

'BUCKSKIN', the term, was initially used to describe the foal coat in a variety of horse colours, "buck" meaning 'young'.

From the early 60's the term 'Buckskin' was increasingly used to describe the colours we now call 'cream and light buckskin' and 'yellow dun' (now know as a Buckskin/Dun). Confusion reigned high in this time period and it was soon after that many of the buckskin associations we see today, started.

The difference between the buckskin and dun colouring was hard to accept for many registries and anything between 'cream buckskin' to 'red dun' and 'black dun' (grulla) was simply called 'a dun'. Unfortunately today some breed registries still refer to the typical buckskin as a 'dun', which makes it difficult for a newcomer to understand the colours. Some breed registries still have horses listed as 'black or brown' that must be 'black or brown buckskin' because they have cream progeny (Buckskin, Perlino, Cremello or Palomino) and this in turn makes checking colour breed lines difficult.

The WABA Inc. split their Buckskin and Dun registries in the early eighties and at the same time recognised the 'black buckskin', the first being registered in 1983. In early 2000, in the US, the term 'smoky cream' was given to the 'black buckskin' when they developed the genetic hair colour test for cream and they believed they had discovered a new colour.

The WABA continue to use the term 'black buckskin' as we believe it is the best descriptive term for a black horse that carries the cream gene, as well as the term 'brown buckskin' for buckskins who carry the recently discovered (2010) 'brown' Agouti allele, but can only be distinguished from the black buckskin with a colour test.

The coat colours below are self explanatory and should help breeders distinguish between true Buckskin, Duns and the deceptive foal coat that can be seen on young foals, especially black.



Left: A good example of the black foal which resembles a mature 'black dun' and is 'not dun'. He carries no cream, dun or agouti gene and is plain black. (tested Ee & aa) He will lose the foal coat to reveal 'Black'. The false dorsal stripe on this foal will blend into the coat, will not be well defined and will disappear when the foal coat drops.

*Right: 'JACK' black QH foal- tested Ee & aa.
Sire: Grey
Dam: Black Dun - Dd, Ee & aa.
He carries no agouti allele, did not inherit a grey gene from his sire or the dun gene from his dam, those genes are not carried recessively, are not present and can never be passed on to progeny.*



*Above ↑
Black Buckskin foal tested Ee, nCR, aa. Showing distinct similarity to the black foal above.*

Gypsy.....(colour tested - U C Davis). **Black Dun** -Dd,Ee,aa.
Sire 'Sierra Autumn Oakie', **Red Dun**-Dd,ee,aa, (colour tested- Animal Genetics and UC Davis). Dam **Black** - Ee,aa. (colour tested Animal Genetics).



Above: Another example of a black dun foal showing the "bucks skin look" foal coat, (Dd Ee aa.) No 'CREAM' here.



Foal Coat

Black Buckskin/Dun



Mature coat



Clipped coat

Above: (Just to add 'a bit' of confusion) This foal has inherited the cream gene from his dam and he in fact is a **Black Buckskin/Dun** - Dd, Ee, nCr, aa. (Tested U C Davis and Animal Genetics) Sire: Dd, ee, aa. Dam nCr, EE, Aa. His mature coat leaves him indistinguishable from the Black Dun, yet he carries the cream gene dominantly, the same as any other bucks skin and has a 50% chance of throwing cream to any progeny.

Below: **Brown Buckskin** - EE,Ata nCr.(Fully tested @ PetDNA [agouti brown =At] & Animal Genetics) This homozygous black Brown Buckskin carrying 1 copy of AT, is noticeably darker in the body coat than the heterozygous black buckskin or Black Dun. left: Showing foal coat at 6 months . Centre and right: Mature 'near black' coat. Again he carries the cream gene dominantly, the same as any other bucks skin and has a 50% chance of throwing cream to any progeny.



Foal Coat

Dark Brown Buckskin



Mature coat



General Colour Code: E = black, e = red, Dd = 1 x dun , A = agouti BAY, At = Agouti BROWN. a = no agouti, nCR = 1 x cream gene.