



ARAPAWA SHEEP  
NEW ZEALAND, S.I., Queenstown  
APRIL 2008  
MECHISLAV KLIMOVICH

PHOTO ENTRY

### Ovis aries

The Arapawa (*Ovis aries*) sheep is a fascinating and beautiful breed of sheep found on the Arapawa Island in the Marlborough Sounds at the Northeast tip of the South Island of New Zealand. The Arapawa are a rather primitive looking sheep and are considered to be rare by some. The most probable origin for the Arapawa feral sheep is that they are escapees of a flock of mainly Merino origin, known to be introduced in 1867.

**DESCRIPTION** (*male*) weight averages 100 - 175 lbs (45 - 79 kg) the ewes are considerably smaller. The Arapawa (*Ovis aries*) is considered to be a small sheep with an average height of 27 - 31 inches at the shoulder.



These animals are believed to be related to the Merino Sheep and are easily domesticated. The animal is a short tailed animal probably from the influence of the merino sheep and has a medium frame with narrow black faces, thin clean legs and small feet with hard hooves. The skin is black and the fleece is typically a deep reddish brown color. The facial coloration is typically black, but may exhibit some degree of white coloring on



certain animals. The Arapawa (*Ovis aries*) are considered to be intelligent animals and are wary, quick on their feet and have a very nervous disposition. The rams grow impressive large open black horns and are typically browsers.

**DISTRIBUTION** huntable populations are found on the Arapawa Island in the Marlborough Sounds at the Northeast tip of the South Island; Pitt Island and in numerous