

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Biological Survey

DIVISION OF INFORMATION

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Photo available from Biological Survey

Biological Survey Finds More Than
5,000 Buffaloes in U. S. and Alaska

There are today slightly more than 5,000 American bison in the United States and Alaska, where probably 60,000,000 roamed the ranges about 100 years ago, it is revealed in census figures recently reported to Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes by the Bureau of Biological Survey. Affording an interesting comparison of the early bison herds, experts estimated that in 1935, there were 68,525,000 cattle in the United States.

Today, the buffaloes are found on Federal, State, municipal and private holdings in 38 States, the Territory of Alaska, and the District of Columbia. Of the 5,029 buffaloes recorded, 4,829 are in the United States and 200 in Alaska. The count did not include the entire calf crop of the year and does not account for an estimated 600 to 800 animals whose owners are not known.

The census takers found that Montana leads the States with 1,044 bison. South Dakota is second, with 955; Wyoming, third, with 922; and Oklahoma fourth, with 639.

The location and ownership of all the animals recorded are shown in a mimeographed leaflet, number BS-148, entitled "Status of the American Bison in the United States and Alaska, 1939." Copies are available upon request.

In its leaflet the Biological Survey calls attention to the fact that no detailed count of these big-game animals had been made since January 1934, when the American Bison Society published its twentieth census of buffaloes.

The American Bison Society, which was organized in New York City in December 1905 by 16 conservationists, is given much credit for the preservation of the species. The National Bison Range in Montana, a national wildlife refuge administered by the Biological Survey, was established largely through the efforts of the Society, the leaflet states.

Of the total number of buffaloes reported in the United States, 1,509 are males; 2,452 females, and 868 calves. Of the 200 in Alaska, 55 are males; 110 females; and 35 calves. The Alaska herd ranges in the Delta River section and is the increase of a nucleus of 23 animals transferred to the Territory from the National Bison Range in 1928 by the Biological Survey.

The number of buffaloes reported in the various States follows:

Arizona, 95; California, 90; Colorado, 143; District of Columbia, 20; Florida, 3; Georgia, 4; Idaho, 15; Illinois, 8; Indiana, 14; Iowa, 10; and Kansas, 49.

Louisiana, 1; Maryland, 1; Massachusetts, 16; Michigan, 33; Minnesota, 41; Mississippi, 6; Missouri, 22; Montana, 1,044; Nebraska, 213; Nevada, 2; New Hampshire, 26; New Jersey, 5; New York, 38; and North Dakota, 93.

Ohio, 22; Oklahoma, 639; Oregon, 17; Pennsylvania, 98; Rhode Island, 4; South Dakota, 955; Tennessee, 5; Texas, 100; Utah, 2; and Vermont, 3.

Washington, 41; West Virginia, 5; Wisconsin, 24; and Wyoming, 922.

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