

ZOOLOGY

Longhorns Number 500

► THE SYMBOLIC animals of America's Western frontier days, Texas longhorn cattle, now number more than 500, it was announced by Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay.

Close to extinction less than 25 years ago, the majority of longhorn cattle surviving from the herds that once numbered thousands are now maintained on national wildlife refuges under Federal protection. A few, the Department reported, are still in private ownership.

The largest herd in the country, 376 animals, is to be found at the Wichita Mountains Refuge, near Cache, Okla. Another herd of 146 is maintained at the Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge near Valentine, Nebr. Four steers are located at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Burns, Ore., and two bulls are on the National Bison Range, Moiese, Mont.

The longhorns were still numerous after the Civil War, the wildlife experts reported, but were soon forgotten as livestock breeders began raising heavier, beefier and more disease-resistant cattle. By 1920 it was difficult to find more than one or two of these animals on the western plains.

Conservation of these vanishing animals was made possible through the efforts of the late John Hatton of the U. S. Forest Service and the late Will C. Barnes, public official, author and one-time cowman, the Department said.

These two men traveled more than 5,000 miles and examined more than 30,000 head of Texas cattle in the late 1920's before gathering a herd of 30 survivors, which became the nucleus of the present Wichita herd.

The longhorn first landed in this country when the animals were brought to America in 1521 by Gregorio Vallalobos, a governor-general sent to "New Spain."

The animal is described as leggy, hardy and active, with long keen horns and an "aggressive disposition." It ranges in color from black, brindle, dun, spotted, buckskin, red, roan and white to combinations of these colors.

The longhorn is slow of growth, but as the animal matures, the horns keep growing. On record, the Department reported, are horns with spreads of up to eight feet from tip to tip.

"While the Texas longhorn cannot be classed as a game animal," the conservationists concluded, "its preservation is considered desirable because this type of cattle was so prominently identified with the early history of the West and the settlement of the country."

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AERONAUTICS

Tell Ways to Eject Pilots in One Piece

► WHEN YOU face a 300-mile-an-hour breeze, your eyelids are forced open and are raised like umbrellas. Above 400 miles an hour the air can force your mouth open and destroy the lungs by overinflating them. Above 500 miles an hour your face may be lacerated.

These are just a few of the problems faced by designers of equipment to bail out pilots from jet planes, described by William Bonas and M. J. Reilly, designers for the Glenn L. Martin Company, Baltimore, Md., at a meeting of the Society of Automotive Engineers in Detroit.

Another great problem is how to prevent the pilot from being cut to bits by the tail section of the plane when he is ejected. Even when he is wearing knee guards, a 500-mile-an-hour wind will fling the pilot's legs outward and tear them from the sockets.

Three fundamental solutions to the problems of getting the pilot out of a plane in one piece were described as:

1. The simplest, a "baby carriage capsule," encloses the pilot and the seat in a shell-like hood. The unit is ejected from the plane. It forms a water-tight pod that will float if it lands on water.

2. The pressurized cockpit, including canopy, seat, control stick, instrument panel and oxygen supply system, is separated from the rest of the plane by a catapult or rockets. The unit is stabilized by fins.

3. In "the ultimate in capsule design" the entire nose section of the ship is ejected by explosive bolts and rockets.

In all these designs the unit may tumble violently before the parachute opens. The added forces generated by tumbling might exceed human endurance, causing injury or even death.

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Wildlife in Alaska

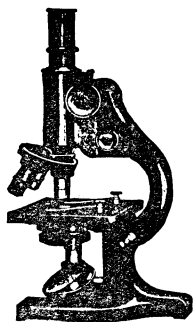
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