

The Great Bison

By: Mae Francis Robinson

Millions of bison once roamed the North American continent, but by the early 1900s only 1,000 remained. Today there are an estimated 30,000 wild bison across the United States and Canada.



Habitat

While North America was once filled with bison, there are nearly a fraction of them left. They can be found roaming near river valleys, plains, and prairies.

Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming is home to about 4,000 bison, who often cause traffic jams for visitors. There are also a large population of bison, 10,000, in Alberta, Canada's Wood Buffalo National Park. There are also several smaller herds of bison in Alaska.

The Basic Facts

Bison, on average, stand about 6-6.5 feet tall, and can weigh up to 2,000 lbs. They can live up to 25-30 years. They eat mostly grasses and sedges, and will travel as a herd to find food. Bison's have a thick layer of fur that protects them from the harsh weather extremes of North America.

Offspring

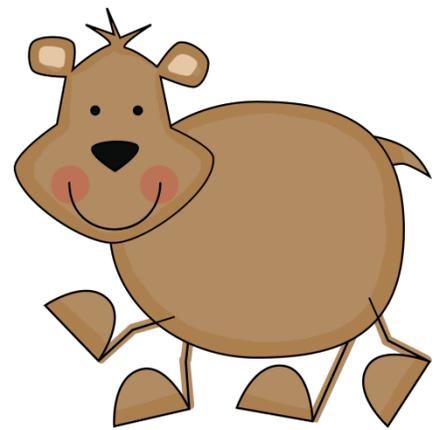
Female bison typically give birth to a calf in April or May, and they will spend 7-8 months nursing that calf. Bison calves are capable of keeping up with their parents an amazing 2-3 hours after their birth.

Why the hump?

A bison's massive hump is comprised of muscles supported by long vertebrae; this allows a bison to use its head as a snowplow in winter, swinging side to side to sweep aside the snow.

Bears, Bears, Bears!

By B.P. Marshall



The American Black bear is the most common bear found in North America. There is estimated to be nearly 900,000 black bears through the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Color and Size

The fur coloring of a black bear can be quite deceiving, as not all black bears are black. Black bears can have blue-black fur, blue-grey fur, brown fur, and sometimes they can even have white fur! Black bears have many layers of shaggy fur which keeps them warm during the long, cold winter months.

Black bears usually grow to be about 5-6 feet long and can weigh between 200-600 pounds. Despite their size, they are capable of running up to 40 miles per hour.



A Bear of an Appetite

Black bears are omnivores and eat a variety of foods. They eat grass, berries, acorns, and nuts. They will also eat fish and small animals such as deer. They are also known as opportunistic eaters, which mean they will eat whatever food they can find. It is important to clean up after yourself when you're in bear country—you wouldn't want to come back to find a bear hanging out at your campsite eating all your food!

Moms and Their Young

Adult females give birth to two to three blind cubs during the winter months. They are only about 8 ounces when they are born, but quickly grow to 80 pounds by the time they reach their first birthday. Cubs stay with their mother for the first two years of their lives before they leave in search of their own area to live.

Home, Sweet, Home

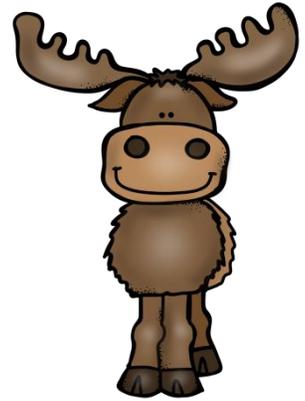
Black bears are most often found in the forests of North America. However, they also live in mountain ranges and swamps throughout the continent. Black bears usually roam a specific area, and it is best not to disrupt them. It is also important to note that black bears are great tree climbers.

During the winter months black bears make dens in caves or other sheltered spots. They stay in their dens for the majority of winter and feed off the body fat they stored up throughout the summer and fall months. Once spring arrives the bears start to become active again.

All About Moose

Written by: T.A. Kelley

The moose is the largest member of the deer family and one of the largest mammals in North America. A male moose can weigh up to 1,800 lbs. and stands nearly seven feet tall. Male moose grow antlers in late spring, early summer and usually shed them by November. All moose have a long, heavy face and their body is covered in short brown fur. The average life span of a moose is 15-20 years.



Good Eats

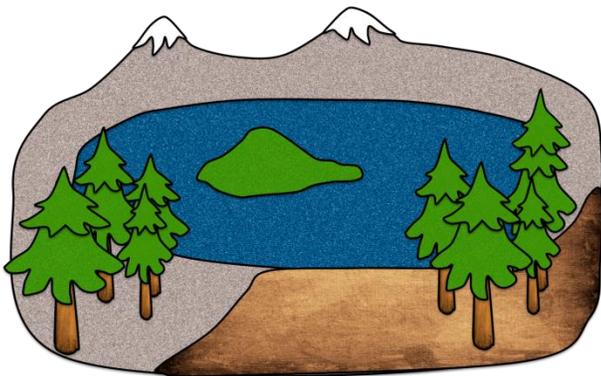
During the summer months, food is plentiful for the moose to eat. They eat high grasses, shrubs, and trees. Moose are herbivores, so they will not eat other animals. In the winter months moose use their hooves like snowshoes to dig under the snow for twigs, mosses, and lichens.

Athletes

Despite their large size, moose are strong swimmers and runners. They are able to swim several miles at one time, and they are capable of staying under water for 30 seconds and can dive 5.5 meters. On land they can run up to 35 miles per hour, and they can trot steadily at 20 miles per hour.

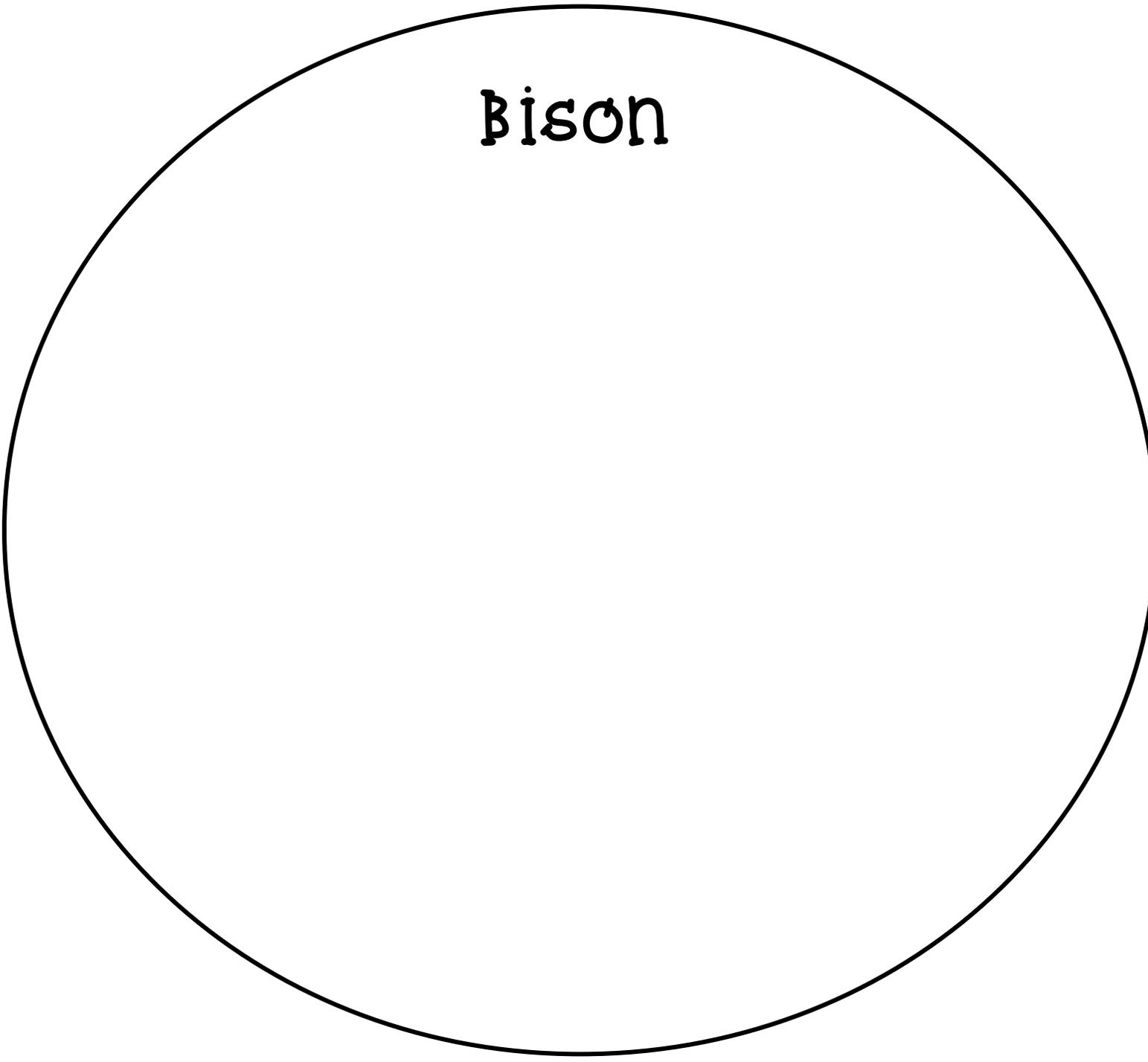
Home, sweet, Home

Moose can be found throughout North America, including Alaska, Canada, and the northwest United States. Moose can also be found in Asia and Europe. They are often found near streams and fields of tall grass.

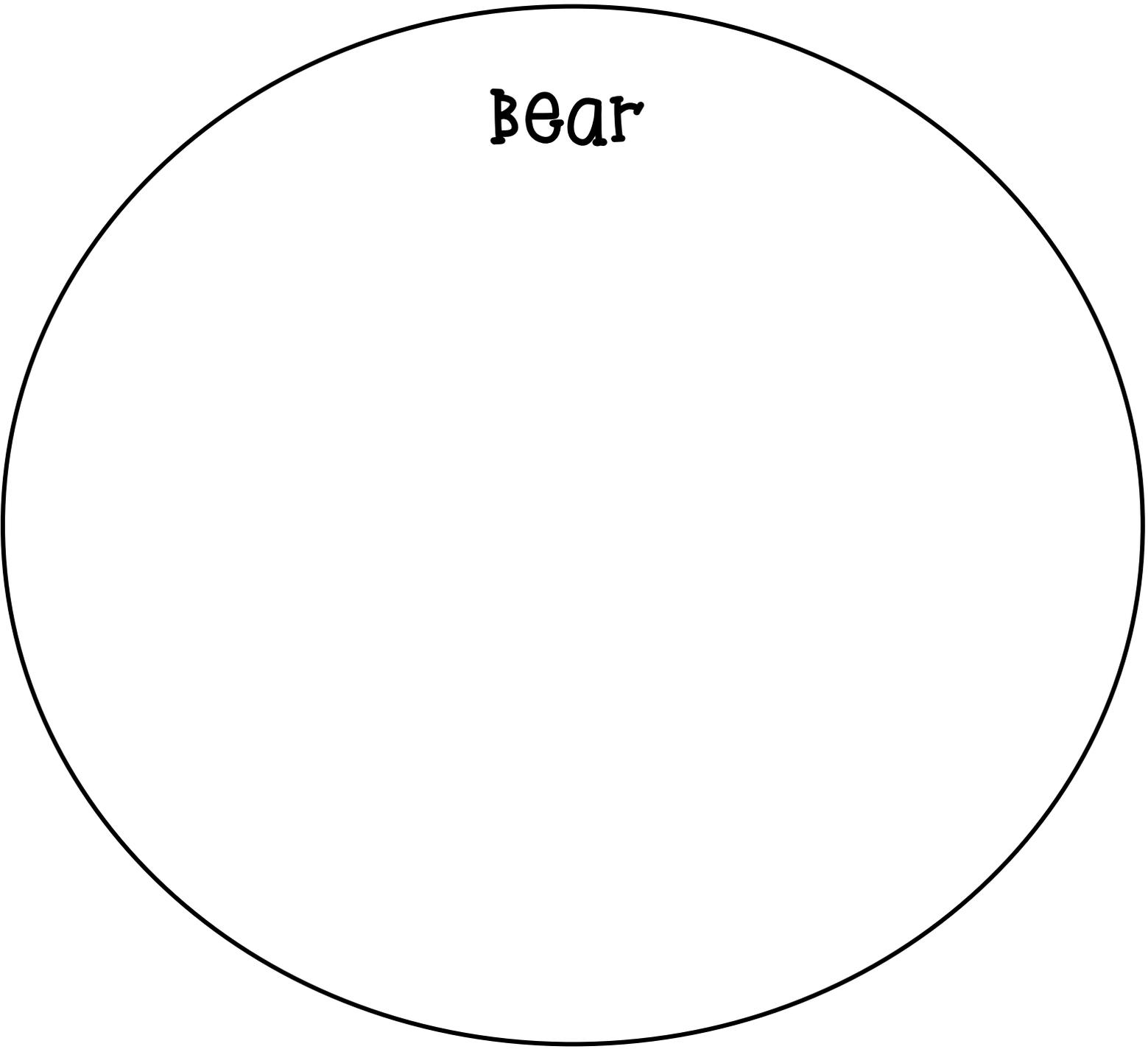


The Dangers of Moose

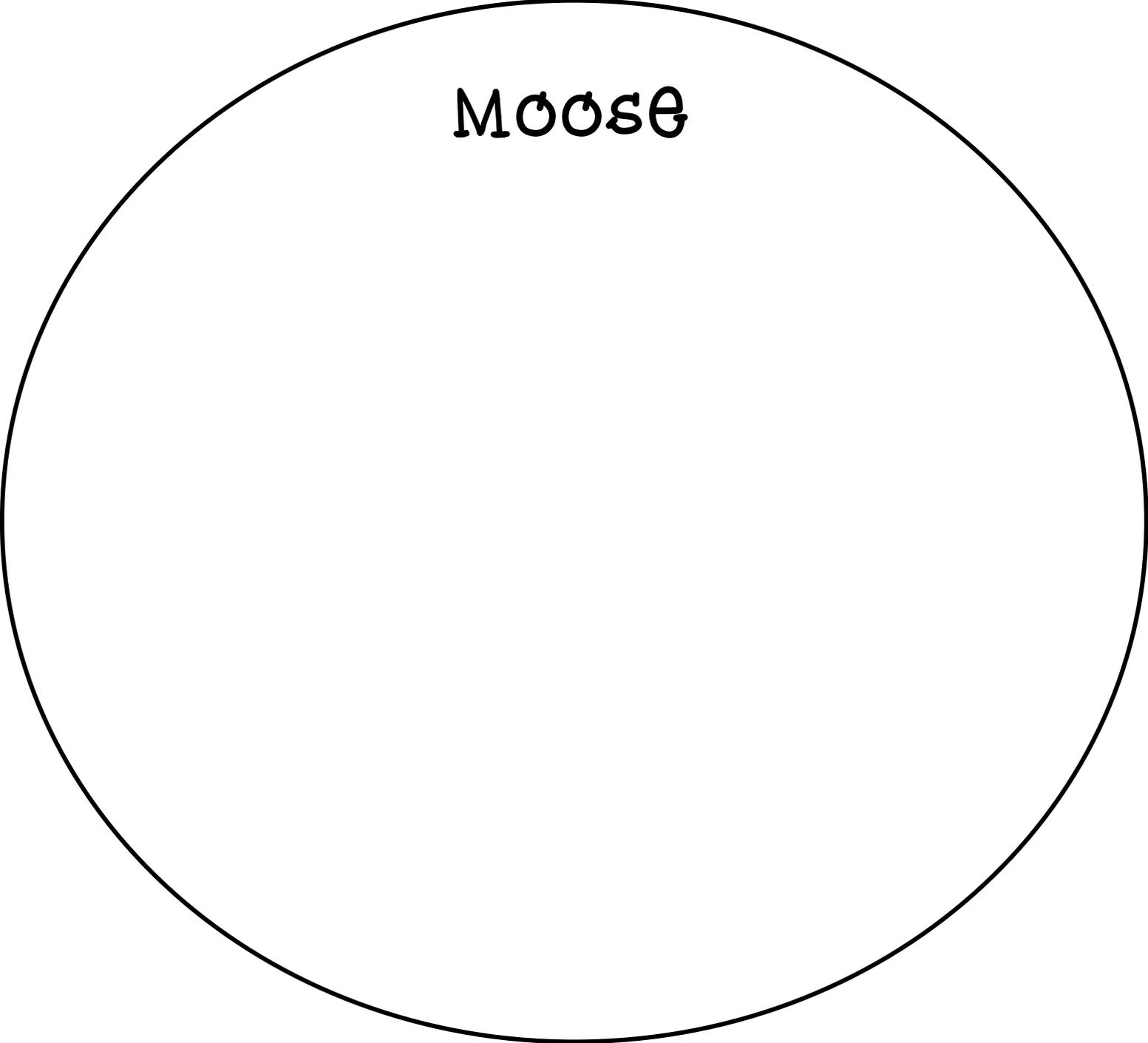
The moose is not an animal you want to encounter in the wilderness. They are good fighters and capable of defending itself against small packs of animals. Male moose use their antlers in defense, so they can be very destructive and dangerous.



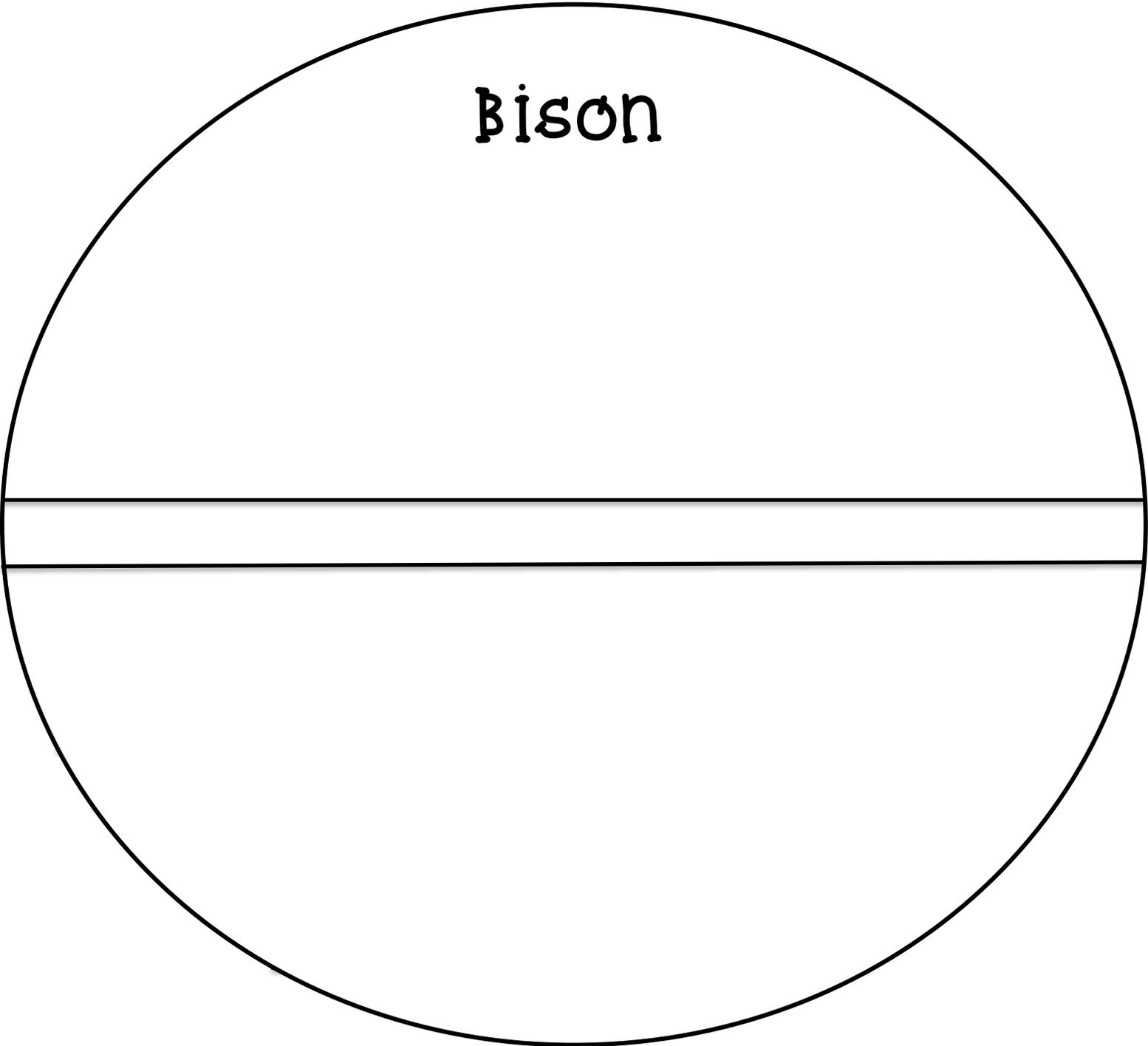
Bison



Bear



Moose



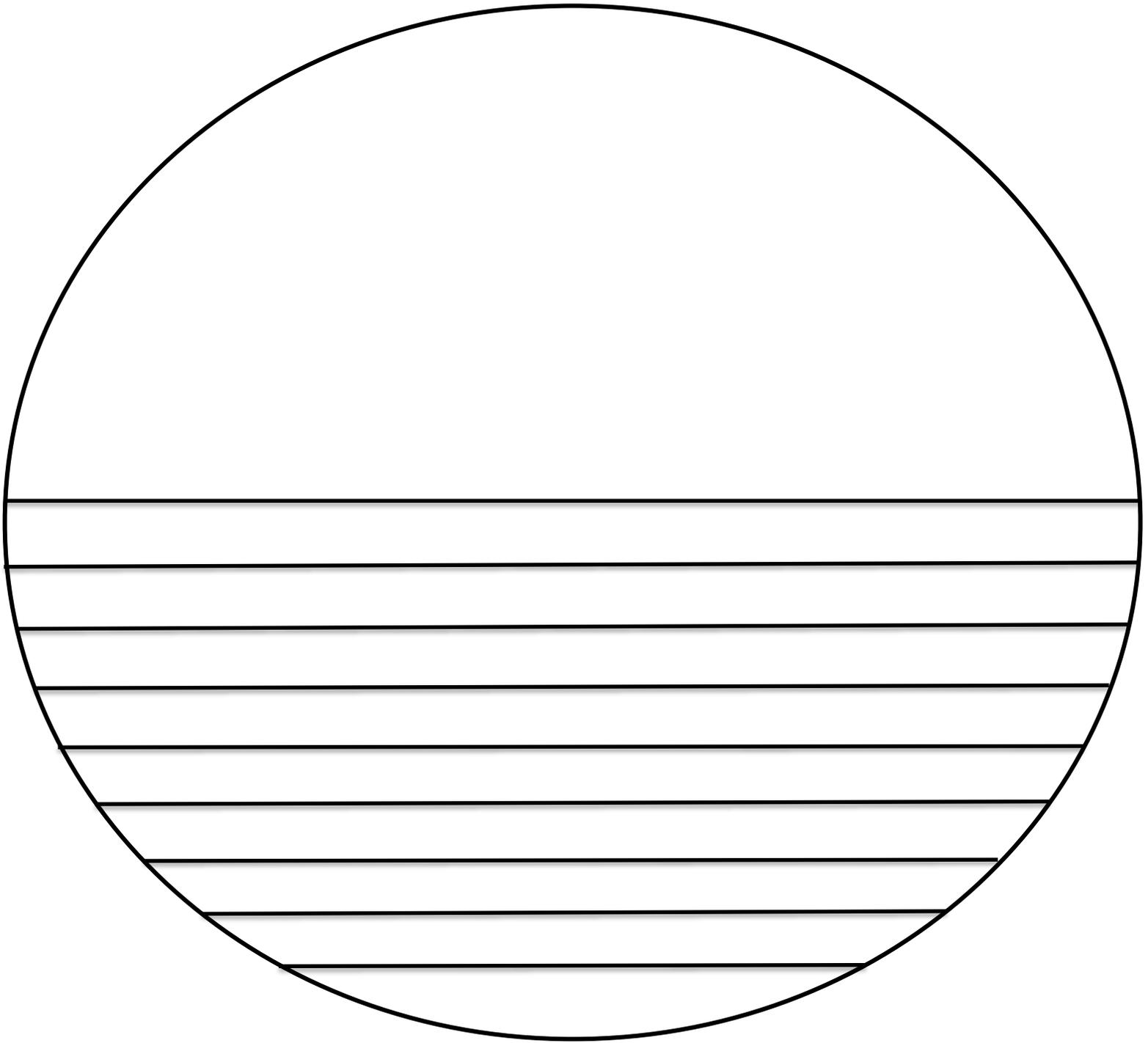
Bison

Bear

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MOOSE

A large circle containing the word "MOOSE" at the top. Below the word are ten horizontal lines of varying lengths, arranged to fit within the circular shape, providing a space for writing.



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