

## RURAL WATCH MESSAGE 10/11/09

Dear all, I thought you should be aware of this as:

1. It is a successful result.
2. Proof that crime prevention does work sometimes.

Gail

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Dear horse owners

Please read the below story sent to me by a caring horse colleague in Avon & Somerset:-

On Monday (2 Nov) night my friend's horse was stolen from a field in the Guildford area. The people who took her sawed through a wooden post and rail fence to get out and this happened between 3pm and 6pm in the afternoon.

The police were informed and so were the microchip company who circulated her details to all the ferry ports etc.

As you can imagine the owner was completely distraught.

Late Tuesday (3 Nov) afternoon she received a phone call from the police to say her horse had been found in Hollyhead, Wales . She was tied to a railing at the ferry port and the ferry to Ireland had gone without her. So today she is driving to Wales to pick her up. 😊😊

Several things have come to light in this story:

1. A week ago her horse had a small plait in its mane when she went to get her in from the field. She describes it as very small, almost like a tangle. She disregarded it as kids messing about (her horses are out in a field with others). However, this is how people mark horses to be stolen later. I.e. One person marks them, another then comes later and knows which one to take.
2. The ferry port at Hollyhead do not check horses passports or microchips. This horse was travelling without a passport.
3. The police believe the reason this horse was left behind was because she was microchipped. Although the UK is lax about passport and microchip checking, it is apparently more common for horses to be scanned on entering Ireland . The people who take them will scan them and dump them if they find a microchip. This horse also had a large obvious scar so this may have been a contributing factor.

The police told her that horses being dumped at a ferry terminal is not uncommon and they usually turn out to be stolen. They have had horses left in a lorry on the actually ferry!

This story has a happy ending for H and E, but it makes you wonder how many other stolen horses were on that ferry to Ireland .

The owner has asked me not to give any more details because of the police investigation that is on

going, but has given her permission for me to relay this story, mainly to highlight:

1. If you find your horse with a small plait in its mane or tail please do not ignore it. I thought it was common knowledge that people knew about this, but several people I've spoken to since were not aware of it.
2. If your horse isn't microchipped please consider doing it. The owner of this horse describes her as 'nothing flashy, just a normal 14.2 bay mare' so please don't think it couldn't happen to you.

Please do not ask me to provide more details regarding the horse or owner as I can't, but please spare a happy thought today for H and E who should be having a (probably very emotional) reunion in Hollyhead later on today. 😊

Please forward this email onto any other horsey people you know. The more people who know about plaits and microchips the better...

Nicky.x

Thank you for reading and please be alert to this plaiting - keep an eye on your own horses and also neighbours!

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