

#RealNewForest

Should we put water out for the animals in hot weather?

No. There are natural water sources throughout the New Forest even in the most severe of droughts. They move naturally to the ponds, streams and valley mires in dry weather, and to the dry heaths in wet weather. This is good for them and good for the variety of habitats in the New Forest, ensuring that all are well-grazed at some point through the year. Unnatural sources also cause similar problems to illegal feeding, that commoners' animals may congregate and become aggressive trying to drink at the same time. If the animals need any extra help then the owners will take them to their back-up grazing land.

Buckets etc., also heighten the risk of the spread of the strangles virus, which survives well in standing water.

Feeding of any sort, including placing water accessible to commoners' livestock, is an offence under the Byelaws. Just follow the general rule of the Countryside Code and leave nothing but footprints.

©realnewforest2019