

Shackleford Banks Horse Herd Update 2009 12-01

On October 20, #76 Daisy surprised us with a filly, #5W Desdemona. Daisy had tested "not pregnant" in January 2009 because she was not far enough along for the test to detect her pregnancy. She had been contracepted in 2008. So, we didn't expect a foal from her in 2009 . . . until the summer when it became clear that she was growing ever wider.

This was not the first time she had conceived after the contraception antibody level had dropped. The antibodies should provide effective birth control for 7 or 8 months, which is usually the duration of breeding season. Daisy was contracepted in 2005 and produced a pretty chestnut filly, #9S Donoma, in 2006. Donoma has left her natal harem and is moving from harem to harem trying to find a comfortable fit. Of course the stallions are fighting over her!

The 2009 foals were named with a Shakespearean character theme. The first letter of the foal's name is the same as its dam's. Foals are: Sprite, Adriana, JohnFalstaff, Shakespeare and Desdemona.

There is a battle going on between west end alpha stallion #35 Tooba and his beta #26 Player. They have lived and worked together, sharing a harem for many years. But lately, Player has been challenging Tooba more and Tooba has been losing some conflicts. Right now they have one mare between them, #68 Sarah with her black colt #4W Shakespeare. It remains to be seen whether Player can take over the harem or not.

The park and Foundation for Shackleford Horses, Inc., removed two yearlings in November. They are available for adoption through the Foundation. Both Disco (the colt) and Samba (the filly) are taking unusually well to socializing and handling, according to Carolyn Mason and Anita Kimball of the Foundation.



Captions:

Desdemona watches with curiosity while dam Daisy feeds in a brackish marsh. (left)

Tooba, left, shows his strength by rearing toward Player, right. Player was undeterred, though, and went to graze with Sarah while Tooba, defeated, grazed a distance away. (below, left)



Disco in his winter coat shortly after arriving on the mainland. Disco's photo is by Carolyn Mason, President of the Foundation for Shackelford Horses, Inc. (above, right)

December 01, 2009

Source: Cape Lookout National Seashore, Wildlife Biologist - Horses