### **MFU** THE LIVESTOCK LANDSCAPE

# A Hiker's Guide

Do you love getting out and walking in the countryside? Do you ever wonder about the farm animals and activity that you see along the way? This guide will give you an insight into some popular breeds of sheep and cattle, farmland birds and wildlife and the farming calendar that delivers the landscapes we all enjoy.

MULE

### KNOW YOUR LIVESTOCK

Our livestock landscapes vary from wild, remote uplands to the rolling green pastures of lowland Britain. The UK is home to more than 60 breeds of sheep and 34 breeds of dairy and beef cattle - many adapted to grazing specific landscapes. For example hill sheep, like Swaledales or Herdwicks, are smaller an lighter than lowland breeds - perfectly adapted to the harsher climate, steeper terrain and rougher grazing found in their natural habitat.

The grazing action of farm livestock effectively manages the appearance of the countryside Sheep graze by nibbling the grass close to the ground, giving fields a manicured look. Cattle on the other hand, tear the grass with their lo tongues to achieve a much 'rougher' appearance

### WALLS VS HEDGES

In traditional livestock areas, the farming infrastructure is easily recognisable - featuring stone barns and walls in the hills with barns, hedges and handling pens found in lowland areas. Vast moorland areas are largely unfenced and instead farmers have 'hefted' flocks - meaning the animals learn where they allowed to go and pass that information on from mother (ewe) to lamb.

### SHEEP BREEDS



Lowland



Upland

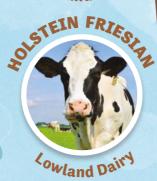


Lowland Beef

HIGHLAND



Upland Beef



Swaledale Ram

## DOGS

### Do you walk with your dog? Please be responsible

Keep dogs on a short lead around livestock Clean up after your dog. Bag it, bin it

Feeding sheep in winter

Yorkshire wildflower meadows

- wherever you are Never get between cows and calves
- walk around the herd & re-join the path when safe
- If cattle follow you, stay calm walk quickly & quietly around the herd
- If you feel threatened, release your dog and get to safety separately

Please follow the Countryside Code and leave gates how you find them.

# Seasonal Changes WHAT HAPPENS WHEN?

Farmers care for their livestock 365 days a year, often housing animals in winter. Hill sheep live out all year round as they are used to the wide open spaces and hate being cooped up. Here are just some of the activities you may see on your travels:



### SPRING

Lambs and calves appear

### SUMMER

and discourage flies.

is harvested to make

round between fields to

Wildlife Habitats



Rams and bulls are introduced to flocks and herds to start the new breeding year.

Daily checking/feeding is essential and is done by farmers using quad bikes.

### BIRDS & BEES

might see on your walk include can be found in clear chalk streams and the only poisonous snake

### the eagle-eyed.

### **BIRD SPECIES**

















Rare plants produce an amazing display in early summer as part of the patchwork of wildflower meadows that can be found in These are the result of careful nanagement and produce wonderful hay for winter feed. Other plants like the fluffy 'cotton grass' are adapted to key habitats such as moorland and wetlands.