

# Leupold Big Game Profiles

It is a privilege of the public trust to hunt big game, and hunt it ethically.

Excerpt from the Season II Finale...

By **Greg Tinsley**  
Editor - *Fair Chase Magazine*

The works and words of God found in the Bible represent the greatest human story ever told. We see His simple masterstrokes of ethereal design in the high rocky divides, the roiling oceans, the flora, the fauna, in sunlight and in the shadow cast by a rising harvest moon. From Genesis, we learn that He has clearly transferred responsibility of the Earth and its creatures to mankind. So, you see, the idea of wise use conservation of our natural resources isn't 50 or 150 years old. Instead, man's use of Earth's creatures, including hunting and domestication, is a Biblical directive from the highest authority. Clearly, man's dominion over the land and its wildlife is without question a supreme and ancient declaration, one that is found in most religions.

Leupold's Big Game Profiles  
Season III can be seen on The  
Outdoor Channel Beginning:  
Sunday, July 6 at 10 am EST



This single absolute truth of Scripture rightfully supersedes the opinions of those who would reject hunting and strip man of the most valuable tool he has to fulfill his obligations to care for, conserve, and protect. This wandering away from the realities of nature and bedrock Christian values may have a following today, but will certainly fade as time moves on. Our growing population, for one, will someday soon force a mutual understanding of all peoples that the last place on Earth is Earth itself, and nobody will save our home for us.

Full measures of courage and currency are required to speak of such truths and have them heard in a modern world. As the Boone and Crockett Club, Mossy Oak and Active Video Productions, together the producers of this big-game television series, close this phase of a show acclaimed as one of the most informative ever, it sends special thanks to the like-minded conservation partners that made it possible: Leupold and Stevens, the Dallas Safari Club, Remington Arms and Ammunition, Cabela's, Walker's Game Ear and Crooked Horn Outfitters.

The epilogue of this general overview phase of the big-game profiles series is accomplished with this text highlighting a great two-year body of work, with visions of the noble warhorses represented by the moose and the elk, precious sightings of the ghostly Coues' whitetail, to breathtaking views of the buck pronghorn.

As dedicated viewers of *Big Game Profiles*, we've learned that as Europeans first began to explore the New World, the grizzly bear ruled a vast domain, from present-day Alaska to central Mexico and California, from the central Dakotas south into far West Texas.

When the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery blazed their trail through the West in the early 1800s, an estimated 50,000 grizzly bears patrolled the continent. The best of today's scientific estimates currently put the number of grizzlies at a mere 1,400 animals in the Lower 48 states. As has been the case for all species of big game, the grizzlies' population decline is complex and multi-faceted.

Bear hunting did not specifically bring on the drastic decline of the grizzly. Unlike other big-game species, the grizzly has never occurred in large numbers like elk, whitetails and bison. The grizzly, like his primary food sources, requires vast tracks of unbroken habitat such as the pre-European Great Plains.

We learned that the grizzly's primary food source, the bison, will probably never properly recover from European

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The Boone and Crockett Club

SINCE 1872

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colonization of America. Perhaps there were 60 million American bison before European settlers began to re-shape the New World. Documented events by trained observers commonly reported bison herds miles wide and days long. Bison ranged widely across much of the continent, the largest bodied and the most numerous big-game species of post ice-age North America. But by the close of the 19th century, only 1,000 or so wild bison remained in this world.

The miracle of the American bison is one of evolutionary survival, great abundance, near extinction, recovery and lost identity. It is also a story that exemplifies the slaughter wrought by the most spectacular human expansion in earth's history.

If the bison is the symbol of the American West, then it is certainly also the symbol of the American conservation movement.

And what started as a buffalo hunt in the year 1883 for a young tenderfoot became the flash-point for America's first private organization chartered to address the depletion of the nation's wildlife resources.

The green-horn bison hunter was an ambitious visionary named Theodore Roosevelt, and at a mere 27 years of age, the conservancy he founded in 1887 was the Boone and Crockett Club.

The fate of the wild, big-bull bison remains unsettled. To maintain viably pure herds may be more daunting tomorrow than it was a century past. In volume, he is the pitifully reduced, obsolete symbol of the American West, the egregiously persecuted underdog of the century. Heartbreakingly, the bison can never be fully restored to the modern world.

Taking the bison's place in the hearts of the American hunter has been the whitetail deer. And we have learned that fossil records indicate that the whitetail deer is an ancient species to North America, first appearing more than 3 million years ago. Unlike less tolerant species, the cautious, keen, and smart whitetail is well adapted to life among humans. He is found at the outskirts of nearly every city and township in the eastern United States,

throughout the intensive agriculture lands of the Midwest and, increasingly, he pushes his tribe farther and father west.

The aggressive whitetail may be the death of the mule deer, which we learned is curiously the result of crossings between ancient blacktail bucks and whitetail does. Some scientists suggest that the day may come when the mule deer is bred out of existence by the whitetail.

Today, certainly, the mule deer is one of the most economically and socially important animals in western North America. His venison is sweet, the countries he favors enrich our souls and the sight of him bouncing across a sage-covered hill brings us closer to God. But let us please be sure of this one thing: The ability to produce the best of the glorious antler sets, art forms supreme among the mid-size deer species,

is that which allows the mule deer access to royalty status among all of the world's greatest big-game animals.

Moving away from the most familiar, we watched the great wild sheep cavort across the starkness of the truly high country.

First, here, the Stone's sheep, one of the four categories of mountain sheep found in North America, all of which are descendants of an ancient

migration from Siberian Russia across the now submerged Bering Sea land bridge. While the Stone's was the last subspecies of sheep to become known to science, they were the first to yield the secrets of their biology. This was possible because individuals are easy to visually identify and study due to individualistic coloration.

And then the Dall's, named in honor of the early Alaskan explorer William H. Dall, the white, thin-horned sheep of Alaska, the Yukon, the western portion of the Northwest Territories and the extreme northwestern portion of British Columbia.

We moved to the broiling heat of the southwestern deserts for secret views of the tremendous desert bighorn, whose small body make desert living possible while giving an overblown dimension to his massive horns.

We studied recent photography of

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potential World's Records on the hoof when it came to the majestic bighorn sheep.

Before abandoning the rocky crags, we marveled at the bravery of the mountain goat, and longed to run our fingers through his pure white robe, and thumb the points of his short, black dagger-like horns.

The American elk mesmerized us, and as we watched, we learned. Native Americans believed the elk was something of a god. They called him *Mus-Koose* and *Wapiti*, and they credited the elk with the creation of the earth, the power of speech and the ability to summon the gods and the winds for assistance. Warrior societies were named after him.

We sat transfixed at the sight of caribou. The big bull caribou is easily the most dramatically handsome antlered animal on this continent and to include the hunting efforts of wolves, bears, insects and man, caribou are also one of the most relentlessly pursued creatures on earth.

The cougar and the black bear, our most widely distributed predators had shows all their own, and rightfully so. At up to 200 pounds, no more fluid killer has ever walked the planet than the secretive cougar. The magnificently beautiful assassin will eat one deer per week, which means that 10,000 cougars will cycle through 2 million deer over a four-year period.

The brown bear, the polar bear, and the common black bear give our tremendous wildernesses character. And what show series on big game could be complete without them. To be in the presence of these creatures is one of life's significant occurrences.

We offered very few sightings of coyotes and wolves in the first two years of the big-game profiles series, but both of these magnificent predators are now positioned to do serious damage to our prey species herds. If our incredible, sportsmen-fueled North American Model of wildlife management is to continue to produce at consumable surplus levels for man and animal alike, wolf and coyote management, and the regulated hunting of wolves, will soon again take a frontline, headline position in the grand art and science of wildlife conservation.

In North America, we are blessed with the greatest wildlife system the modern world will ever witness. Leupold, the Boone and Crockett Club, and our television partners hope that you will never forget that it is a privilege of the public trust to hunt big game, and hunt it ethically. Thank you for your support of these big game treasures.

Thanks for watching and happy hunting. ■

**Leupold Big Game Profiles Season III is sponsored by:**

- Leupold
- Dallas Safari Club
- Remington
- Cabela's
- Mossy Oak
- Walker's Game Ear
- Crooked Horn Outfitters
- Boone and Crockett Club

## Get Ready For Season III

The third season of the Club's television series, *Leupold Big Game Profiles*, will see the airwaves on the first Sunday in July at 10 a.m. EST on The Outdoor Channel. Thirteen new episodes will be on display airing three times a week through the end of December.

If you have been a fan of the first two seasons, you won't be disappointed with our new format. If you will be catching the show for the first time, we doubt you will have seen anything in outdoor programming that will compare.

Our hunting/wildlife documentary series will continue with a new twist—the records book. We have referenced the B&C archives to point the *Big Game Profiles* cameras in the direction of those destinations across North America noted for producing record-class trophies. In addition to hunting these locations, we will profile each of these regions and ask and answer questions such as why Arizona grows the biggest bulls, what's going through a Kansas whitetail's mind during the rut, or what is harder to field-judge, caribou or pronghorn?

Each episode will be a profile of a different species in a different region. Season III will pick up where we left off with Seasons I & II in offering a documentary-style in-depth look at the big-game treasures that have held our passion and imagination for generations.

The full schedule for Season III can be found on the Club's website.

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