

# WHITEFACED WOODLAND

## Summary

Rare and endangered, the Whitefaced Woodland is a large hill sheep originating from the southern Pennines, where it is known by the local name Penistone. A hardy and self-sufficient breed, well adapted to the harsh conditions and often-difficult terrain of the uplands, the Whitefaced Woodland has potential for expanding into grazing nature conservation sites.

**Hardiness** – a hardy breed well suited to areas with difficult terrain and exposed conditions.

- *Can withstand exposed conditions* – developed on upland Pennine moorlands, it is tolerant of cold, wet conditions.
- *Agile and active* – adapted to ranging over poor quality pastures and moors, often coping with steep or difficult terrain.
- *Suited to poor quality grazing* – does best when kept on rough pasture, as rich food causes scouring.

**Physical Attributes & Husbandry** – a large, self-sufficient breed, requiring routine husbandry.

- *Appearance* – a large breed, adult ewes and rams have an average weight of 63kg and 130kg respectively. Both sexes are horned; the rams have heavy spiral horns. Fleece colour is white.
- *Long tailed* – may be docked in females, but usually left long, particularly in rams. Tails are very muscular and a feature of the breed.
- *Fly strike* – not a major problem, but if tail left undocked, may be an increased risk of fly strike in lowland areas. Rams tend to get it in cracks in the horns.
- *Handling* – generally easy to handle. Rams usually friendly, but because of large size need firm handling; some keepers have found that older rams can be difficult. Can be worked with a dog.
- *Fencing* – standard stock fence plus single top wire sufficient. A horned breed, thus not suitable for containment within electric net fencing.
- *Lambs* – vigorous and quickly on feet.
- *Hooves* – can get foot rot in damp conditions. No problems with feet if vaccinated.
- *Brambles* – tend to get caught up due to rather loose fleece.



Caroline Lewsey

**Grazing Characteristics** – a thrifty breed which copes with sparse conditions and is relatively tolerant of unproductive vegetation types.

- *Browsing characteristics* – will happily browse Bramble and thorn bushes.
- *Grazing characteristics* – very catholic eating habits.

**Interaction with the Public** – a useful breed for grazing public access sites, particularly on larger areas.

- *Public appeal* – due to large size and large horns, which give the breed a striking appearance.
- *Reaction to people* – can be friendly and docile when regularly exposed to humans, but sheep from the hills are likely to be wary.

**Marketability** – as a rare breed with proven commercial attributes, there is a market for good breeding stock.

- *Meat* – lean with good flavour.
- *Fleece* – produces 2-3kg of fine (for a hill breed) white wool which will take any colour dye. Very good for hand spinning.

## Sites where Whitefaced Woodland sheep are in use & contacts

SITE NAME	HABITAT	DETAILS AVAILABLE	CONTACT
<b>Bluebell Barn</b> Norfolk	Orchard and scrub.	Garden/spinning flock. Good orchard grazers; no scour from eating fruit. Very good in woodland – will eat dead leaves and clear waste. Will damage immature trees. Love Bramble. Very intelligent and will come to feed bucket. Easy sheep to handle and maintain. Good wool for hand spinning and will lamb out of doors if weather is good.	Caroline Lewsey 01953 861088
<b>Contacts:</b>		Whitefaced Woodland Breeders Group	Mrs C Muddiman 01280 850677
		Rare Breeds Survival Trust	024 7669 6551

## References