



GOTLAND RUSS

Gotland pony or Gotland Russ is an old Swedish pony breed. Gotland ponies are claimed to descend from Tarpan that lived on the small island of Gotland that is on the South-Eastern coast of Sweden right after the last ice age. The Gotland pony is the only breed of pony native to Sweden. The Öland horse from the neighbouring island of Öland was a close relative of the Gotland, but became extinct in the early 20th century.



The Gotland Russ is the most common breed of pony in Sweden. It is considered to be clever and easily trainable, often used as childrens ponies, they are great all-rounders.



These versatile ponies are also used in harness racing or competition, as well as dressage, jumping, eventing and riding schools.



Ponies were exported to Europe to be used in the coal mines, bringing them close to extinction by the early 1900's. Originally running wild on the island, the first Gotland Russ society protected a 650 acre area and a semi-feral herd still lives there.

1943 saw two Welsh stallions arrive to improve the breed, but the stud book was closed in 1971.