

**WILD
ANIMAL WAYS**

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Wild animal ways by Ernest Thompson Seton

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ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

**WILD
ANIMAL WAYS**



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WILD ANIMAL WAYS

By

ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

Author of

*Wild Animals at Home, Wild Animals I Have Known,
Two Little Savages, Biography of a Grizzly,
Life Histories of Northern Animals,
Rolf in the Woods, The Book of Woodcraft.*
Chief of the Woodcraft League of America



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With 200 Drawings by the Author

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1922

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Preface

When I look at the names of the animals whose stories are given here, I feel much as an artist might in looking at sundry portraits of his friends and ideals painted by himself.

Some of these I personally knew. Some are composites, and are merely natural history in story form. Way-atcha, Atalapha, and Foam are of the latter kind.

Foam is an effort to show how the wild things instinctively treat themselves in sickness. They have their herbs, their purges, their sudorifics, their hot and cold baths, their mud baths, their fastings, their water sluicings, their massage, their rest cure, and their sun treatment.

The final scene when the Razor-back utterly defeated the Bear was witnessed and related to me long ago by a Michigan lumberman, whose name I cannot recall. The minor incidents are largely from personal observation of wild hogs in various parts of America. I am in hopes that some will

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see the despised Razor-back in a more friendly light when they realize the strong and wise little soul that lurks behind those blinking eyes.

The Wild Geese is a simple narrative of well-known facts, facts that I observed among the Honkers in my own home park.

Jinney, the had monkey, I never saw, but I have told her story as it was given to me by my old friend Louis Ohnimus, at one time Director of the Woodward Zoölogical Gardens in San Francisco, California.

Billy and Coaly-Bay are in the main true, and a recent letter from the West gives me new light on the history of the wild horse. The story had just appeared in *Collier's Magazine*, where the writer saw it.

The letter runs as follows:

"January 26, 1916. I, too, knew Coaly-Bay, the glorious creature. He began his struggles in the Bitterroot Mountains of Idaho, left through the Salmon River country straggling tales of his fierce resentment under the yoke, and escaped triumphantly at last to the plains in the south.

"I was sixteen then and it is six years ago.

"Something, however, you failed to record. It is this: that before he escaped from the world of

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spur and lash, the world of compulsion, the world that denies to a horse an end in himself, he came to love one person—me, the woman who petted instead of saddled him, who gave him sugar instead of spurring him, who gloried in him because he dared assert that he belonged to himself. For I, too, was an outlaw.

“When I wandered joyfully through the evergreen labyrinths of the Florence Basin, sniffing like a hare or fox the damp spring smell of the earth, going far down the narrow, rock-walled canyons for the first wild orchids, Coaly-Bay came, too. I did not ride or drive him. He trotted beside me as might a dog. We were pals, equals, fellow rebels. I went with him where he could find the first young meadow grass, and he went with me where grew the first wild strawberries. As together we glimpsed, far below, the green ribbon that was the Salmon River, or saw, far off, the snow attempting to cover the sinister blackness of the Buffalo Hump, we laughed at the stupidity of the world of man, who sought to drive things, to compel things, to master things, breeding hate and viciousness thereby; the stupidity of the world of men who never dreamed of the marvellous power of love!

“But they came between us, these men; and

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when Coaly-Bay broke the leg of one of them, I laughed. That day when they were going to crush his spirit with a bullet, I *hated* them! And when he escaped down those endless labyrinths, which we had threaded together so often, how I gloated! But later I wept, for he had left me to be an outlaw alone.

"Yes, always I shall love the memory of Coaly-Bay. He was a symbol of the eternal spirit of Revolt against the Spur of Oppression. My desire is to be as true to that spirit as he was, to fight the lash and spur, to bleed or starve rather than submit."

I gladly quote this letter because it interprets some others of my friends as well as Coaly-Bay.

New York,

February 27, 1916.

Ernest *Ernest* Baker

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