



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WE HAVE A WINNER!

JANUARY 2009

Congratulations to Carol Lewis; her entry Ridgy-Didge has won the Name the Cavallo Brumby Contest! “Ridgy-Didge” is Australian slang meaning original or genuine, and we thought it a fun moniker for our little Brumby who, together with his herd, is roaming the great outbacks today just as the feral Brumbies have done for thousands of years.

Researchers of the Brumby-tracking project continue to trek out to the most remote areas of the vast countryside of Australia. Their goal is to find herds of horses that are surviving without human intervention, and to study and report their findings in hopes of “...improving the foot health of the domestic horse” through their research.

“The aim of this project is to determine if the typical shape of the feral horses’ feet from soft sandy country will develop into the typical shape of feet of the rocky country feral horses when placed on hard rocky country for six months,” writes Hampson. “The reverse case will also be tested.”



During the first 12 months of the project it has been confirmed that feral horses living on soft sandy country have long and often splayed hooves. Feral horses living on hard rocky ground have short, rolled hooves.

“We will swap six horses from each of these environments for six months to test the effect of the environment on the foot type,” writes Brian Hampson, Ph.D. student and coordinator of the Australian Brumby Research Unit. “The aim of this project is to determine if the typical shape of the feral horses’ feet from soft sandy country will develop into the typical shape of feet of the rocky country feral horses when placed on hard rocky country for six months,” writes Hampson. “The reverse case will also be tested.”

Horses will wear a GPS tracking collar for the six months of their release and a VHF beacon for relocation. Horses’ feet will be photographed, radiographed, and their loading pressures and patterns will be assessed using an RS scan pressure plate, both before and after the swap. Hoof wall growth rate over the six month release period will also be measured.

Thanks to everyone who submitted their entries to the “Name the Brumby” contest! The Cavallo prize pack of a pair of Simple Boots, a Total Comfort System Saddle Pad, a Fly Mask and a pair of XP Series Leg Protectors goes to Carol Lewis.

To follow the progress of Ridgy-Didge and the other Brumbies in this research project, please visit the Australian Brumby Research Unit website at www.wildhorseresearch.com.