

Extract from Review of Mongol camel studies

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Mongol camel body conformation and growth

Biological distinctions of the Mongol camel

Mongol camel color

Shulijenko (1957); Luvsan (1975, 1986) and Baldan (2001) have studied the colour of Mongol camels.

Shulijenko (1957) classified Mongol camel color into dark (dark brown, red brown) and light yellow. Camel color was studied in seven provinces in the Gobi desert region and it was found that 41.6 per cent of the total number of camels were red brown; 17.7 per cent were dark brown; 6.4 per cent were yellow brown; 36.4 per cent were light yellow; and 1.36 per cent were white. The study showed that dark colors dominate.

According to Luvsan (1975), dark red, brown and red are the main colors of the Mongol camel. Out of the total number of camels studied, 76.6 per cent were of a dark color and the remaining camels were light in color. The researcher conducted studies in seven provinces in the Gobi desert region in 1986 and found that 23.5 per cent of the camels studied were dark red; 19.0 per cent were brown; 15.9 per cent were red; 11.4 per cent were black; 15.4 per cent were yellow; 12.4 per cent were grey blue and 4.2 per cent were white. The percentage of white color in the distribution was relatively consistent ranging from 2.6 to 5.1 per cent.

Baldan (2001) conducted studies of Mongol camel color based on the camel strain and line such as Galbyn Gobi red and Khanin Ketsiin red brown. The color of these strains is described in a separate section.

Change in camel color can occur depending on the type of breeding performed. During the period 1970-1980, cross breeding was predominantly done to increase wool quality and yield, and as a result, the brown red color became dominant in Mongol camels. When such cross breeding stopped, the brown color became more common. However, in general, the dark color is still dominant.

Mongol camel body size and shape

The body composition, that is the shape and size of the Mongol camel, has been much studied by both Mongolian and Russian researchers.

According to Mishariev (1930), the Mongol camel body composition is suitable for the transportation of loads. The camel has a light head, wide chest, good leg posture, a long body and plenty of wool. Dolgushina (1933) studied the body size of fully grown camels in the western regions of Mongolia. The fully grown female camel has a height of 159cm between the humps; a body length of 164.7cm; chest width of 74cm; a chest ring of 216.2cm; and a croup height of 155cm. In his study of camel body composition, Meleshko (1937), mentioned that the Mongol camel body is peculiar in two aspects; that is, it is flat and heavy. Naurzbaev studied the composition and size of the Mongol camel in two Gobi provinces, Umnugobi and Uvurkhangai resulting in the following findings: female camels have a height of 170.3cm between humps; the body length is 144.1cm; the chest ring is 196.8cm; and the shin diameter is 18.1 cm, while for fully grown male camels the sizes are 176.6cm; 151.0cm; 210.3cm; and 20.3cm respectively. The study showed that camels in Umnugobi province are larger in size than those in Uvurkhangai province. Shuljienko (1954) also studied the Mongol camel body composition and size in the Gobi regions. The results were as follows: average height of 164-171cm between humps; 143-147cm body length; 201-211cm; chest ring and 17-21cm shin diameter. Dash (1958) found that the Mongol camel has a well developed bone structure and has a weight of 590kg.

A comprehensive study of Mongol camel size and body composition was conducted by Luvsan (1975, 1986). Mongol camel body size and mass were studied in the Gobi region provinces for camel calves, young camels and fully grown female and male camels. No significant difference was identified in camel size or weight between provinces. However, the Galbyn Gobi red strain camels are considerably larger in size. The following table shows Mongol camel body size and body mass on average.

Table 1: Mongol camel body average size and body mass

Description	Camel calf		Young camel		Fully grown female	Fully grown male
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Height between humps (cm)	131.0	131.2	158.4	157.2	163.9	167.3
Body length (cm)	96.5	96.6	127.9	127.3	145.1	146.9
Chest ring (cm)	130.7	127.0	203.0	200.7	220.5	233.6
Shin diameter (cm)	13.6	13.3	17.8	17.8	19.1	22.5
Body mass (kg)	139.9	138.9	437.6	425.9	500.6	592.8

Source: Luvsan (1986).