

# BELTED GALLOWAY

## Summary

Extremely hardy and adaptable to a wide range of habitats and environmental conditions, the Belted Galloway has proven value for both conservation and commercial use. A gentle, placid nature and attractive appearance makes the Belted Galloway a very useful animal for grazing sites with public access.

**Hardiness** – a very hardy breed, particularly useful in wet climates and in year-round grazing situations.

- *Extremely tolerant of wet weather* – has a thick mossy undercoat & long wavy overcoat that sheds rain, enabling it to graze contentedly through the wettest weather.
- *Prefer to winter out-of-doors* – not ideally suited to being housed during winter months and unlikely to grow a winter coat in this situation.
- *Supplementary feed* – fares well on coarse grasses even during winter and may only need minimal amounts of hay or concentrate.

**Physical Attributes & Husbandry** – a good all-round breed of cattle, which is placid, easy to handle and of good general health.

- *Handling* – generally docile and easy to handle. Even animals in semi-feral situations quickly become used to handling if their circumstances change. Some individuals may have a tendency to kick. A polled breed.
- *Sure-footed* – is particularly adept at grazing on steep slopes without causing poaching or erosion damage. Flatter areas are necessary for resting and ruminating.
- *Containment* – standard stock fencing is ideal, but will respect electric fencing provided they are not short of keep and there is a strong charge.
- *Insects* – not particularly susceptible to flies and ticks.
- *Breeding* – good, milky mothers.
- *General health* – very good. Cows will usually live at least 10-12 years.
- *Size* – medium build, average weight of a cow 500-600 kg.
- *Appearance* - an attractive breed with a broad white belt around its otherwise black or dun body and is classified as a Minority Breed by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.



Marilecia Fraser (IGER)

**Grazing Characteristics** - adaptable to grazing and browsing a great range of species and habitats.

- *Preferences* – not particularly selective. Appears to take a wide range of grasses, shrubs and coarse herbs.
- *Browsing* – appears to take a wide range of shrub species. See table overleaf detailing sites where the breed has been used.
- *Grazing* – see table overleaf for site-specific information.

**Interaction with the Public** – a gentle animal with high aesthetic appeal.

- *Placid nature* – placid, gentle nature and unusual markings are helpful in achieving local support in potentially controversial grazing schemes (see example in site table overleaf).
- *Temperament in breeding situations* – not such strong mothering instincts as the Galloway and so not as likely to be over-protective of calves. However, calving may best be avoided on well visited sites. Bulls very placid in a herd situation.
- *Curiosity* – generally oblivious to visitors and unlikely to take any notice of walkers or dogs on a site.

**Marketability** - a breed with great possibilities for both conservation and commercial viability.

- *Commercial value* – able to produce tasty, lean meat off rough grazing. Fattening on improved grassland to finish within 30 months may be necessary.

## Sites where Belted Galloway cattle are in use & contacts

SITE NAME	HABITAT	DETAILS AVAILABLE	CONTACT
<b>Rodborough Common SSSI</b> Gloucestershire  National Trust	Limestone grassland common, with steep slopes.  115 hectares	Nine plus Belties were introduced in July 1999 to help manage botanically rich sites throughout the South Cotswolds. Winter grazing on steep slopes on the Common using electric fence paddocks. Cattle successfully removing thatch, Tor-grass, Upright Brome as well as suppressing/eating Cotoneaster, Scots Pine, Holme Oak, Silver Birch, Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Ash and Whitebeam. In summer, a variety of other wildlife sites grazed, mostly limestone grassland but also a calcareous marsh.	Paul Hill 01452 814213
<b>Boxmoor Trust</b> Hertfordshire  Boxmoor Trust	Various habitats: chalk grassland, arable reversion & floodplain meadows.	Different parts of the site used at different times of the year. Belted Galloways introduced in 1995 when sheep proved unsuitable on the edge of a town. Not very selective - Fescues and Timothy perhaps taken first, with Bents and Cocksfoot left until last, but still grazed. The stock browse a wide range of chalk grassland shrubs including Hawthorn, Cherry, young Ash, Beech, Blackthorn and Spindle. Wayfaring Tree tends to be the last of the browse species chosen. They browse the Juniper if left on site, but they are taken off before this stage as the Trust does not want the Juniper to be browsed. A good impact on Bramble, largely through trampling.	Phil Pennington 01442 240938
<b>Trendlebere Down</b> Dartmoor ESA Devon	Upland moor/ lowland heath interface, with bracken and gorse. Common land.	10 Belties of mixed ages introduced in 1999, grazing March – September, to address decline in grazing on common. Some sheep and ponies also on site. Belties moved to similar habitat on the farm during the winter, in preference to South Devons which caused poaching damage. The area is recovering from a fire in 1997 and the cattle have been found to graze well and unselectively. On leaving the Moor, the cattle homed in on roadside Nettles and Docks, species not found on the Moor itself. Good trampling of Bracken and Bramble in lying up areas and pathways.	Phil Page 01626 832330  William Kidner 01647 221391
<b>Other:</b>		Belted Galloway Cattle Society	Myrna J Corrie 01557 820218
		Rare Breeds Survival Trust	024 7669 6551

## References