

## Sheep Rolling Over Cattle Grids

These are three reasons why you may be reading this.

1. In response to the prompt in my book 'Who shares your problem?'
2. You were visiting our website and you were curious about the link.
3. Google took you to this page as part of your research.

In my book, 'Who shares your problem?' we were looking to see if sheep had learnt to overcome the constraint of cattle grids, by rolling over the gaps to avoid their feet getting trapped.

Here is the newspaper article, written on 30 July 2004, that triggered off the spate of stories.



### ***Crafty sheep conquer cattle grids***

*BBC News 30 July, 2004*

***Hungry sheep on the Yorkshire moors have taught themselves to roll 8ft (3m) across hoof-proof metal cattle grids - and raid villagers' valley gardens.***

*The crafty animals have also perfected the skill of hurdling 5ft (1.5m) fences and squeezing through 8in (20cm) gaps. They have destroyed several gardens and even graze on the village park, bowling green, cricket field and graveyard.*

*The grids were installed 10 years ago after a gardener in Marsden, near Huddersfield, held stray sheep hostage. Dorothy Lindley, a Conservative councillor in the former textile town on the edge of the Pennine uplands in West Yorkshire, said: "They lie down on their side, or sometimes their back, and just roll over and over the grids until they are clear."*

*A National Farmers' Union spokeswoman in York said: "We have never seen anything like it. We have looked at ways of improving the situation but it is very difficult. The grids are substantial bits of kit."*

*A National Sheep Association spokeswoman said: "Sheep are quite intelligent creatures and have more brainpower than people are willing to give them credit for."*

## **Further research on the subject**

### ***Sue Arnold: Outsmarted by greedy West Highland sheep***

*Saturday, 23 July 2005*

*"It's my fault, of course, for wanting anything as silly and suburban as a garden. Had I given the matter sufficient thought before I'd planted this year's crop, I'd have realised that the reason the sheep haven't eaten my two vintage climbers is that they have grown so tall that their lowest leaves and flowers are out of nibbling reach. I didn't. I was far too busy choosing exotic raspberry ripple coloured floribunda roses and variegated honeysuckle to bother with detail.*

*You know the rest. What can I do, I wailed to my neighbour, a fisherman who recently inherited a croft and is now the proud owner of 120 sheep. Absolutely nothing, he said. Sheep can jump over, crawl under and wriggle through anything. He once saw a sheep roll over a cattle grid, an initiative that was immediately copied by the rest of the flock. Another time, a large sheep lay across a gully and allowed itself to be used as a bridge."*

### ***Cattle grid fails to halt goat's village rampage***

*Last updated at 13:11 15 January 2007*

*"A £40,000 cattle grid may have to be redesigned after it failed to stop wild goats escaping from their beauty spot home and causing damage in a village. The 70-strong herd has lived for centuries in the Valley of the Rocks - a site of special scientific interest overlooking Lynton in north Devon.*

*It was hoped that years of problems caused by escaped goats would be solved by the grid, which was installed mainly to keep in ponies introduced to help keep down ground cover. But a dozen goats from the herd, a major tourist attraction, found a way to negotiate the grid and have been wandering and eating their way through the village."*

# sixth sense

## A picture paints a thousand words...or does it?



This image was found on the Internet. But does it actually paint a true picture of what went on?

- Did the sheep roll? Why not a picture of the sheep rolling?
- Is there any other way they could have got out of the field?
- Had they actually come from that field? Maybe they had come from another field, but were unable to cross the cattle grid.

I hope you have more questions that you would ask.

## Conclusion

From my research, I have no evidence that sheep are able to roll over the cattle grids. I found many websites that repeated the story, written first on the BBC news website. However, just because the story is repeated doesn't make it true. When I first joined the Police I was told by an old detective at a crime scene, "Believe half of what you see and nothing of what you hear."

So, at the moment, I do not believe it. But, if I do find any direct evidence, I will update this page.

Best regards  
Neil