

## Shackleford Banks Horse Herd Update 2010 07-11

The Shackleford Banks horses are managed as wild animals, meaning that (except for contraception and occasional removal) they are left alone to live as they have for centuries. This preserves their wildness – which is so important for our image of and reverence for them.

However, the horses are monitored and injuries are noted. As we watch injuries heal, we gain renewed appreciation for the horses' resilience. Stallions, particularly, are amazing in their drive to establish their place in the hierarchy while wearing significant battle scars.

Sometimes wounds are of a different nature. The park and the Foundation for Shackleford Horses, Inc., evaluate each situation individually. Djibouti, #4M, stepped on a nail which stuck in the sole of her hoof and made her very uncomfortable. The potential risks of sedation and the limitations of one treatment were weighed against the possible benefits of removing the nail but still possibly having a debilitating infection. Advice from veterinarians Roderick Jordan of Harkers Island and Linda Kuhn of Greenville was sought. Dr. Katie Willis from East Carolina Veterinary Services in Greenville advised us and worked with the park and Foundation staff to sedate the mare, pull the nail, and clean the wound. Woody and Nena Hancock and Clyde Thomas Styron from the Cedar Island-Shackleford Horse Association, and Rachel Stern, a volunteer at ECVS, provided on-the-scene assistance.

The eight year old mare is being monitored and appears to be doing well. Hopefully she will give us another inspiring example of the resiliency of these wild horses.



Caption:

Dr. Willis evaluates the injured hoof.  
Photo by Carolyn S. Mason.

July 11, 2010

Source: Cape Lookout National Seashore,  
Wildlife Biologist - Horses