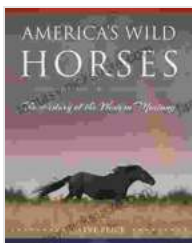


America's Wild Horses: A Majestic and Enduring Symbol of Our Nation's Spirit

The wild horses of America are a majestic and enduring symbol of our nation's spirit. They are a living reminder of the untamed wilderness that once covered our continent and a testament to the resilience of the American spirit.

Wild horses first came to America with the Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century. These horses quickly escaped captivity and thrived in the wild, spreading across the vast open spaces of the West. By the 19th century, there were millions of wild horses roaming the Great Plains.



America's Wild Horses: The History of the Western Mustang by Rick Steves

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 30445 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 154 pages

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Wild horses played a vital role in the settlement of the American West. They were used for transportation, hunting, and warfare. They were also a source of food and leather for the settlers.

In the early 20th century, the population of wild horses began to decline due to a number of factors, including hunting, disease, and competition from livestock. By the 1950s, there were only an estimated 100,000 wild horses remaining in the United States.

In 1971, Congress passed the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, which protected wild horses and burros on federal land. This law helped to stabilize the population of wild horses, but they still face a number of challenges today, including habitat loss, disease, and competition from livestock.

Wild horses are an important part of the American landscape. They are a symbol of our nation's history, heritage, and spirit. We must continue to work to protect them and ensure that they continue to roam free for generations to come.

Physical Characteristics

Wild horses are typically smaller than domestic horses, with an average height of 14 to 15 hands. They have a stocky build and a muscular body. Their coats are usually a shade of brown, but they can also be black, gray, or white. Wild horses have a long, flowing mane and tail.

Wild horses are adapted to life in the wild. They have strong hooves that help them to travel over rough terrain. They also have a keen sense of smell and hearing, which helps them to avoid predators.

Behavior

Wild horses are social animals that live in herds. Herds are typically led by a stallion, who is responsible for protecting the herd from predators and

other threats. The mares in the herd are responsible for raising the young.

Wild horses are territorial animals and will defend their territory from other herds. They will also fight with each other for dominance within the herd.

Wild horses are grazers and spend most of their time eating grass and other vegetation. They will also eat leaves, fruits, and flowers.

Habitat

Wild horses live in a variety of habitats, including grasslands, deserts, and forests. They prefer areas with open spaces where they can graze and run.

Wild horses are found in the western United States, from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. They are also found in Canada and Mexico.

Threats

Wild horses face a number of threats today, including:

*

- **Habitat loss:** The loss of habitat is the biggest threat to wild horses. As human populations grow, more and more land is being developed for housing, agriculture, and other uses. This is reducing the amount of habitat available to wild horses. *
- **Disease:** Wild horses are susceptible to a number of diseases, including influenza, pneumonia, and brucellosis. These diseases can spread rapidly through herds and can kill large numbers of horses. *

- **Competition from livestock:** Livestock compete with wild horses for food and water. This competition can put a strain on wild horse populations, especially during times of drought. *
- **Hunting:** Wild horses are still hunted in some areas of the United States. This is a cruel and unnecessary practice that should be stopped.

Conservation

A number of organizations are working to protect wild horses. These organizations are working to:

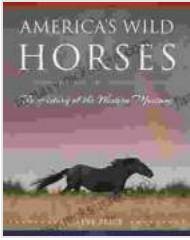
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- **Protect habitat:** Protect habitat is one of the most important things that can be done to protect wild horses. Organizations are working to acquire land for wild horse herds and to create wildlife refuges and national parks. *
- **Vaccinate horses:** Vaccinating horses is a way to protect them from diseases. Organizations are working to vaccinate wild horse herds against influenza, pneumonia, and other diseases. *
- **Manage livestock grazing:** Managing livestock grazing is another way to help wild horses. Organizations are working to reduce the number of livestock that graze on public lands where wild horses live. *
- **Educate the public:** Educating the public about wild horses is also important. Organizations are working to raise awareness about the importance of wild horses and the threats they face.

The Future of Wild Horses

The future of wild horses is uncertain. They face a number of challenges, but there are also a number of organizations and individuals who are

working to protect them. We can all play a role in ensuring that wild horses continue to roam free for generations to come.



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Mustang by Rick Steves

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