least 6 inches between them.

Nose-touching is greeting behaviour that allows exchange of information and identification of group members. Because of the high rate of sniffing, rubbing and grooming between cats it is likely that every colony has a specific odour. This is supported by the fact that cats returning from hunting are rubbed all over by the other cats and it can also be seen that pet

cats rub all around their owners legs when they return. They are rubbing their gland secretions on you so you once again smell like you belong to their colony!

Cats communicate with each other in a number of ways. Visual signalling is based on posture, tail and ear position. When you see a cat trotting towards you with his tail vertically in the air, it means he is approaching with friendly intentions, invariably he will then rub you and wrap his tail around your leg, another sign of friendly affiliation. A paw being waved in your face as you are trying to see the TV signals he would rather you were playing than ignoring him. If you continue to ignore him, yet he feels he is the dominant animal here, his ears rotate outwards and he will slowly move his head from side to side with that amazingly haughty look that cats seem to have perfected. Submission and fear signals are reasonably obvious to anyone familiar with animals, flattened ears, tail tucked under, hissing and ruffled fur in the case of fearful aggression.

Interestingly enough scratching on objects is not just Tiger sharpening his nails. If it is on the outskirts of a cats domain it is thought to be a signal that the area is already colonised. Often cats will scratch objects in the middle of their territory, simply to say "I'm here, I'm also big and tough – look at the mess I have made of this post/log/sofa". Furniture damage is often an issue with indoor cats; mine demolished an entire three piece suite once, having studiously ignored the 2 pristine scratch posts purchased for them. Individual cat preference has to be recognised in such cases. Mine apparently find vertical scratching unpleasant and have hardly touched a sofa since I purchased a horizontal scratch pad with a springy rubber mousy on the end. I'm not going to start on urine spraying etc as it probably needs a page of its own, and there is only so much drivel about cats that some people want to read – if you are having cat pee problems however you are very welcome to ring for some advice!

My final snippet of information that I think is particularly clever is the nature of mating. Males mate with several females and females mate with several males. It is highly likely that queens given the opportunity have kittens sired by several males all within the one litter. This is not just because fertile queens are women of ill repute. It is known that males are protective of their kittens. By mating with several males the queen may generate a situation in which several males will defend her kittens, or at least not attack them, thus ensuring the survival of her litter. When a queen then gives birth, certainly in a colony situation, other familiar queens will happily nurse and guard her litter and possibly even deliver foot to the nursing female, perhaps showing the softer side to these highly individual and unique animals.

The comedian Eddie Izzard superbly summed up the difference between cats and dogs. While recounting the tale of Pavlov and his dogs (chap rang a bell before feeding the dogs, eventually the dogs started salivating simply at the sound of the bell because they learned that the bell meant food) he wondered what might have happened if you tried the same experiment with cats? It went something like this;

Day 1: Rang bell, cat went to answer door

Day 2: Rang bell, cat said no thanks, had eaten earlier

Day 3; Rang bell, cat shushed bell with paw and said had headache

You get the picture.....

# RAINFALL UPDATE - 1ST QUARTER 2007

*By Siân Ferguson*

First of all I would like to apologise for the delay in getting the rainfall information out to everyone, the Wool Press was quite packed last month. Thanks as always to everyone for sending their rainfall data, we are very grateful and I will try to be more consistent with updating everyone with the totals!

Location		2006									2007		
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Stanley	Rainfall	76	30	41	68	28.5	24	23	27	71	55	73	64.5
	Average	58	58	50	46.5	45.5	41	39.5	46	68	74	57	59
MPA	Rainfall	61.9	47.4	72.8	58.8	43.5	44.5	34.1	39.9	68.1	55.2	75.5	68.7
	Average	54.1	49.5	58.1	45.7	36.7	34	34.6	36.6	57.9	63.1	47.9	56.8
Bleaker Island		43	26	66	42	43	40	23	25	55	69	95	69
Cape Dolphin		50.5	39	51	45.5	30.5	23.5	21	20	15	41	60	36
Darwin		20.5	25	48.5	34	39.5	20	21	37	59	38.5	98	31
Fern Ridge		57	58.5	63	45.5	-	30.5	13.5	20	57.5	68	55.5	60.5
Head of the Bay		68	18	62	58	47	32	33	31	51	45	95	62
Moss Side		57	46	58	54	42	32	27	28	20.5	55	56	42
Paragon		42	43	18	14	12	29	5	11	25	10	50.5	26
Pebble Island		60	45	43	42.5	37.5	31.5	16	36.5	22	34	71.5	52
Port Howard		71.5	82.5	80.5	71	75.5	58.8	31.5	50.5	85	69.5	104	72
Saladero		26	45	-	-	28	21	12	17	35	30	67	25
Shallow Harbour		51	47.5	48	53	-	30.5	9.5	22.5	41	65.3	55	57.5
South Harbour		30	40	45	53	44	25	10	13	50	42	45	68
Swan Inlet		49.5	43	72	54	-	27	28.5	37.5	59	35.5	76.5	67
Wineglass Station		66	62	63	61.5	47	28	42.5	41	85.5	39	79.5	70

## TAKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

As part of the Careers programme at the Falkland Islands Community School, students participated in a Take Your Child To Work Day. Careers teacher Louise Taylor hopes the experience will motivate them to consider a career relating to the place they visited and use the opportunity to find out more about the qualifications and training needed to pursue their aim. At worst students can at least pick up some transferable skills and eliminate a working idea for the future – but we are pleased to hear that the student reports about the Department of Agriculture came back very positive!! For their day at work, students need to find their own placements, hopefully accompanying a relative but some of the more enterprising students made arrangements with other places. The day at work is intended to give students an insight into work issues they may not have considered and with GCSE options coming up soon, it is hoped that their experiences at work will guide students with their choices.

Louise believes all work experience is good experience to show links between what happens in school and what you'll have to do at work. Clearly, not every last fact from the school curriculum is going to be useful in any job, but team-working, listening to people, showing respect for your colleagues, communicating politely, information technology skills and some aspects of specialist knowledge (to name a few things) should be seen to be worthwhile. At the DOA, we had Dylan Stevenson shadowing Agricultural Advisor Peter Johnson and Robyn Davies spent her time at the Veterinary Section with Veterinary Services Officer Sarah Bowles. Peter and Sarah wrote about the day's activities....

### ***Sarah Bowles***

Robyn joined me for the day on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April in the Veterinary Office. Sadly the majority of our clinical work had been carried out on the previous day so there weren't too many animals to occupy our time with, however, she did assist me in the office with jobs such as filing, packaging goods to be sent to Camp and completing new EU fish health certificates. Although the animal side of things was relatively quiet, we did have some pets in and she observed consultations, blood sampling and treatments. I hope Robyn enjoyed her day and that it gave her an insight into work carried out by the Veterinary Service.

### ***Peter Johnson***

I had Dylan Stevenson join me and to start the day off we headed into the East Falkland camp to look at and discuss the range of trial work the DOA is currently undertaking. The long Rover ride was dominated by discussions about the merits of different sheep breeds, why science at school is important in an agricultural context, what makes plants grow, and the number of stomachs that sheep and cows have compared to pigs and humans. As a part of this trip around we stopped and looked at lambs being fed pellets in two locations as part of the DOA's new-season lamb trials. Dylan asked some well directed and thoughtful questions about what the Agriculture Department is up to and what qualifications you need to do the various jobs. I think he was also surprised to sit and watch the sheep and their behaviour with each other around the feed troughs. We also had a look at the progress of two different swede crops that form a part of the Grazing management trials. Related to this was the data that Dylan downloaded from one of our weather stations onto the laptop. After a busy day in camp taking it all in, the rest of the afternoon was spent in the office and shed. I would like to thank Dylan for coming along for the day and for his polite, pleasant nature and positive attitude for the day.

