

VER ENewsletter



Celebrating all things alpaca

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VER MEMBER INPUT

Is there a topic you would like to know more about? Such as alpaca dental health? Or fibre processing?

Did you miss out on a workshop and like us to do it again?

Send us an email with your feedback and suggestions.



Ver Annual Awards

Lyla Fisher Memorial Trophy

ALPACA OF THE YEAR HUACAYA

AWARDED TO AURAVALE GOLDLEAF SALVATORE

Inaugurated in May 2002.

Lyla was a foundation member of the Region and from the early '90s to her untimely passing in 2002, was totally committed to the Region and the Alpaca Industry, serving the Region in every possible capacity - a highly reputed alpaca breeder; show organiser and programmer; a dedicated committee member, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-President and President. Her legacy lives on with us, through this award.



Keith Turner Memorial Trophy

ALPACA OF THE YEAR SURI



AWARDED TO GRANJERO PARK SIR LANCELOT

Inaugurated in April 2010.

Keith, a product of Dookie College, with cattle and dairy farm origins that began in South Gippsland, traversed into Queensland and returned to South Gippsland where he and his wife Glenda established Mawbanna Alpacas. Keith's animal husbandry background together with Glenda's alpaca fibre processing skills created a successful venture into quality Suri breeding. Together the couple travelled Australia to learn of the processing of alpaca fleece and further develop their involvement in specialised alpaca handcrafts. An outdoors man, an ambassador for the alpaca industry, Keith passed away in 2009.

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Ver Annual Awards

Dianne Condon Memorial Trophy BEST NEW BREEDER

AWARDED TO DULCE ALPACAS

Inaugurated July 2012

Dianne loved alpacas and the Industry with a passion. A long standing member of the Region, Dianne served extensively at both regional and national committee level. In co-ownership with her husband Ron, their highly successful Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud gained early world-wide recognition. A national and international show judge, Dianne was accorded an AAA Life Membership for her service to the Industry. Dianne, who passed away on 12th January 2012, is remembered with great affection.



Previous Winners & Rules

[HTTPS://VER.ALPACA.ASN.AU/ABOUT/ABOUT-OUR-REGION/PERPETUAL-TROPHIES/](https://ver.alpaca.asn.au/about/about-our-region/perpetual-trophies/)



The above link provides access to the previous winners of these prestigious regional awards. The rules are also available through this link, it is worth checking them out to see whether you too might be eligible to be in the running!!

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The VER & The Committee

Our region

The region's boundaries start at Albury/Wodonga, then down the Hume Highway to Benalla, south on the Midland Highway to Mansfield, picks up the Maroondah Highway to Merton, Healesville, Lilydale and on to Melbourne, then follows the coastline to Mallacoota. The VER covers a geographically diverse area from the vineyards of the Yarra Valley and the Mornington Peninsula, to the rich soil farming districts of Gippsland, the coastal extension from Port Phillip to Mallacoota and the grandeur of the Great Dividing Range.

Within the Victorian Eastern Region there are approx. 120 registered alpaca breeders, several with larger studs in excess of 100 alpacas to others with only a few. Many members also produce, promote and sell alpaca products.

Within the region there are a few subgroups that get together regularly providing both social and educational support to each other.

What we've been up to

Your committee are all volunteers and work tirelessly for the benefit of the Victorian Eastern Region and broader alpaca community. Activities of your committee to date this year include:

- Convening and supporting convenors of both Berwick and Red Hill Halter and Fleece Shows
- Organising/Supporting workshops on Birthing and Internal Parasites
- Providing educational/interactive opportunities for members of the public at Farm World
- Conducting and supporting youth competitions and activities at the Whittlesea Show, Farm World and the Red Hill Show.
- Acquiring new promotional banners on the "Care of Alpacas" and "Welcome to the VER."



Welcome to this Victorian Eastern Region
Alpaca Event!

Together we actively foster education and promote
community among alpaca breeders, owners and
enthusiasts.

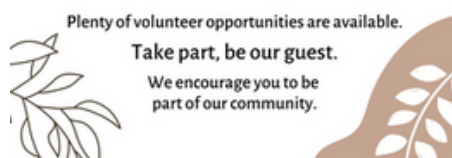
These gentle and unique animals, native to Peru, are
too easy to love. They:

- Make wonderful pets and companions.
- Grow beautiful fibre.
- Are good for land management, investment,
therapy, show and tourism.

The Victorian Eastern Region regularly conduct:

- Events and workshops.
- Forums and networking opportunities.
- Certification programs.
- Youth days and camps.

Our members are keen to chat, so make sure to ask
questions about things like alpaca care, breeding and
fibre production.



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The VER & The Committee

- Implementation of biosecurity matts and antiseptic solutions for use at alpaca events and shows
- Determining the annual award winners for 2023 including preparation of the trophies for the Alpaca of the Year and Best New Breeder Awards
- Trailer and equipment maintenance
- Social media and other member communications
- Trailer registrations
- Preparations for AAA Certificates of Appreciation and VER 10 Year Service Awards
- Support and planning for upcoming shows

Caring for Alpacas



Reproduction

Males are known as a Macho.

- Intact males or recently castrated males must not be run with females.
- All males not used within breeding programs should be castrated.
- Surgical castration by a vet is required.

Females are known as a Hembra.

- Induced ovulators.
- Pregnancy is usually between 335 - 355 days.
- Pregnancy testing can be achieved by reintroducing a female to a male at 7 and 14 days post-mating to see if they spit off.



Defence - Spitting

Used to establish its place in the herd. Spitting at humans is uncommon.



Berserk Syndrome

This may occur if livestock is over handled, leading to aggressive behaviour towards humans.

<https://ver.alpaca.asn.au>

Caring for Alpacas

Water
Fresh, clean water checked daily.

Feed
Pasture feeding and supplement feeding when pasture growth is low.

Supplements
Mineral and vitamin ADE supplements as required.

Females & Males
Need to be separated from each other.

Halter Training
Correctly fitted halter, numerous methods but firm and gentle persistence is common to all. Seek guidance from a local breeder.

<https://ver.alpaca.asn.au>

Caring for Alpacas

Vaccinations
6 to 12 monthly vaccinations (5 in 1).

Shearing
Annually in spring or early summer.

Trimming Toe Nails
Approximately 3 times a year.

Worms/Drenching
Pasture rotation and faecal egg monitoring.

Shade & Shelter
Protection from the rain, wind and heat.

Teeth
Monitor for dental issues and trim as required.

<https://ver.alpaca.asn.au>

If you would like to be involved in any of the VER activities please just make contact.

If you have any suggestions for events, workshops, social gatherings, what you would like to see your committee action, please contact us and share your thoughts.

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Recent Events

Berwick Show – 25 February 2023

SUPREME CHAMPION HUACAYA AWARDED
TO AURAVALE GOLDLEAF TRUFFLE (WHITE)



SUPREME CHAMPION SURI AWARDED
TO CHAKANA BLUE OPTIMUS (WHITE)



It was great to see Berwick Show return to the VER alpaca events calendar this year, the weather was perfect and 85 Halter entries and 37 Fleece entries competed. The show had a great atmosphere and competitors were grateful for the in depth feedback provide by our judge – Adrienne Clarke. Fleeces were judge by Adrienne, aptly supported by our experienced retired fleece stewards Heather and Paul Gardner, who kindly returned for a special performance!!

Congratulations to all those that attended and a special thanks to our volunteers: (as pictured from left below) Louise, Jodi, Julie, Leah, Jenny, Tilly, Hans, Rachel and Colin, as well as Kylie, John, Heather and Paul. We would also like to thank and acknowledge our sponsors: Scotch Group, Discount Animal Supplies, Fibre Naturally, Emphyrean, Avonsleigh Vet, Greg Pickering, Shear Success, Precision, Whispering Gums, Design Awards, Vircon S, Balnarring Produce and City of Casey. Fibre Naturally, Granjero Park, Elissa and Maylands all held stalls at the show selling product both for and from alpacas. This further helped to show the public what can be done with alpaca fibre.

– Convenors Lynda and Nic Holdsworth



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Recent Events

Berwick Show – Photos of the Day



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Recent Events

Birthing Workshop

26 FEBRUARY 2023

What an amazing workshop!!

We are so grateful to Adrienne Clarke for running the Birthing Alpaca Workshop. Everyone has come away more confident and with a greater knowledge about how to handle alpaca births, in particular those alpaca births that are difficult/not your typical presentation.

25 AAA members attended this fabulous event and all came away with knowledge that they will rely on for future births. – Lynda Holdsworth



Parasite Workshop

16 APRIL 2023

On April 16th 2023, a successful Parasite workshop was held at Chakana Blue in Seville East. Despite a cria being born at 8 am, the show went on with the newborn all cozy in the shed next to Mum out of the pouring rain. Fourteen attendees made for a full shed on a cool rainy day (60 mls in 24 hrs) with heaters ablaze.

The workshop was led by qualified veterinarian Andrea Redgewell who shared her expertise and valuable insights on various topics related to animal health and welfare. The workshop provided vibrant discussions among the breeders, resulting in knowledge exchange and practical learning.

Vet Andrea expressed her experience in the field of veterinary medicine and shared her valuable insights on various aspects of animal health and welfare. She discussed the importance of preventive healthcare measures, including vaccinations, parasite control, and proper nutrition. She also emphasized the need for regular health check-ups, veterinary intervention and early detection of parasite burdens to ensure the overall well-being of the animals.

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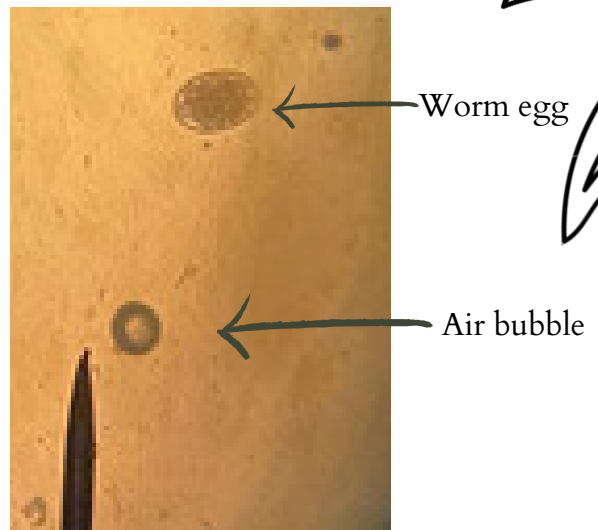


Parasite Workshop continued...

The importance of biosecurity was highlighted, including measures to prevent the spread of diseases/parasites in the herd and shared practical tips for implementing effective biosecurity protocols on the farm. Her expertise and practical advice were well-received by the attendees and deemed invaluable for improving the health and productivity of their livestock. Thank you to Andrea for donating your time and knowledge voluntarily.

The workshop was abuzz with discussions among the breeders who actively participated in the knowledge-sharing sessions. Breeders shared their experiences, challenges and best practices, creating a collaborative environment for learning. There were discussions on all topics with much appreciated real-life circumstances and their outcomes. These success stories and failures created great learning outcomes. The exchange of ideas and practical tips resulted in valuable insights that could be implemented on farms to improve breeding programs and animal welfare practices.

The topics covered during the workshop made for lots of Questions and note-taking. The emphasis was ultimately on practical skills using a microscope, which will hopefully be useful for on-farm applications.



We concluded overtime at 4.15pm despite a few stragglers staying on till after 5pm.

There are a number of things I've learnt from facilitating this type of workshop and hope to improve workshops as we go in to the future. All around it appeared very well liked.

Julie Blake

Chakana Blue Alpacas



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Recent Events

Red Hill Show - 11 March 2023

SUPREME CHAMPION SURI AWARDED TO
GRANJERO PARK SIR LANCELOT (MED FAWN)



Show Day 2023 dawned bright and clear and with the promise of perfect sunny weather, the Showgrounds were soon abuzz with crowds at record levels. The Peninsula was overflowing with visitors for the long weekend and the Red Hill Show was ready to present a true agricultural and horticultural experience.

Although Alpaca numbers entered in the Halter Class competition were slightly below those that we have become used to at Red Hill over the years, the quality was up in all colours. A total of 23 breeders entered 69 alpacas (23 suris & 46 huacaya).

We were privileged to have Peter Kennedy-Gane as our Judge with Lee Sadler from South Australia, as our apprentice judge. Their informative comments in support of their decisions were delivered in a relaxed style, putting exhibitors at ease and setting the tone for the day. Our thanks also to Robert Kennedy-Gane for his day-long assistance as Ring Steward and photographer.

SUPREME CHAMPION HUACAYA AWARDED TO
AURAVALE GOLDLEAF SALVATORE (WHITE)



How good was it to see local Peninsula breeders, Jack and Rosalie Boer of Granjero Park, win their first Supreme Suri Championship with their Intermediate fawn male, Sir Lancelot, while the Supreme Champion Huacaya went to Auravale Goldleaf Salvatore, an Adult white male, exhibited by Nic and Lynda Holdsworth.

Heartiest congratulations to both Granjero and Auravale!

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Red Hill Show continued...

We welcomed first-time exhibitors, including several Alpaca Youth group members who, while participating in the Halter class programme in the Alpaca Pavilion, were also competing in the Showmanship and Stockmanship events, on an adjacent outdoor site.

Later in the day, the Youth group assembled in the central show ring in the Alpaca Pavilion for the presentation of awards by their Judge - the ever enthusiastic, Jillian Elwers.

Our congratulations to Jillian, all Youth group exhibitors and their convening team - thank you for being part of Red Hill 2023.

A Special Note to the Youth Group: Please know that the constraints experienced with your outdoor site this year, have been made known to the Ag Society and steps taken to ensure that a more suitable site will be made available to you in the future.

History will show that alpacas first appeared at Red Hill in 1995, and while it is true to record that the alpaca show has continued to evolve in the years since, twenty-eight years on, at this year's show, we experienced a further set of "firsts" for Red Hill:

- the use of the Region's recently acquired show-pen trailer sets, ensuring pen panel portability from venue to venue, a uniform look and layout and a consistency with other alpaca shows at National and Regional level. The Pavilion has never looked better!

- the introduction of Alpaca CheQA, an additional tier in the structure of the assessed status of alpaca livestock. For the statistically minded:

	No. of exhibitors	No. of Alpacas
Assessed - Q alpaca	6	22
Assessed - Alpaca CheQA	5	16
Total assessed	11	38
Total non assessed	12	31
Total	23	69
% assessed	47.8%	55.1%

- the support of the already existing Biosecurity measures within the Alpaca Pavilion, secured through the generosity of sponsorships from Alltech Lienert and Balnarring Produce, which enabled the acquisition and positioning of disinfectant mats across all entrances of the Pavilion - a move that impressed our Compliance Auditor, and the Veterinary Officers from Agriculture Victoria, who are endeavouring to raise the biosecurity awareness of all livestock owners across the State. Ahead of our afternoon show session, the Department's programme was kick-started with a short, informative talk on issues associated with Foot and Mouth (FMD) and Lumpy Skin (LSD) disease. Our thanks to Dr Nikki Chadee and her departmental team for the presentation.

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Red Hill Show continued...

- The final “first” and one certainly well worthy of note, was that the Halter Show concluded at 3.00 pm. Never, in our alpaca show experience at Red Hill has this been achieved before. Invariably, our show runs on to 4.30 pm or so, with clean-up to follow. It says much for the skill of the judging panel and the cooperation of exhibitors throughout the day, while not forgetting the slightly lower exhibit numbers.

In closing, a word of thanks:

- to our Show hosts, Red Hill A & H Society. Congratulations on a most successful 95th Annual Show and a special thanks for all your support of the Alpaca section, this to include the Alpaca Youth group.
- to AAA Victorian Eastern Region, in particular: Nic and Lynda Holdsworth, for your collective efforts and support for the Alpaca Show at Red Hill. Although fully involved in the convening and follow-on from the Berwick Show, to say nothing of the management of the Region itself, your time was readily given to troubleshooting on matters relevant to eAlpaca entries for Red Hill; the pick-up of the biosecurity matting; assistance with pen set-up etc. A great contribution – very much appreciated.
- Georgia and Jacqueline Bishop, for the support so readily given in the promotion and representation of the Alpaca Show on social media. We welcomed you as a first-time exhibitor at Red Hill and as a sponsor, of the Stud Service Silent Auction, conducted on the day. Thank you for your much-valued input.
- to each and every one of our fabulous sponsors, a sincere “thank you”. Without your support, we just could not run a show. Your willingness to say “Yes” when approached was so very much appreciated.

The Alpaca Show is also heavily dependent on the huge amount of work done by our locally-based volunteers. Ahead of Show Day, arrangements were put in hand to pick-up the pen and equipment trailers from the Berwick Showgrounds, set-up the shed penning, banners/murals, and lighting.



Photos of some of the Suri and Huacaya Age Champions at the Red Hill show

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Red Hill Show continued...

Then followed the pre-show set-up on Sunday 5th March and the transformation of the Pavilion into a fully fledged show setting. Job done by an enthusiastic team of Arthur Biri, Jack & Josh Boer, Peter Collett, Meg Price, Cal Daddo and fellow sparky, Jacko. Their reward – a most welcome morning tea provided by Larissa – cake, cookies, Tim Tams and wait for it – icy poles!! Thanks Larissa, for looking after us – just what was needed.

In the week that then followed, the days were filled with finalising details on Judge's accommodation, Trophies, Catalogues, Sponsor acknowledgements, Silent auction set- ups etc.

Then it was "Fine tune Friday." Exhibitor names on each pen. Penning straw spread – thanks to the Boer family, Rosalie, Jack and Alecia. Three product stalls erected: Pero, Granger Park, and Pitching Ridge. We welcomed exhibitors who had booked in their alpacas for the Friday overnight stay, and met with Dr Belle Mann from Main Ridge Vet Clinic, who approved and signed off the Alpaca Show's Certificate of Compliance. On an outdoor site, John Price, too, was busy finalising the Alpaca Youth Group display and competition event. Thanks John for all your work in co-ordinating and bringing the Youth Group to Red Hill.

While all this alpaca-ing was progressing, Arthur Biri, ably assisted by Peter Collett, was absented from alpaca duty and in full flight setting-up Vintage Corner on the top oval. A big thank you to Arthur for his time, endeavour and enthusiasm in bringing his vintage machine collection to Red Hill – a king-size logistics exercise, carried out with his usual "no problems, all's good" approach. Thank you Peter, for your invaluable help with the whole process.

All was in readiness. Show Day was upon us, which in itself, brought some special mentions:

To our Inspection Stewards: Jack Boer, Alexis Daddo, Arthur Biri, Wendy Lyons, Marie FitzGerald, John Price, and Sarah Vaughan. Thank you for your involvement, for your attention to detail and for delivering on this most important element of the Show. Timed to perfection.

To Meg Price: For her last minute launch into the role of Results and Record Steward – all undertaken with that "I'll give it a go" attitude, which seems very much part of her DNA. Meg's all-day keyboarding effort was significant and greatly appreciated.

To Lisa Chiminello: For your multi-tasking as Judges' Chaperone, Registration, Ribbons and Awards Steward. For your enthusiasm which knows no bounds. For your fantastic contribution to the day.



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Red Hill Show continued...

To Warwick Robertson – The Voice. For yet another masterly, all-day display of your microphone technique, that surely should be copyrighted.

To our End of Show Day Clean-up Team: With pen panels loaded onto trailers by exhibitors and with the pavilion vacated of people and livestock – the clean-up team of Larissa & Tim, Alexis & Trent finalised packing of the equipment trailer, tables & chairs to storage, ferried trailers, floats etc away from the Showgrounds, and finally pushed the massive pile of penning straw to the doorway for the planned despatch per a masterstroke arrangement initiated by Arthur. We are indebted to Neil Farnsworth, who with large truck and significant operator skills, manoeuvred his bobcat, in and out and around, until every wisp of bedding straw was loaded and away. All done with that spirit of community and “happy to help” attitude that is Neil Farnsworth.

To Brian Price and Arthur Biri: For your above and beyond collective efforts at Sunday's post show clean-up. Well done on getting the large mural banner down ahead of the hose-out by the local CFA. A thoroughly well timed exercise.

To our Product Stall Holders: Granjero Park, Pero Alpacas, Pitchingga Ridge – thank you for creating “Alpaca Avenue” within the Pavilion. Stocked with a smorgasbord of alpaca product, the Farm to Fashion centre was abuzz with customer support throughout the day providing that synergy between the alpacas on show and their fleece product.

To All: who exhibited, displayed product, officiated and/or assisted with stewarding roles, were there when needed – before, during and after. A BIG, BIG THANK YOU. We do hope that you enjoyed your day!

A POST SCRIPT – To those who conspired to bring together the MPAB group and others for that post-lunch acknowledgement of our time with the alpacas at the Red Hill Show, to say we were lost for words, is an understatement! Don't know as to whether one can ever trust you again – so unexpected, so humbling and yes, so very, very thoughtful.

To Warwick for your kind words, to Meg and other suspects – thank you. Jean and I will long remember the gesture – to say nothing of the Chockies and Champers which we cracked open that night in celebratory afters.

– Jean & David Daddo



Jean & David Daddo
Convenors

WE LOOK FORWARD TO RED HILL 2024.
KEEP SATURDAY OF THE LABOUR DAY
WEEKEND – FREE!

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Recent Events

Farm World

24-26 MARCH 2023

The VER would like to thank all of our members who participated at Farm World during March 2023. Members shared their alpacas, knowledge and expertise; offered garments and other products made from alpacas and for alpacas; conducted youth activities; plenty of written flyers, magazines and other alpaca information sheets were handed out. This combined effort ensured thousands more people have been educated on the care of alpacas and the joy they bring.

Well Done Jen McDavitt and all who participated, including family and friends who pitched in to help individual studs over this three day event.

- The Merungle team
- The Maylands team
- The Serenity team
- The Ripplefield team
- The Westwind team
- The Stevley Park team
- The Milestead team
- Rachel and Leah Burnett together with students from Donvale Christian College.
- Lynda and Nic Holdsworth
- Kylie Taylor
- Julie and Tim Blake

Even the alpacas were informed and took it all in.



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Youth Events

Red Hill Show

11 MARCH 2023

A super nice sunny day which was perfect for our parades competition at red hill. We had a good show with 11 youth competitors who competed in both our showmanship and stockmanship sections. It was great to see some new faces and welcome more people into our group. It was especially exciting to see some kids who are training up their own alpacas and showcasing their new training skills and alpaca knowledge! Jillian Holmes did a fantastic job judging, as always. Her constructive comments for the youth helps the kids get better every show and gives these kids more knowledge they can apply at home.

— John Price



THE RESULTS

Supreme Open: Megan Gridley

Trainers Award: Megan Gridley

Senior Open Champion: Megan Gridley

Senior Open Reserve: Leah Burnett

Intermediate Open Champion: Tilly Perry

Junior Open Champion: Tait Bradshaw

Junior Open Reserve: Jayde Lee

Intermediate Preliminary Champion: Tallarah Murdoch

Intermediate Preliminary Reserve: Abigail Mattar

Junior Preliminary Champion: Liberty Murdoch

Junior Preliminary Reserve: Ellie Frost



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Youth Events

Farm World

25 MARCH 2023

Setting ourselves up in the Rotunda at Farm World, Lardner Park, the public had the opportunity to come and learn about alpacas and the youth activities within the alpaca industry. Alpacas from Maylands Alpacas charmed the public and demonstrated just how awesome alpacas are. Several young people from the public were very excited to explore joining the youth in the future. – Rachel Burnett



Whittlesea Show

21 JANUARY 2023

Being rescheduled from November to January due to the floods, it was a smaller show. However, the youth made the most of the day and thoroughly enjoyed competing and talking to the public. They also participated in the grand parade and were a big highlight of the show. Whittlesea results:

- Open Champion: Aliya Lewis
- Preliminary Champion: Abigail Mattar

— Rachel Burnett



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Upcoming Events

Ladner Alpaca Show

Date: 6th August 2023

Location: Lardner Park

Address: 155 Burnt Store Rd, Lardner VIC

Convenors: Tammy Attenborough, Greg & Jenny Bradshaw.

Sale Alpaca Show

Date: October 2023

Location: Sale

Convenors: Jenny Miles & Jen McDavitt

National Alpaca Show

Date: 18th August 2023

Location: Bendigo Event & Exhibition Complex Prince of Wales Showgrounds
42-72 Holmes Road BENDIGO VIC 3550

Melbourne Royal Alpaca Competition

Date: 21-23rd September 2023

Location: Melbourne Showgrounds



AAA NATIONAL ALPACA SHOW

Fri 18 - Sun 20 August 2023
Bendigo Showgrounds, Victoria
(Regional Events Complex)



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The Last Stages of Alpaca Gestation

The last weeks

300DAYS ONWARDS

INFORMATION HAS BEEN COMPILED FROM VCR AND VER MEDIA POSTS, ARTICLES, AND BREEDERS ACROSS VICTORIA.

The body goes through a number of major changes in order to allow for a cria to safely be birthed. Some of these changes are visible externally.

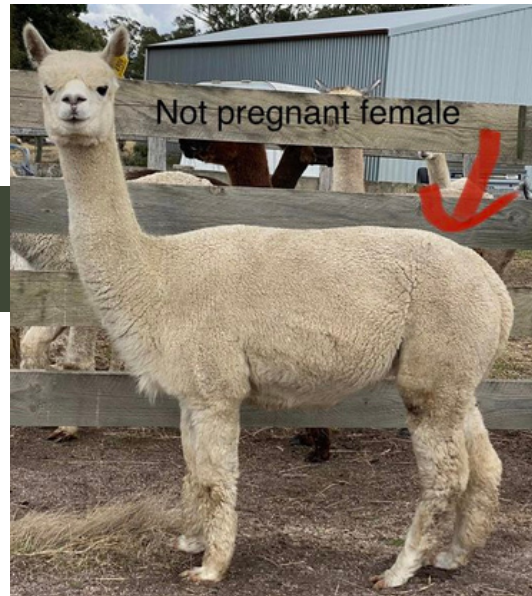
In the last few weeks before birth we can often see:

- the loosening of the muscles around the tail. These muscles look plump and rounded, like in the first photo. As birthing nears, these muscles slacken so there is an obvious angle from the base of the tail to the pelvic bone.
- the dilation of the vulva. This can appear as simply being longer, or it can appear puffy, bulging or have some pink showing (note - excessive amounts of pink is not a good thing, this could be a sign of vaginal prolapse).
- the "bagging up" of the udder. Most females do have the udder fill up before birth. Though, some won't have any udder development until after birthing so this is not always the case.

In the days before birth, we can often see a change in how the belly sits. The baby will begin making its' way towards to birth canal and no longer sit as "low".

We note that signs are not always 'obvious' or 'easily visible' in alpacas. Maidens sometimes show fewer externally visible symptoms. Knowing your individual alpacas in this regard is key.

The summary of symptoms above is very small and some breeders notice additional signs in the last weeks of gestation. Attending an Alpaca birthing workshop provides you with in-depth knowledge of the many symptoms people see/notice



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