

Free roaming Mustangs of the Nevada desert has been found seriously tender footed due to severe thrush.

It is with great sorrow in my hart I share these pictures with you. I have been visiting the free roaming Mustangs that lives about 55 miles north west of Las Vegas regularly for the last 4 years and I have never before seen them tender footed. This year I got completely chocked when I saw them walking “on egg shells” when they were passing an area with hard but not even sharp gravel (video will come on the website). I have seen on their foot prints from earlier years that their frogs have not been in perfect shape but these pictures shows severe thrush infections not much different from many domestic horses considered in need of treatment and rehabilitation.



Facts:

Thrush always starts as a fungus infection (one of the thrush fungi are identified as a *Candida albicans* which comes from within the horse). The fungus infection will eventually lead to the bacterial infection that is more commonly detected as thrush (black mucus secretion with a rotten smell).

Some of these Mustangs do from time to time get “supplemented” with Alfalfa from the nearby village of Cold Creek.

The ground where these horses live is fairly hard (they seldom leave deep foot prints) and they do walk quite a lot on the paved road. We know that hard surfaces impairs the hoof mechanism and the blood circulation dramatically.

This thrush does not come from:

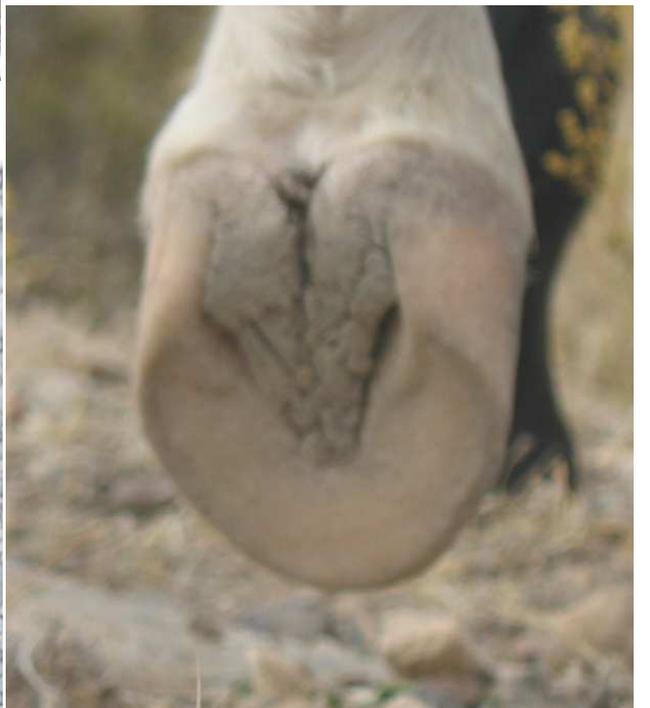
- Standing in dirty stables.
- Being trimmed with infected tools.
- Living in a humid environment.
- Eating too much sweet feed (even Alfalfa is low in sugar).



All pictures in this article are from living free roaming Nevada Mustangs.



Left front foot of a (living) free roaming Nevada Mustang Stallion.



Right hind hoof of a free roaming Nevada Mustang yearling.



Left front foot of a (living) free roaming Nevada Mustang Mare.

As you who have seen the videos I show on my seminars know, does a hoof without frog pressure due to an impaired frog as on some of the above hooves hardly have any hoof mechanism at all compared to a sound hoof so this must be considered a very serious condition.

Are there any sound Mustangs left?

In Sheldon, northern Nevada desert, both perfect and not so perfect (too much central sulcus) hoof prints can be found. I did however not see any lame Mustangs up there. What I did saw though was Mustangs standing at the same place for more that 3 hours and that can not be natural. One stallion was even standing completely alone for that long (watching a family band from some 600 feet away). The only reasonable explanation I can think of to this kind of behavior is that the horses don't have any natural enemies and therefor has become "lazy" and overly secure. This might also be confirmed by the fact that even though I was sitting, completely open, about 200 feet from a natural spring in Sheldon for 2 full days watching some 150 horses not a single one saw me. When the antelopes came to drink they saw me instantly.

