

# Rare Spanish Barb Horses On The “Critical” List

When reenactors dress in Spanish costumes from the 1700’s, the horses they ride may be the most authentic part of the reenactment.

The Spanish Barb breed is “the horse that discovered America” according to the Spanish Barb Horse Association. Breeders love the history and the breeds, many good traits, including a lot of smarts and durability.

According to the SBHA website: “The horses survived weeks of sailing to the New World from Spain, slung in the dark belly of ships and then adapted to a vastly different and often hostile environment. It was upon this horse’s back that the Americas were settled.”

The endangered breed was vital to the missions and settlements in Northern Mexico and the American Southwest.

A couple of centuries later, a group of horses from this area were herded north to sell in the stockyards of Kansas City. On an early stop of the drive, ranch owner Dr. Reuben Wilbur purchased 25 mares and a stallion. He turned them loose on his high desert Arizona ranch where they multiplied

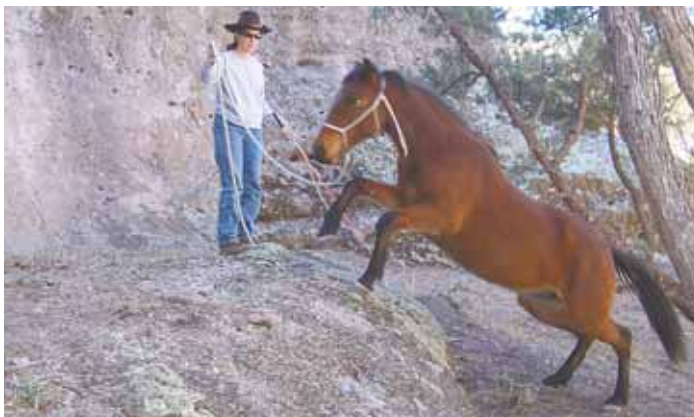
and thrived. Because they handled the rugged terrain so easily, they were referred to as “little rock horses”.

Isolated for 113 years, the herd known as the Wilbur-Cruce strain, makes up the majority of the fewer than 200 horses on the SBHA registry, says registrar Heidi Collings. There are other breed registries with numerous different lines. The SBHA focuses on preserving the breed’s original characteristics, which make them such willing and capable mounts.

“They are extremely hardy, easy keepers that don’t require grain,” says Marjorie Dixon, former SBHA president.

At 14 to 15 hands tall, they are a comfortable size for older people and make great trail horses, Dixon says. They can handle extreme climates. Spanish Barb horses have a distinctly refined head and overall appearance of balance and smoothness including round hips and clean legs. They come in all colors and patterns.

“Our members do everything with them from dressage to ranch work. They are a jack



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of all trades,” Collings adds. “They may not win contests, but they do well at anything you ask them to do.”

Saving and perpetuating the breed is the goal of the SBHA, Dixon says. Breeders can be found through the association’s website. Horses average \$1,000 to \$3,500, depending on age and the level of their training.

“Most people buy them for recreation, because they are extremely dependable,” she says.

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First-of-its-kind mechanical pollinator uses purified pollen in a filtered liquid suspension and sprays it on flowering fruit trees with an electrostatic sprayer.



## “Who Needs Bees?” Says Inventor Of Mechanical Pollinating

Matthew Whiting is busy as a bee, pollinating apple and cherry orchards at Washington State University with a first-of-its-kind mechanical pollinator. He can increase a tree’s fruit set from 10 to 30 percent.

“We are still trying to refine the system, but results have been promising,” says Whiting. “Our impact depends on the variety and on the amount of natural pollination. This year we had great conditions for bee activity so our system only increased fruit set by an average of 15 percent.”

The system uses purified pollen in a filtered liquid suspension and sprays it on flowering fruit trees with an electrostatic sprayer. The contrasting electrical charges of the flower stigma and the pollen-loaded droplets attract each other to ensure pollination.

This year Whiting did two applications on trees that were covered with insect netting to keep out bees. He says mechanical pollination produced commercial level crops that were as good as natural fruit set.

Whiting says there is still much to be learned before the product is introduced commercially. “We’ve learned that when a flower opens, the stigma may only be receptive to pollen for a day or less,” says Whiting. “We need to know when to apply, at what stage of bloom, and when the highest percent of receptive flowers are in blossom.”



Photo shows unit spraying purified pollen onto flowering fruit trees.

Once system testing has been completed, Whiting is confident it will become available quickly. “Our process has been to partner with companies from the beginning, so when the system is ready to go, they will be ready to make it available to growers.”

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Anti-theft device uses the motion of the ATV’s rear wheels moving forward to send a piston through one of the rear wheels, locking vehicle in place.

## “Quad Vice” Stopped ATV Theft

ATV theft is a big problem in many places, including England where farmer Gareth Davies came up with a foolproof locking device.

Davies raises a flock of Welsh mountain sheep in a region of England plagued by 4-wheeler thefts. One of his neighbors has had five 4-wheelers stolen, 2 in a single year.

The anti-theft device he designed works by driving the 4-wheeler onto a metal stand. It uses the motion of the rear wheels moving forward to send a piston through one of the rear wheels, locking the vehicle in place. The patented design means the thief would need to

have the 4-wheeler’s ignition key and put the rear wheels in reverse, in order to disengage the locking system and drive the 4-wheeler off the stand.

It takes just 10 sec. to secure the 4-wheeler in the vice and, as it weighs 660 lbs. and is bolted down, it’s more than a match for criminals.

Davies has already sold 3 Quad Vice models and is currently exhibiting it at farm shows to drum up support for the product. It retails for \$1,935, but he says that with the help of potential investors, the design could be modified in order to lower the price.

## Mobile Yard Waste Burner

Wayne Hamel, Hopwood, Penn., bought a Tuff Muck Cart from Tractor Supply Company for around \$50. He replaced the plastic bucket on it with a metal garbage can to make a mobile yard waste burner.

Instead of hauling leaves, sticks, and other debris he finds to a burn pile, he just wheels the cart around and burns stuff right on the cart as he goes.

Hamel used a Tuff Muck Cart like this one to make a mobile burn barrel.

