



## ***Kosciuszko National Park Brumbies.***

One of the world's great national parks, and the largest in New South Wales, Kosciuszko National Park covers 690,000 hectares. The park contains the highest mountain on mainland Australia, the famous Snowy River and all NSW ski fields. Its many and varied attractions include walks through alpine herbfields; spectacular caves and limestone gorges; scenic drives; and historic huts and homesteads.

One of the Australian Alps national parks, this park is nationally and internationally recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. It contains nine wilderness areas, and its alpine and sub-alpine areas contain plant species found nowhere else in the world. The park is also home to the rare mountain pygmy possum and corroboree frog.

Currently there are estimated to be around 3000 Brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park. The Brumbies are managed, as is the National Park, in two sections, Northern and Southern Units. In the Southern Unit, Brumbies are passively trapped by an external contractor. The majority of these Brumbies are then processed for pet food. Around 200 Brumbies are removed each year in this manner.

The Northern unit has an excellent 'in house' passive trapping program which is run by Rangers who are also excellent horsepeople. Between July 2009 and January 2010, 197 Brumbies were removed from the Northern Unit. Whilst some of these came to the Victorian Brumby Association, the majority were given to a local horse dealer and many of those were processed for pet food.

Kosciuszko Brumbies are very similar to those found in the Alpine National Park. Many of the same settlers and explorers travelled through these areas, using many of the same style of horses. It appears that Kosciuszko National Park Brumbies also have some Suffolk Punch bloodlines however, in addition to the Clydesdale, Thoroughbred, Stockhorse and Timor Pony. Kosciuszko Brumbies are generally medium to very stocky in build and mature between 13.3 and 15hh. Colours can range vastly from bays and browns to roans, the sought after 'creamies' made famous by Eleyne Mitchells Silver Brumbies series and the pintos.

Kosciuszko National Park is an example of a program where some effort goes into capturing the Brumbies humanely, yet the disposal of them once caught becomes an issue due to the numbers caught.



The use of fertility control as a further management tool would mean that fewer Brumbies would be born each year, therefore fewer would need to be removed, lessening the load on Brumby rehoming programs. The Victorian Brumby Association is working with Parks NSW to further improve the welfare of the Brumbies being caught in their already good program.

*Pictured at left: Brumbies in the Kosciuszko National Park*

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