



Today the feral donkeys in the Karpaz peninsula are protected by the state and have the chance of living and breeding in peace. They are a great tourist attraction. It is a good opportunity for the tourists to visit the attractive Karpaz peninsula with golden sandy beaches and home to rare species of plants to see the beautiful Cyprus donkeys.



North Cyprus

The government took some serious precautions in order to protect both the farmers and the donkeys. The authorities declared Karpaz peninsula as a natural wildlife park. Wild donkeys of North Cyprus live in small groups and like to be social. The basic unit of a small donkey community consists of a mother and two or three offsprings. The females look after the offsprings whereas the males protect the group. At the age of one or two, a male leaves the group to search a female from other groups. On the other hand, females have stronger relationships with their mother and their groups.

Feral DONKEYS



Feral Donkeys

For centuries, the donkey has been the Cypriot villager's best help for means of transportation. Donkeys can easily carry up to 30% of their own bodyweight. They helped Cypriot farmers to carry olives from the groves and cereals from the fields to the mills and for many other works.

In Cyprus, donkeys formed a considerable percentage of exports in the past. Remains of donkeys in tombs uncovered from the 7th Century BC, suggests that these animals were present in Cyprus for a longer period of time than most of us would guess. The first animals to be harnessed were not the horses but the donkeys. These beautiful creatures walk extremely slowly and, when they decide they don't want to go any further, they can stay in the same place for hours.



The origins of the Cyprus donkey is not exactly known. It is believed that the Nubian Donkey is the ancestor of the domestic donkey. According to a research, Cyprus donkeys have been in Cyprus before the island broke off from the mainland. It is possible for you to still come across with villagers riding their donkeys. Apart from those owned by the villagers, latest observations suggest that there are about 1000 feral donkeys that can only be found in the Karpaz peninsula.

The Karpaz peninsula provides both shelter and food for donkeys to survive because of the suitable vegetation which consists of mainly maquis. Karpaz is an agricultural area and at times when food is scarce, these free donkeys wander into fields causing a lot of damage.



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