

The BMA concludes that in order to keep rabies out of Britain, either the present system of quarantine must be retained, or a system adopted similar to the Scandinavian one, but with extra safeguards. These extra safeguards would be: facilities for additional serological testing at the port of entry in doubtful cases; identification on implanted microchips using an internationally agreed numbering system and a central register; inclusion of this number on a computerized system stored by MAFF, as an extension of their ANIMO (Animal Movements) system for livestock.

This book is well written, well illustrated and well indexed. There are Appendices on vaccine production past and present. In 140 pages it covers a lot of ground. It gives no advice to clinicians or to people dealing with stray dogs, but it sets out clearly the arguments for and against quarantine as a means of preventing the entry of rabies into Britain, and it deserves to be widely read.

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Equus caballus: On Horses and Handling

Jan May (1995). J A Allen & Co Ltd: London. 122pp. Hardback. Obtainable from the publishers, 1 Lower Grosvenor Place, Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0EL, UK (ISBN 0 85131 616 6). Price £15.95.

It is only in recent years that we have seen the emergence of books for horse owners that deal purely with horse handling procedures. Previously advice on 'handling' was confined to specifics, such as how to pick up a horse's foot, with very little on behavioural principles.

I therefore wholeheartedly agree with the writer's opening sentiments that on the whole 'many people are dangerously ignorant about what makes and maintains good manners in a horse'. Instead of looking at the world through the horse's eyes and handling them accordingly, many horse owners attempt to outsmart them with human thinking, often with disastrous results. How many people own or have owned a horse that is difficult to load? will not stand tied? pushes or barges? shies? rears? bucks or bolts?

Horses *are* what we make them and Jan May seeks to give the reader an insight into the horse's behaviour and will make us all better handlers, benefiting ourselves and ultimately the horse.

The book is in three parts. Part one deals with the language of the horse; part two, hands on experience; and part three is a guide to curing problems.

Part one – the language of the horse begins with an outline of the basic behavioural characteristics of the horse. It is by no means a comprehensive explanation but does highlight the most important principles, particularly as they relate to handling. The section then goes on to describe how to 'read' the horse through its body language. This is an important skill to learn since it is the only way in which the horse can communicate his moods, feelings and reactions to us. Finally the writer deals with fear and motivation in the horse and I found this section particularly readable. Three points come across. Firstly, that cruelty, pain and abuse have no place in the training of any horse, and invariably when this approach is taken a 'problem' animal will result. Secondly, it is the 'thinking' horseman that gets results – 'There is nothing casual or vague about their manner when around horses. They display an

alertness and confidence born of knowing they will reach their stated goal. This involves kindness too, and these skills always produce the same result, an obedient horse displaying a willingness to oblige.' Finally Jan May points out the other extreme, which in my experience is all too common, that is the overly sensitive or emotional horse owner who fails to give the horse the boundaries of correct conduct. In these cases the horse invariably takes control and, because of fear and inexperience on the handler's part, rapidly develops into a 'problem' animal.

Part two – hands on experience deals mainly with the effective use of the so-called 'war bridle', the handling of the foal and other essentials such as picking up feet, leading, lungeing and loading. This is good background reading for any horse owner and I believe that most people would learn from it. Putting the ideas explained into practice, however, would demand not only a thorough comprehension of all the basic principles that are described but also the necessary practical skills and ability.

Part three – a guide to curing problems starts with a cautionary note 'If you do feel worried about trying any of these methods yourself it is strongly recommended that you employ someone who is thoroughly experienced in horse handling'. When you read the detail of the suggested 'cures' it is clear that many of the practices should not be attempted by the novice. Jan May obviously has a great deal of experience handling problem horses, however, I believe many of the techniques explained within this section are well beyond the scope of the average owner.

All in all this is a very readable book which all horse owners will learn from. There is little doubt that the horse's welfare will benefit from people learning more about how they should handle their animals, but perhaps the most important message is that 'Horses *are* what we make them'. If at the very least after reading this book owners realize they lack the confidence and ability to teach basic skills to the horse, and are encouraged to seek help from professional trainers, then horse welfare will have benefited.

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Restraint and Handling of Wild and Domestic Animals, 2nd Edition

Murray E Fowler (1995). Iowa State University Press: Ames. 383pp. Hardback. Obtainable from the publishers, 2121 S State Avenue, Ames IA 50014, USA (ISBN 0 8138 1892 3). Price US\$64.95.

In his preface to this second edition, the author mentions that he has utilized his '5 Ps' formula for restraint procedures (namely *Success = Plan + Prepare + Practise + Produce + Persist*) in all facets of his life. This book is strong supporting evidence that this is so. It is carefully considered, well researched, painstakingly prepared, and an excellent book. It describes techniques for physical and chemical restraint of a wide range of domestic and non-domestic species. The great strength of the book is the wealth of information it provides on physical restraint techniques. Although valuable information is included also on suitable chemical agents and doses for various taxa, the coverage of chemical restraint is relatively brief.