

The Hand

Assessing Animal Welfare



Assessing



... and looking for patterns

Good Welfare



- happy and well cared for
- good body condition
- no wounds
- no lameness
- no other signs of injury or disease

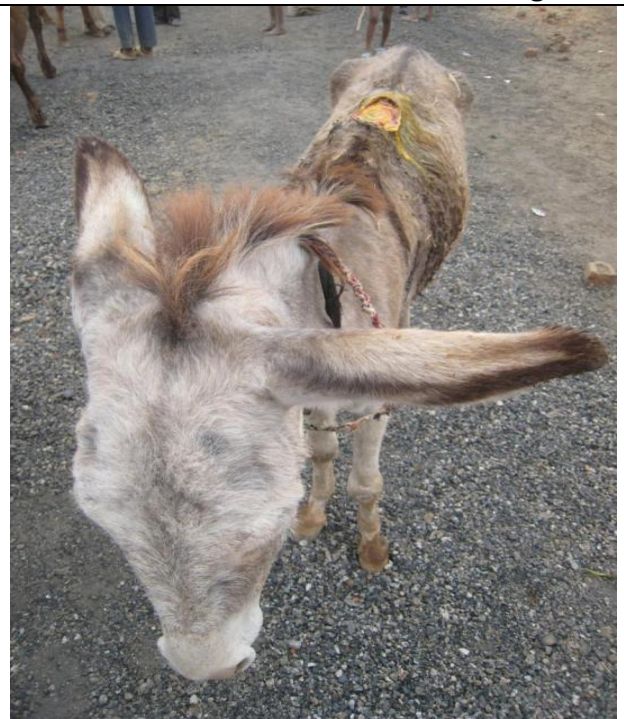


Poor Welfare



- miserable
- thin
- wounded
- lame
- ill

..... and often still working



The Hand - Guidance notes

The Hand sets out a very simple structured approach to welfare assessment that can be applied to one donkey, a group of donkeys, or a whole population of donkeys.

We ask people to describe donkeys in this structured way so that we can compare donkeys and populations of donkeys around the world.

Used regularly within a project this structured approach allows you to assess whether you are making progress in improving donkey welfare or not.

All scores rely on qualitative assessment on a scale of 1 to 5 (see below). So:

- **Behaviour/Demeanour:** Observing a donkey, ideally with its owner or while it is going about its business, allows you to assess its behaviour and demeanour, and also the quality of communication between the donkey and its owner/user. For example does the owner communicate gently by talking to the donkey, or communicate by beating it with a stick?
For the thumb, 1 is excellent behaviour and communication; 5 is terrible - a miserable looking donkey just being beaten - and with wounds to show for it.
- **Body condition:** We grade body condition on a score of 1 (skeletal thin) to 5 (obese).
- **Wounds:** As with behaviour, wounds are assessed on a score of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning no wounds, and 5 the worst wounds you've ever seen on a donkey. Look also at patterns of wounds and qualify your score with comment on where they are (eg map them on a diagram of a donkey) and whether are harness wounds (eg on back, under the tail, around the girth, on the chest), communication wounds (eg rump wounds from beating, eye injuries from whips, mouth wounds from bits), or tethering wounds (eg round the ankles).
- **Lameness or how the donkey uses its body:** This requires that you see the donkey moving. It is assessed on a score of 1 to 5 as with behaviour and wounds.
- **Other signs of injury or disease:** This usually requires more detailed examination - a clinical examination if you are a vet. In this case, the scoring is the same (1 no problems, 5 some serious signs of disease or other injury) but you would need to qualify this with details of what you have seen or a diagnosis.
- **The palm of the hand** represents the donkey's life, work and people.
It reminds you to look at and comment on the whole life of the donkey, for example: what age is it (or what patterns of ages for a population), where was it bred, what age did it start work, how many owners has it had, what happens at the end of its working life, its opportunities for relationships with other donkeys?
It also reminds you to explore the working practices, including patterns of use over the year; the attitudes, beliefs and traditions of the community; social and economic factors that affect the donkeys' welfare; and any other human factors.

Please try using this and let us know how you get on. It would be great if you could take photos of best, worst and average donkeys so that we can 'calibrate' your scoring.

The welfare assessment helps you to focus on the worst welfare problems and try to make a visible difference to those. This will almost certainly require that you work closely with the community to get their involvement in finding solutions.

Assessing Animal Welfare




Assessing





... and looking for patterns


Hands-on Donkey Welfare Assessment


Scoring system


BEHAVIOUR/DEMEANOUR				
HAPPIEST DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS				MOST MISERABLE DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS YOU HAVE EVER SEEN
1	2	3	4	5

BODY CONDITION SCORE				
POOR	MODERATE	IDEAL	FAT	OBESE
				
1	2	3	4	5

CAN USE HALF SCORES e.g. 1.5, 2.5, 3.5

WOUNDS				
A DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS WITH NO WOUNDS				THE MOST SEVERE WOUNDS ON A DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS YOU HAVE EVER SEEN
1	2	3	4	5

LAMENESS				
A DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS WITH NO SIGNS OF LAMENESS				THE MOST SEVERE LAMENESS ON A DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS YOU HAVE EVER SEEN
1	2	3	4	5

OTHER SIGNS OF INJURY OR DISEASE				
A DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS WITH NO OTHER VISIBLE SIGNS OF INJURY OR DISEASE				A DONKEY OR GROUP OF DONKEYS WITH THE MOST SEVERE SIGNS OF INJURY OR DISEASE
1	2	3	4	5

ANY SCORE ABOVE 1 REQUIRES ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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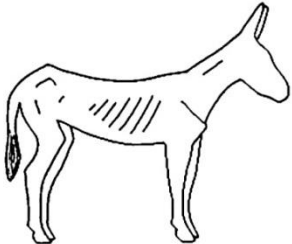

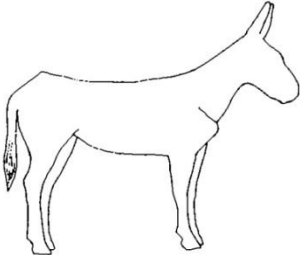

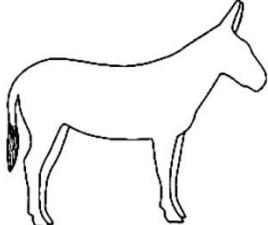

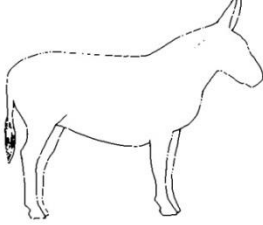

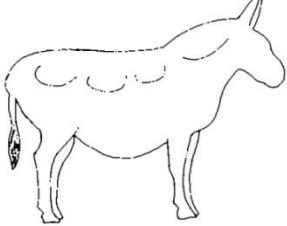

DONKEY BODY CONDITION SCORE CHART



**THE DONKEY
SANCTUARY**

Fat deposits may be unevenly distributed especially over the neck and hindquarters.

Some resistant fat deposits may be retained in the event of weight loss and/or may calcify (harden). Careful assessment of all areas should be made and combined to give an overall score.

1. POOR		
2. MODERATE		
3. IDEAL		
4. FAT		
5. OBESE		

Condition Score	Neck and shoulders	Withers	Ribs and belly	Back and loins	Hindquarters
1. POOR	Neck thin, all bones easily felt. Neck meets shoulder abruptly, shoulder bones felt easily, angular.	Dorsal spine of withers prominent and easily felt.	Ribs can be seen from a distance and felt with ease. Belly tucked up.	Backbone prominent, can feel dorsal and transverse processes easily.	Hip bones visible and felt easily (hock and pin bones). Little muscle cover. May be cavity under tail.
2. MODERATE	Some muscle development overlying bones. Slight step where neck meets shoulders.	Some cover over dorsal withers, spinous processes felt but not prominent.	Ribs not visible but can be felt with ease.	Dorsal and transverse processes felt with light pressure. Poor muscle development either side midline.	Poor muscle cover on hindquarters, hipbones felt with ease.
3. IDEAL	Good muscle development, bones felt under light cover of muscle/fat. Neck flows smoothly into shoulder, which is rounded.	Good cover of muscle/ fat over dorsal spinous processes withers flow smoothly into back.	Ribs just covered by light layer of fat/muscle, ribs can be felt with light pressure. Belly firm with good muscle tone and flattish outline.	Cannot feel individual spinous or transverse processes. Muscle development either side of midline is good.	Good muscle cover in hindquarters, hipbones rounded in appearance, can be felt with light pressure
4. FAT	Neck thick, crest hard, shoulder covered in even fat layer.	Withers broad, bones felt with firm pressure.	Ribs dorsally only felt with firm pressure, ventral ribs may be felt more easily. Belly over developed.	Can only feel dorsal and transverse processes with firm pressure. Slight crease along midline.	Hindquarters rounded, bones felt only with firm pressure. Fat deposits evenly placed.
5. OBESE	Neck thick, crest bulging with fat and may fall to one side. Shoulder rounded and bulging with fat.	Withers broad, unable to feel bones	Large, often uneven fat deposits covering dorsal and possibly ventral aspect of ribs. Ribs not palpable. Belly pendulous in depth and width.	Back broad, unable to feel spinous or transverse processes. Deep crease along midline bulging fat either side	Cannot feel hipbones, fat may overhang either side of tail head, fat often uneven and bulging.

Examples of Donkey Welfare Assessment Scoring Sheets

The Hands-on Welfare Assessment Tool or Framework can be used flexibly. Once problems have been identified, more detailed recording of specific problems is likely to be necessary.

The Donkey Sanctuary is also developing a Hand App which will become publically available.

The following are examples of summary recording formats developed for use in different places.

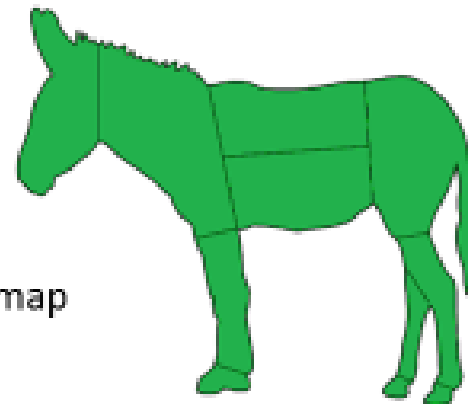
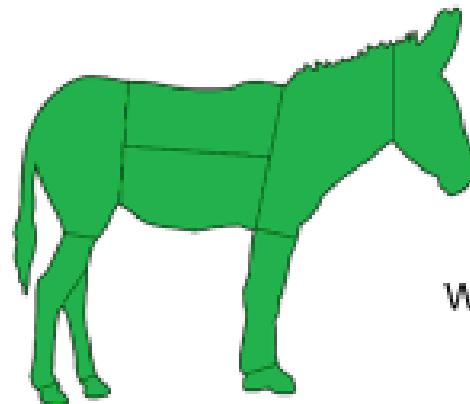
1. Summary Sheet for individual or group with wound mapping diagrams
2. Summary Sheet for individual or group
3. Scoring Sheet used for groups of feral and sanctuary donkeys on a Caribbean island
4. Hands on Donkey Welfare Assessment Sheet developed by our collaborating partner the NSPCA, South Africa
5. Photo of Community Annual Summary Welfare Assessment Sheet taken from Excel Workbook - highlighting the importance of repeating assessments throughout the year to pick up annual variations and trends

Enjoy and Good Luck!

Summary Sheet for individual or group with wound mapping diagrams

Summary data sheet

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Behaviour						
BCS						
Wounds						
Lameness						
Other						
Notes:						
Behaviour						
BCS						
Wounds						
Lameness						
Other						
Life of the donkey, Work and People						



Wound map



Donkey welfare assessment

Summary Sheet for individual or group

	1-5 score or range	Comments, observations, seasonal variations, concerns
Behaviour/demeanour & Quality of communication between donkey and people		
Body Condition Score		
Wounds		
Lameness & Use of body		
Other signs of injury or disease		
Other work or management practices & Cultural or traditional attitudes		
Other 'life of donkey' points		

**HANDS ON DONKEY
WELFARE
ASSESSMENT SHEET**
from NSPCA, SOUTH
AFRICA

Behaviour (donkey & owner)
1 - Friendly/comes forward/kind owner
2 - Shy
3 - Nervous
4 - Aggressive/very nervous
5 - Non-responsive

Body Condition
0 - emaciated/pts?
1 - Poor
2 - Fair
3 - Good/Ideal
4 - Fat

Wounds (Harness/whip/harm)
1 - NO wounds
1.5 - scars
2 - superficial wound/s
3 - tissue/muscle wounds
4 - serious wound/s
5 - Vet/PTS

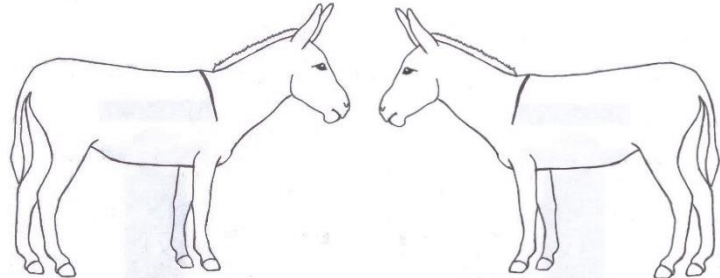
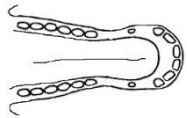
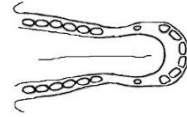
Lameness
1 - 100% fine
2 - tenderness
3 - slight limp
4 - limping badly
5 - can't walk

Other Injury/Disease/Parasites
1 - 100% fine
2 - of concern
3 - needs minor treatment
4 - serious
5 - Vet/PTS

Bit/Bridle/Breastplate CONDITION
1 - Very Good
2 - Good
3 - Acceptable
4 - Poor
5 - Very Bad/Removed

Bit/Bridle/Breastplate FITMENT
1 - Very Good
2 - Good
3 - Acceptable
4 - Poor
5 - Very Bad/Removed

Project: _____ Inspector: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ Area: _____

Owners Name _____ AGE of oldest donkey _____						Behaviour & Demeanour	Body Condition Score	Wounds	Lameness	Other injuries or disease	Bit Condition/Fittment	Bridle Condition/Fittment	Breastplate Condition/Fittment		
Number Owned	Adult Male (Castrated?)	Young Male<3	Adult Female	Young F/male<3	Foal										
Donkey Name _____ aM/C jM aF jF							Poor Fair Good								
Donkey Name _____ aM/C jM aF jF							Poor Fair Good								
Donkey Name _____ aM/C jM aF jF							Poor Fair Good								
Donkey Name _____ aM/C jM aF jF							Poor Fair Good								
Total:															CARTS 2 wheels _____ 4 Wheels _____

Comments _____

