

# Help us look after the wellbeing of the New Forest ponies

The New Forest Pony is part of the traditional forest scene and has been for more than a thousand years.

However what many people don't know is that, though owned, they are all left to live as if wild while out on the forest. They are watched over and cared for, but live

naturally finding their own food, water and shelter from the elements. Although they are an even tempered animal it is not surprising then that of the about 4500 ponies, some have developed behaviour that is unpredictable and sometimes dangerous, especially to young children.



## Please

take your litter home or place it in one of the pony-proof litter bins.



## Never

feed or pet the ponies or donkeys.

## Angry ponies

Will kick or even bite if threatened.



## Always

View the ponies from a safe distance.



## Stay safe

- Never feed or pet a pony or donkey.
- If a pony approaches you, move away. If you are sitting down, stand up and move away.
- Avoid coming between a mother and her foal.
- If you are camping, keep your food locked away. Even food left in tents is tempting so also store it in a secure airtight box.
- Picnics: be aware that food, rustling bags and even car doors opening may attract the attention of a pony. Please take all your litter home or place it in one of the pony-proof litter bins.
- Pony-free picnic areas: Fenced picnic areas are provided at Blackwater, Bolderwood and Wilverley.

### Contact:

Forestry Commission England,  
The Queen's House, Lyndhurst, Hampshire, SO34 7NH.

For more information about the New Forest ponies please visit [forestry.gov.uk/newforest](http://forestry.gov.uk/newforest) or call the Forestry Commission on: 023 8028 3141 (24 hr) or the Verderers Office on: 023 8028 2052 (Mon- Fri 9am-5pm)



New Forest  
**Ponies**  
Do not  
touch



Please... Do not feed or pet the ponies, it can be dangerous for you and dangerous for them!



# Look after yourself



**Admire the ponies without getting too close!**

## Feeding ponies

Dangerous for you and dangerous for them. Feeding and petting ponies encourages them to behave badly – pestering picnickers and hanging around busy roads and car parks. This increases the chances of them causing harm to children and makes them more likely to be killed or injured by traffic.

## Always view the ponies from a safe distance

Because they are attracted to people with food, some ponies will spend a lot of time at places which are popular with visitors. They may bring their foals with them and just like us, ponies are extremely protective of their young. Always avoid coming in between a mare and its foal. Be aware that ponies gallop and may move very quickly! **Angry ponies will kick or bite when threatened.**

**Human food can make ponies very ill and could kill them**

# Watch for the signs

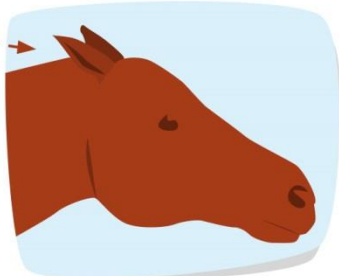


**Be aware that ponies gallop about from time to time and may move very quickly**

## A short lesson in pony body language

### Watch the ears!

The commonest sign that a pony is agitated by you is the ear threat, when the ears are held back towards the neck. If you see this **move away and the pony will calm down.**



### Watch the nose!

If you ignore the ear threat, it may be repeated with more intensity as the animal gets really annoyed. The mouth may then open slightly, the nose wrinkle and the nostrils flare, with a sharp raising of the head. The pony is really angry now! Back off immediately. **A pony can only defend itself by biting or kicking.**

For further information please call the Ranger team on 023 8028 3141

[forestry.gov.uk/newforest](http://forestry.gov.uk/newforest)