

America's
**ANIMAL
COMEBACKS**

American

Bison

A Scary Prediction

by William Caper

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A Scary Prediction



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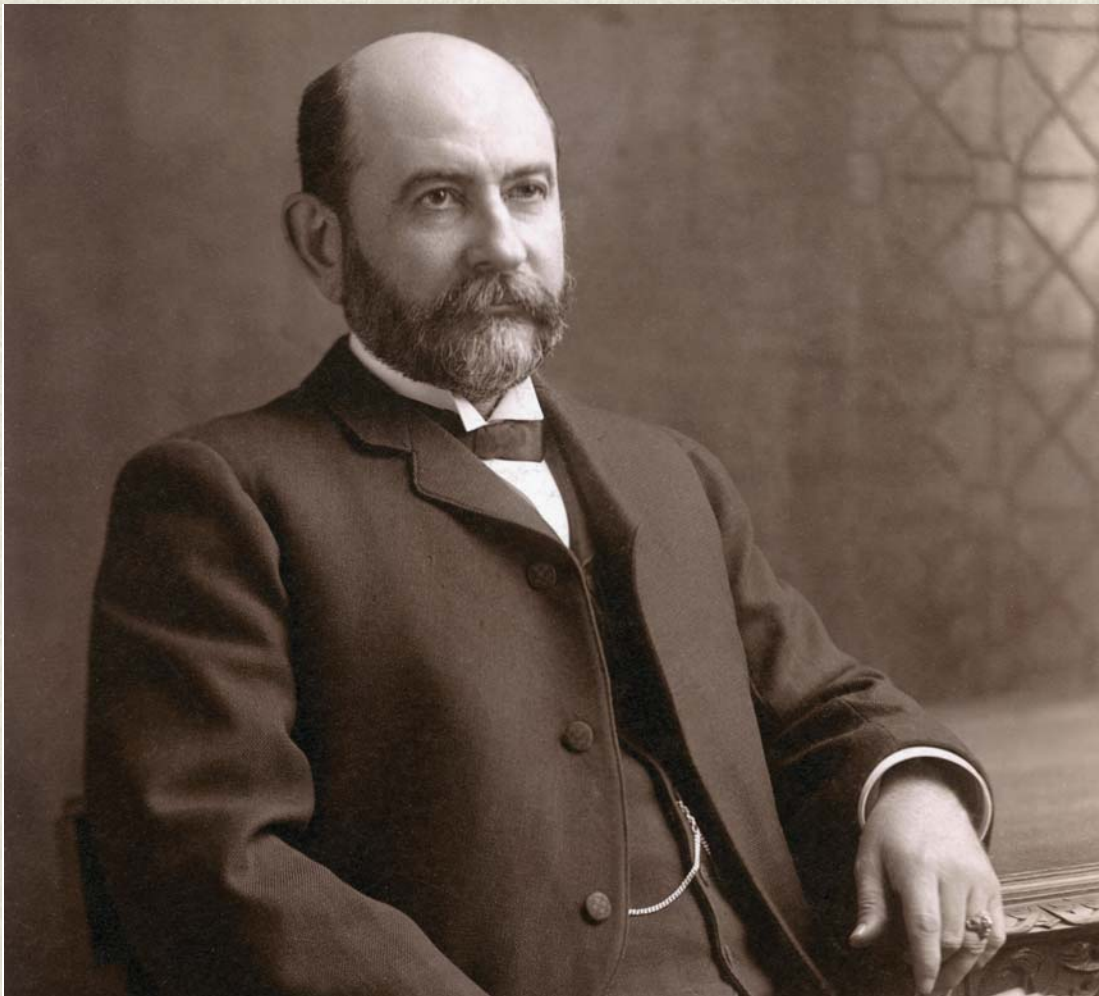


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A Shocking Prediction

It had been a long day. William Temple Hornaday, a **zoologist**, and his team of workers were in Montana looking for bison. More than three weeks had gone by and they had not seen even one of the large creatures. It was hard for Hornaday to believe that millions of these animals had once roamed the American plains.




William Hornaday was a leader in helping to save American bison.

Only three years later, in 1889, Hornaday made a **prediction** that shocked many people. He said that in ten years wild American bison would be **extinct**. The only ones left would be living in zoos or on ranches.

Something had to be done to save the bison from extinction. Or was it already too late?

Millions of bison once roamed North America.

A large, brown bison with dark fur on its head and neck, and lighter brown fur on its body, stands in a field of tall, dry grass. The bison is facing slightly to the right. In the background, another bison is partially visible. The overall scene is a natural, outdoor setting.

Bison use their small horns to defend themselves from enemies and to fight for a spot within a **herd**.

Bison Were Here First

There were bison in North America long before people arrived. It's believed that bison **migrated** across a **land bridge** that once joined Asia and Alaska about 35,000 years ago.

By the time people settled in North America, bison were almost everywhere. They were as far south as what is today Mexico. They lived as far east as what is today New York. Most of them, however, lived on the **Great Plains**.



Scientists don't know exactly how many bison there were. It's thought, however, that at one time 30 to 60 million lived in North America.



A bison drawing found in a cave

In the past, there were as many as six different **species** of bison. Today there are only two—American and European bison.

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About the Author

William Caper has written books about history, science, film, and many other topics. He lives in San Francisco with his wife, Erin, and their dog, Face.

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American Bison

A Scary Prediction

In 1886, William Temple Hornaday and his team of workers were in Montana looking for bison. It had been 17 days and they hadn't seen one of the large creatures. It was hard for Hornaday to believe that millions of these animals had once roamed the American plains. Hornaday predicted that soon there would be no more wild American bison. Something had to be done to save these remarkable creatures from extinction. Or was it already too late?

American Alligators
Freshwater Survivors

American Bison
A Scary Prediction

Bald Eagles
A Chemical Nightmare

Black-footed Ferrets
Back from the Brink

Florida Manatees
Warm Water Miracles

Florida Panthers
Struggle for Survival

Gray Wolves
Return to Yellowstone

Grizzly Bears
Saving the Silvertip

Southern Sea Otters
Fur-tastrophe Avoided

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