

# CASTLEMILK MOORIT SHEEP

## Summary

A lean attractive hill sheep which is currently listed as Critical by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. Small in size with brown close-knit wool and light under parts. Both sexes are horned. Low maintenance breed in terms of husbandry although generally prefer quite good grazing.

**Hardiness** – small and quite hardy despite a delicate appearance.

- *Shelter is advisable* – shelter of some kind is preferred. Artificial shelter in the form of hayracks is often used.
- *Good hooves* – extremely good, hard, slow-growing hooves. Foot rot is unheard of even on the wettest of grounds.

**Physical attributes & Husbandry** – easy to keep and handle with few husbandry requirements.

- *Good hooves* – extremely good, hard, slow-growing hooves. Foot rot is unheard of even on the wettest of grounds.
- *Wool* – short close-knit wool which is easy to clip or pull.
- *Handling* – can be flighty and so difficult to pen. However, excellent health records mean penning should not be needed too regularly. Individual sheep can be tamed quite easily.
- *Lambing* – if ewes have too rich a diet, big lambs are produced which can cause birthing difficulties. Lambs are normally born as twins and are small, thus very vulnerable to foxes for the first few days. Accordingly it may be advisable to lamb inside.
- *Supplementary feeding* – benefits from light supplementary feeding through the winter. Fine quality hay is enjoyed with poorer alternatives generally wasted.
- *Horns* – temporary electric netting is a potential hazard, as both sexes are horned.



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**Grazing characteristics** - a breed which prefers richer forage.

- *Prefers a grass-rich diet* – will graze poorer forage although richer grasses are preferred.
- *Browsing ability* – will browse shrubbery and strip bark.

**Interaction with the Public** – generally placid although ewes will protect offspring from dogs.

- *Placid nature* – while rams can be very territorial, ewes are generally placid. However, startles easily if anything out of the ordinary occurs.
- *Reaction to dogs* – ewes are good mothers and will use their horns to protect offspring from dogs.

## Sites where Castlemilk Moorit Sheep are in use & contacts

SITE NAME	HABITAT	DETAILS AVAILABLE	CONTACT
<b>Ashdown Forest</b> East Sussex  The Conservators of Ashdown Forest	Heathland.	All stock owned and managed by Commoners. Infrastructure (including fences, gates and cattle grids) managed by staff. Sheep handled infrequently and can be difficult to round up.	Chris Marrable 01342 823583
<b>Other contacts:</b>		Rare Breeds Survival Trust	024 7669 6551
		Castlemilk Moorit Sheep Society	John Sanders 01884 881222

## References