



The South African Big Game Hunting: Wild Scenes and Wild Hunters (1851)

Charles Wilkins Webber

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Charles Wilkins Webber (1819 – 1856) was an United States journalist and explorer. In 1838, Webber went to Texas, then struggling for independence; was for several years connected with the famous Texas Rangers, seeing much of wild and adventurous life on the frontier. He was engaged in an unsuccessful attempt to lead an exploring and mining expedition to the region of the Colorado and Gila rivers in 1849. He was a noted big game hunter.

Webber writes:

"The night of the 19th was to me rather a memorable one, as being the first on which I had the satisfaction of hearing the deep-toned thunder of the lion's roar. Although there 'was no one near to inform me by what beast the haughty and impressive sounds which echoed through the wilderness were produced, I had little difficulty in divining. There was no mistake about it; and on hearing it I at once knew, as well as if accustomed to the sound from my infancy, that the appalling roar which was uttered within half a mile of me was no other than that of the mighty and terrible king of beasts. Although the dignified and truly monarchical appearance of the lion has long rendered him famous among his fellow quadrupeds, and his appearance and habits have often been described by abler pens than mine, nevertheless I consider that a few remarks, resulting from my own personal experience, formed by a tolerably long acquaintance with them both by day and by night, may not prove uninteresting to the reader. There is something so noble and imposing in the presence of the lion, when seen walking with dignified self-possession, free and undaunted, on his native soil, that no description can convey an adequate idea of his striking appearance. The lion is exquisitely formed by nature for the predatory habits which he is destined to pursue. Combining in comparatively small compass the qualities of power and agility, he is enabled, by means of the tremendous machinery with which nature has gifted him, easily to overcome and destroy almost every beast of the forest, however superior to him in weight and stature."

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- THE GIRAFFE.
- SOUTH AFRICAN LIONS.
- THE RHINOCEROS AND HIPPOPOTAMUS.
- BUFFALO AND ANTELOPES OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Originally published in 1851; reformatted for the Kindle; may contain an occasional imperfection; original spellings have been kept in place.

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