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# Lama glama gazette

UPDATES FROM THE NEW ZEALAND LLAMA ASSOCIATION (NZLA)  
KEEPING YOU INFORMED OF YOUR COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Your 2018-19 Committee will be working hard this year to keep you up-to-date with where we are at, and what we are doing to help ensure we are achieving the [NZLA Objectives](#).

## Committee Updates

Quick summary: So far, so good!

While being a bit tongue and cheek, the committee is going well so far. We have two meetings under our belts now and have been trialing a couple platforms to best communicate with each other to get the most out of our meetings. Technology in some of the more rural areas for our committee members has its limitations, but we seemed to have found a conference call service that worked well for the last meeting.

In addition to that, we have increased our committee meetings this year to once per month, instead of every two months. This will allow us for better communication among the committee, but also really

make sure that we keep some momentum up for progressing the NZLA and llamas within NZ.

One of the consistent concepts coming up at meetings is ensuring the longevity of the NZLA. This will be achieved hopefully by adding value to the NZLA membership and encouraging more membership (both new and previous members). Some of the things that we have been discussing and trialing within the committee to achieve this are:

- DNA Parentage Verification
- Microchipping
- Certificates/Pedigrees

If you have further ideas, please let us know.

*NZLA Committee 2018-19*



## PROMOTING THE NZ LLAMA

One of the clear messages that came out of the NZLA AGM this year, was that we were all on the same page to try and work hard to refocus our efforts ensuring we are promoting the NZ Llama. As such, we are looking for opportunity to work with joint events all around NZ to introduce the public to llamas, as well as their kind and loving natures we all love. Hopefully, we will be able to answer the question this year of 'why should I own a llama?' If you have any suggestions for events (i.e. picnic, school fair, community day), please email [info@llamas.org.nz](mailto:info@llamas.org.nz) to let us know of any opportunities you think we could get involved and add in the spice of a few llamas on the day.

# OK, IF THEY ARE NOT RUMINANTS, WHAT ARE THEY?

BY: KEITH PAYNE

When llamas were first introduced into my life, I was surprised when informed they are not true ruminants. **So what are they, I asked?** Answers to this varied from “they are called ‘modified’ or ‘pseudo’ ruminants”, to “we just call them ruminants anyways, after all they have only one less stomach than a cow or a sheep”.

Being a cantankerous type, this didn't sit well with me. Surely our llamas and alpacas deserved a bit more care than this! And so I learned about the suborder ‘Tylopoda’ which is distinct from the suborder Ruminantia.

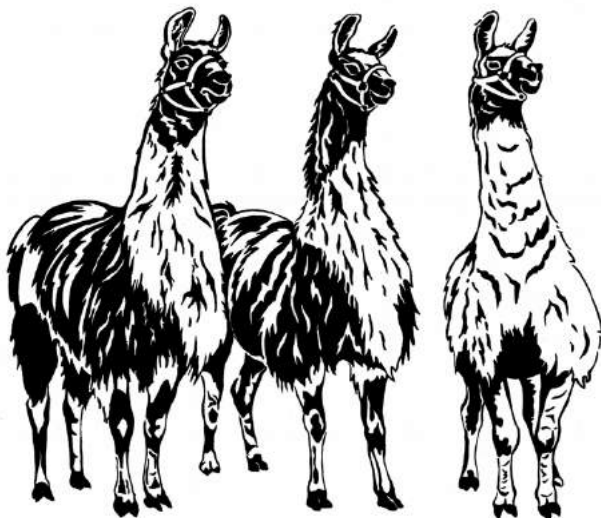
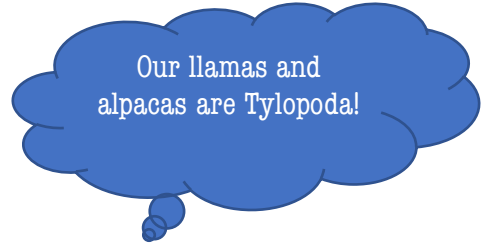
But it still kept festering away in the back of my head, which continued to bounce questions at me

- : How are they different from Ruminants?
- : Will their health care be different?
- : Are there different diet considerations?
- : My vet talks about them as ruminants and is guided accordingly when discussing health issues with me. Is this correct?

And so I began to research the differences between a Tylopoda (specifically llama and alpaca) and a Ruminant. There are many but here are a few of them:

- Red blood cells are different size and shapes, llamas and alpacas have higher glucose levels;
- Male ruminants usually have horns;
- Ruminants have hooves and sole;
- Llamas and alpacas have a split upper lip;
- Ruminants have a cloven foot;
- Most ruminants have dewclaws;
- Ruminants have four compartment stomachs and are susceptible to bloat, llamas and alpacas have three compartments and rarely get bloat. The llama in particular is able to live in health with a low protein diet;

- Ruminants are spontaneous ovulators with an estrous cycle, llamas and alpacas are induced ovulators with a follicular wave cycle;
- Llamas and alpacas do not lick their young or consume the placenta;
- Ruminants are highly susceptible to TB, llamas and alpacas are minimally susceptible;
- Ruminants are highly susceptible to foot and mouth, llamas and alpacas are mildly susceptible;
- and so on and on, but you will get the drift here that our llamas and alpacas are actually quite a bit different from ruminants.



## And so why is this even important?

There are many reasons, but here are two of them:

Firstly we live in a world of government regulation and whenever there is cause to regulate ruminants, llamas and alpacas are classed as ruminants and accordingly caught up. Often totally unfairly. We don't want this; secondly for reason of dietary health. Ruminants benefit from having grains in their diet as a supplement. Llamas and alpacas do not, in fact grains as a regular supplement are dangerous for them. But many llama and alpaca owners take advice from well meaning people who do not know the difference between a ruminant and a tylopoda. Of course grains are to a llama and alpaca like a Big Mac is to an 8 year old, they will fall over themselves to gobble what they can – but we owners need to know better.

Actually a study of the workings of your llama or alpaca's digestive system will convince you to donate any feed containing grain to the neighbour's sheep. Visit another neighbour's horse stable and enquire where they source

baled hay for their horses. Buy that for your llama or alpaca instead. If it is quality hay, it is all they will need (but you can still give them a little grain free treat from time to time). The late Dr Murray Fowler published a paper in 2008 entitled “Camelids Are Not Ruminants” which contains a lot more technical information on the above subject. You can ‘google’ it.



# NZLA Member Profile

*Kaikaoura Llama Trekking – Lynn Barrett*

## Hi there lovely llama people!

There are a lot of new llama owners around so for those of you that I don't know, here is a little bit about me.

My name is Lynn and I have been involved with llamas for 18 years. I was traveling around New Zealand in 2000, and was lucky enough to be staying in Glenorchy where I was first introduced to llamas!

Alistair MacDonald was doing llama trekking tours in the Glenorchy back country and I got involved for five months helping him with the animals, helping train them, trekking, toe nails, shearing etc. We traveled around the south island for a month and helped teach others basic catching, haltering and training (meat some lovely people).

On returning to the UK I set out to get some llamas. After a lot of

research and hunting I found what I was looking for, the Ccara type llama.

I found the lady through word and mouth and was told she never sells her animals. She agreed to see me and realised I knew llamas and was happy to sell me a couple of young untouched siblings. Golly (gelding) was 1.5 yrs old and Snowdrop was 2.5 yrs old.

I set out training the two of them, which went well and fast but i wanted to get on and do some trekking; I needed some older animals. She agreed to sell me 3 more: another girl and two more geldings, and then later another two. All of them aged 5 - 8 and hardly handled.

Thanks to Alistair's training of me, the llama training went well and with in a few months my trekking business was up and running and was

going from strength to strength. I will write another story of how I trained the boys and girls another time.

It was always my aim to one day live in NZ but I didn't have enough (immigration) points to qualify, so I decided to attend an Open University and get a degree. I worked full time, I had my trekking business on weekends and summer evenings, and was studying - all pretty full on, but at the end of four years I had my BSc in Environmental Science.

I Got my visa for NZ in 2007 and here I am. My partner and I bought a small farm in Kaikoura; It had a farm park, we added more llamas and set up Kaikoura llama trekking and later accommodation on site, all have been very successful.

- Lynn Barrett



**THE BIG QUESTION:**  
Why own a llama?



If you have a telling tale as to why you love owning llamas, please send us through a short story and a photo so that we can share it on our social media to answer this common question we all face.  
Help us in promoting the NZ llama, as well as the NZLA.



*\*Example accomodation at 'Wacky Stays – Farmstay with Kaikoura Llama Trekking*



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