

WSAG Newsletter

August 2018



Your New Committee:

Following the AGM and due to unforeseen circumstances there have been a few changes to the committee. The committee are currently:

Chairman: Roger Mount

Treasurer: Iain Sharp

Secretary: Julia Berry (co-opted)

Membership Secretary: (Vacant)

Others: Val Fullerlove

Pauline Key

Harry Edwards

Jay Holland

Anne Cheston

More info about each of our committee will be included in the biogs later in this newsletter and in future newsletters. You can also come and meet the committee at the 'Open Afternoon' at Roger Mounts on 19-Aug-18 — see events for more details. The new committee is keen to make the group relevant, up to date and responsive, informative and above all fun. If you have any ideas about the group and what you would like us to do please don't hesitate to contact a committee member.



Upcoming Events

Your committee are working hard to put together a program of events. These will be updated and publicised on the WSAG website and Facebook as soon as we have the details.

So far we have:

- 19-Aug-18 Roger Mount open farm
1:00pm Snowhill Hill Barn, GL54 5XX
- Sep-18 Feeding for Fibre—Paul Vallely
(Owner/Manager of AAFT)
Details/Location/Cost to be advised
- 10-Nov-18 The Midlands Championships
Three Counties Showground
- Feb-19 AGM 2019
- TBA Talk: Pasture Management
- TBA Visit: Mill Tour
- TBA Sharing: Basic Husbandry
- TBA Sharing: What to do with your fleece
- TBA Sharing: Basic Handling
- TBA Social: BBQ

If there is anything else you would like to see, please let us know.



Feeding for Fibre

Paul Vallely has a long history with fine fibres. He started with Merino sheep on his farm. He bought a fibre measurement machine and set up a service for Merino breeders. Alpaca breeders soon approached him for his help and he set up AAFT (Australian Alpaca Fibre Testing) which now analyses fibre from 40,000 animals around the world. He has agreed to spend a day with us helping us understand fibre analysis, breeding for the fibre and related fibre topics. This is a great opportunity to come and learn more about alpaca fibre, what is good and bad about it, how to get it analysed and how to understand the results. He will also update us on the trials that have been running to look at the effects on nutrition on fibre.

The workshop will be held on one day during the weekend of 22/23 Sep. We will be finalising arrangements in the near future and will keep you informed.



Julia Berry

Hello, we live on a forty acre farm on the Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire borders. We started our journey with alpacas 5 years ago. We started with 4 pregnant females and now, once our birthing is complete this year, we will hopefully have 26!!

We have learnt such a lot in those 5 years and I know there is still lots more to learn. The journey has lead me down paths I hadn't expected - I have learnt to spin and weave and my passion is to try and promote the benefits and qualities of the very best of alpaca fibre.

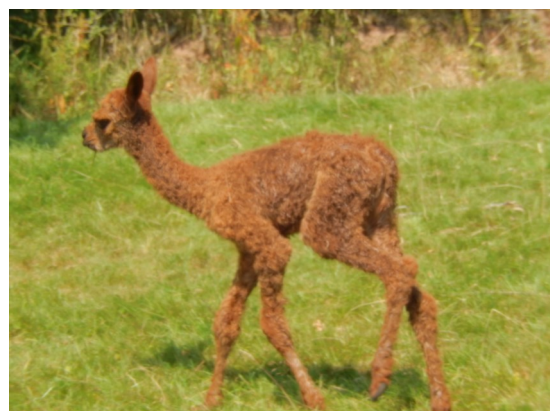


The Midlands Championship 10-Nov-18

This is a new show that the group held for the first time last year and was such a success it is being held again this year. It is held in the sheds at the Three Counties Showground. Like any show there is a lot of work behind the scenes and on the day so if you can spare any time please let a committee member know. The more helpers there are the more enjoyable it is for all of us. In addition, if you have any ideas about sponsorship of any aspect of the show that would also be most welcome. The more profitable we can make the show the more money we have for activities next year.

Membership 2018

Have you renewed your membership for 2018? £20 per farm/family. Payable to WSAG, BACS payment to: Sort Code: 30-95-72, Account No: 40049060, Ref: Your Name or cheque made payable to West Shires Alpaca Group and sent to Iain Sharpe, The Orchards, The Village, Abberley, Worcs, WR6 6BN.





Three Counties Halter and Fleece Show

Having decided to reduce the size of our tent this year, we actually had the most entries that we have seen for some years with over 150 entries by owners from a large geographic area.

With some juggling of the pen planning they were all fitted in but the seating around the show ring had to be reduced. Also we lost the “village show” feel as the straw bales we had been provided with in previous years were not available, instead we had fold up chairs. We will need to review what we do next year and whether we revert to a larger tent.

Rob Bettinson did a sterling job judging the halter show along with apprentice judge Kevin Hamstra. The fleece show was judged by Barbara Hetherington. Congratulations go to all our members who took part but in particular to Roger Mount for his 5 halter champion sashes and two fleece champion sashes and to Jay Holland for his Champion and Best British Bred in the Halter show and his Supreme Champion Suri fleece. Something for us all to aspire to!!



Many thanks go to those involved in organising the show and those that helped on the day to make it another successful event.

Iain Sharp

Hello, Anne & I entered the world of Alpacas in 2015 and have enjoyed every moment of it. Over the years we’ve been on various holidays and noticed alpacas in the fields around us, but never did we imagine that we would one day own some!

Like many people we started out with 4 pregnant females and have gradually increased our numbers to 12 (7 girls and 5 boys) and are in the process of organising our mating's this year. We’ve learnt such a lot over the past few years and have found WSAG and it’s members to be a great source of learning and support, where nothing is too much trouble and no question is a silly question.


Between us we have attended a number of courses and seminars, from basic husbandry, to parasitology, neonatal and shearing courses etc. each having proven to be immensely useful: everyday really is a school day!


Alpacas really are great animals to have around, intelligent and inquisitive each with their own unique personality, from aloof ‘gaffer’ of the herd to the screaming spitty monster with a mouth like a pump action shot gun, who will not hesitate to cover you head to toe in green goo at the mere suggestion of an injection—they have a good aim!

The social aspect has been good fun too, we’ve found that Alpaca people are pretty affable, particularly so in WSAG!



Find us on:

 : www.westshiresalpacagroup.org.uk

 : West Shires Alpaca Group