ALBC News
Ad Rates

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Conserving rare breeds since 1977

Ancient White Park Cattle in North America

By Wes Hentborne

Ancient White Park cattle in North America have made some large strides in the last 20 years. In 1989, there were fewer than 20 purebred females of breeding age on the North American continent. In 2010, there will be over 600 calves born as the population continues to grow. This year also marks a milestone for the growth of the breed as its status has been changed from Critical to Threatened on the ALBC Conservation Priority List. The following outlines the challenges and successes the breed has faced throughout its history.

History

This breed has its past truly rooted in the midst of antiquity. Some of the earliest historic records from Britain mention the breed. While historians have disputed whether the cattle are descended from wild aurochs or domestic cattle introduced by the Romans, it is clear that the wild, white cattle herds of medieval times originated from that time. Familiar herd names in the breed that date back hundreds of years include Dynevor, Chartley, and Cadzow. The famous Chillingham herd also dates from

The Ancient White Park is an excellent forager known for its high fertility, easy calving, extreme adaptability, and hardiness. Photo by Wes Hentborne.

of its long-term priorities and contacted the King Ranch in Texas to provide a home for the cattle.

The cattle stayed at the King Ranch from the early 1940s until the early 1980s when the entire herd was sold to the Mueckly family in Polk City, Iowa. The Mueckly's culled the herd for type and maintained the ancient horned animals separately from their more commercial

second goal was to simply increase the population numbers.

Joywind Farms, Seed Savers, Mark Fields, and the B Bar Ranch worked very closely together in the early 1990s. Two bulls were exported to Canada to help that small program get off the ground. Because half of the cows purchased by the B Bar Ranch lacked a legible Bang's tattoo or sufficient documentation of brucellosis vaccination, they were not allowed to

Spanish Goat Rescue Underway

A volunteer holding the young goat removed from the island.

Volunteers crowding near to the island to begin the transfer of the goats to the mainland

Volunteers docking the boat in order to unload the first doe.

ALBC staff member Margene Bender and volunteers assist with loading the goats into the transport trailer.

The Spanish goat herd on the island in their natural habitat.

George, one of ALBC's principle volunteers for the rescue, feeding the goats.

The goats were transported to Breadgrove Gardens and released. They immediately took to their new surroundings and began browsing and exploring. All rescue photos by ALBC staff.

Rates

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