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Old-Time Buffalo Hunter Teaches
Youngsters How to Handle Herds

When the famed plainsmen hunted buffaloes in the early days of the West, young riders learned how to round up the thundering herds by apprenticeship to an experienced buffalo hunter. Now there are so few experienced riders available that William E. Drummond, old-time cowhand and ranger on the Bureau of Biological Survey's Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, has decided to write some suggestions for young riders in future round-ups.

There are 388 buffaloes on the Survey's refuge in Oklahoma, and moving the animals from one pasture to another requires expert round-up technique.

When approaching a buffalo herd, ride slowly, Ranger Drummond advises neophyte "cowboys." The horse should be walked if possible, since this is the best way to keep the herd from running.

Contrary to the tenderfoot's ideas about the Kings of the Plains, when a rider has approached fairly close to a herd, he should stop completely. Stand very still and most of the time, assures Mr. Drummond, the buffaloes will come right up to look the riders over.

If the buffaloes should start to run, a few riders should circle in front of them. By keeping them circling, the animals often can be stopped from stampeding.

Drummond declares that though a buffalo often looks as though it is ready to swallow both horse and rider, there is little danger unless the buffalo is a cow with a calf. "Then it is good policy to give her air," he admits.

Discussing other habits of these animals, the Survey ranger reminds young riders that no one knows what a buffalo will do, and one should govern his conduct accordingly.

"This much is certain," warns Drummond, "If a buffalo bull raises his tail and starts for you, give him plenty of room."

Drummond is hopeful of having more experienced riders when the Biological Survey holds its next buffalo round-up on the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.