

Buffalo Book: The Full Saga of the American Animal

David A. Dary



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The journals and memoirs of 19th century explorers and travelers in the American West often told of viewing buffalo massed together as far as the eye could see. This book appropriately covers the subject of the buffalo as extensively as that animal covered the plains. Other recent accounts of the buffalo have focused on two or three aspects, emphasizing its natural history, the hunters and the hunted in prehistoric time, the relationship between the buffalo and the American Indian. David Dary's treatment stretches from horizon to horizon. Of course he discusses the origin of the buffalo in North America, its locations and migrations, its habits, its significance and role in both Indian and white cultures, its near demise, its salvation. But more. Dary weaves throughout his fact-filled book fascinating threads of lore and legend of this animal that literally helped mold who and what America is. Further, in addition to detailing the extinction which almost befell this mythic beast and the attempts to give life again to the herds, Dary concentrates significant attention on the buffalo as part of 20th century America in terms of captivity, husbandry, and symbol.

The Buffalo Book rounds up all the contemporary buffalo. Dary has located just about every single buffalo alive today in the United States. He has visited or corresponded with everyone who raises a private or government herd, small or large. He maps their location, size, purpose, future. There are even some instructions about how to raise buffalo if one is so inclined. For the gourmet *The Buffalo Book* provides a number of recipes, such as Sweetgrass Buffalo and Beer Pie or Buffalo Tips a la Bourgogne. From the buffalo nickel to Wyoming's state flag, from The University of Colorado's mascot to Indiana's state seal, we picture and use the buffalo in hundreds of ways; Dary surveys the 19th and 20th century symbol adaptation of the animal.

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