

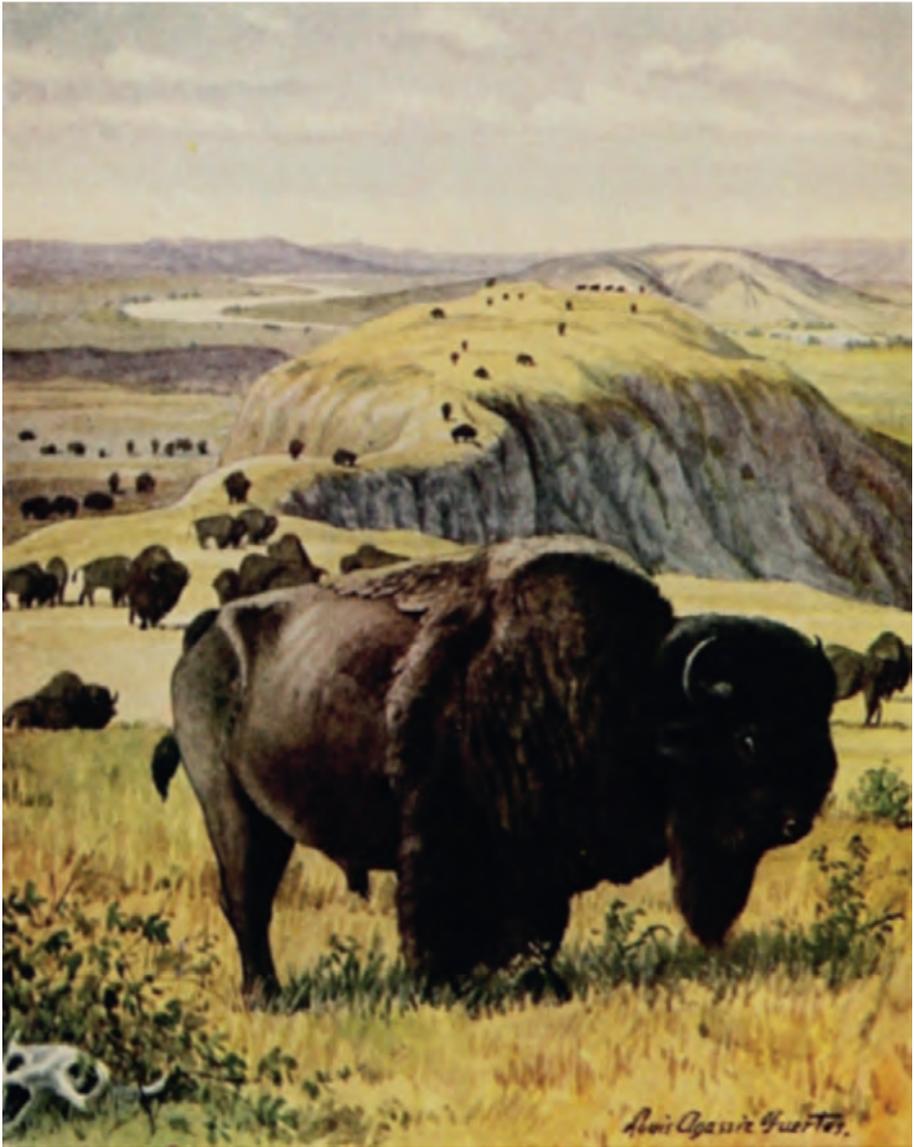
CLASSIC LIVING BOOK

THE BURGESS ANIMAL  
BOOK FOR CHILDREN

Thornton Burgess  
ill. Louis Agassiz Fuertes

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

COLOR EDITION



THUNDERFOOT THE BISON. He is commonly called Buffalo. His race has been reduced from millions to a few hundreds.

# THE BURGESS ANIMAL BOOK

By  
Thornton W. Burgess

Illustrated by  
Louis Agassiz Fuertes

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CHAPTER I  
JENNY WREN GIVES PETER RABBIT AN IDEA

“As sure as you’re alive now, Peter Rabbit, some day I will catch you,” snarled Reddy Fox, as he poked his black nose in the hole between the roots of the Big Hickory-tree which grows close to the Smiling Pool. “It is lucky for you that you were not one jump farther away from this hole.”

Peter, safe inside that hole, didn’t have a word to say, or, if he did, he didn’t have breath enough to say it. It was quite true that if he had been one jump farther from that hole, Reddy Fox would have caught him. As it was, the hairs on Peter’s funny white tail actually had tickled Reddy’s back as Peter plunged frantically through the root-bound entrance to that hole. It had been the narrowest escape Peter had had for a long, long time. You see, Reddy Fox had surprised Peter nibbling sweet clover on the bank of the Smiling Pond, and it had been a lucky thing for Peter that that hole, dug long ago by Johnny Chuck’s grandfather, had been right where it was. Also, it was a lucky thing that old Mr. Chuck had been wise enough to make the entrance between the roots of that tree in such a way that it could not be dug any larger.

Reddy Fox was too shrewd to waste any time trying to dig it larger. He knew there wasn’t room enough for him to get between those roots. So, after trying to make Peter as uncomfortable as possible by telling him what he, Reddy, would do to him when he did catch him, Reddy trotted off across the Green Meadows. Peter remained where he was for a long time. When he was quite sure that it was safe to do so, he crept out and hurried, lipperty-lipperty-lip, up to the Old Orchard. He felt that that would be the safest place for him, because there were ever so many hiding places in the old stone wall along the edge of it.

When Peter reached the Old Orchard, who should he see but Jenny Wren. Jenny had arrived that very morning

from the Sunny South where she had spent the winter. “Tut, tut, tut, tut, tut!” exclaimed Jenny as soon as she saw Peter. “If here isn’t Peter Rabbit himself! How did you manage to keep out of the clutches of Reddy Fox all the long winter?”

Peter chuckled. “I didn’t have much trouble with Reddy during the winter,” said he, “but this very morning he so nearly caught me that it is a wonder that my hair is not snow white from fright.” Then he told Jenny all about his narrow escape. “Had it not been for that handy hole of Grandfather Chuck, I couldn’t possibly have escaped,” concluded Peter.

Jenny Wren cocked her pert little head on one side, and her sharp little eyes snapped. “Why don’t you learn to swim, Peter, like your cousin down in the Sunny South?” she demanded. “If he had been in your place, he would simply have plunged into the Smiling Pool and laughed at Reddy Fox.”

Peter sat bolt upright with his eyes very wide open. In them was a funny look of surprise as he stared up at Jenny Wren. “What are you talking about, Jenny Wren?” he demanded. “Don’t you know that none of the Rabbit family swim unless it is to cross the Laughing Brook when there is no other way of getting to the other side, or when actually driven into the water by an enemy from whom there is no other escape? I can swim a little if I have to, but you don’t catch me in the water when I can stay on land. What is more, you won’t find any other members of my family doing such a thing.”

“Tut, tut, tut, tut, Peter!” exclaimed Jenny Wren in her sharp, scolding voice. “Tut, tut, tut, tut! For a fellow who has been so curious about the ways of his feathered neighbors, you know very little about your own family. If I were in your place I would learn about my own relatives before I became curious about my neighbors. How many relatives have you, Peter?”

“One,” replied Peter promptly, “my big cousin, Jumper the Hare.”

Jenny Wren threw back her head and laughed and laughed and laughed. It was a most irritating and provoking laugh. Finally Peter began to lose patience. "What are you laughing at?" he demanded crossly. "You know very well that Jumper the Hare is the only cousin I have."

Jenny Wren laughed harder than ever.

"Peter!" she gasped. "Peter, you will be the death of me. Why, down in the Sunny South, where I spent the winter, you have a cousin who is more closely related to you than Jumper the Hare. And what is more, he is almost as fond of the water as Jerry Muskrat. He was called the Marsh Rabbit or Marsh Hare, and many a time I have watched him swimming about by the hour."

"I don't believe it!" declared Peter angrily. "I don't believe a word of it. You are simply trying to fool me, Jenny Wren. There never was a Rabbit and there never will be a Rabbit who would go swimming for the fun of it. I belong to the Cottontail branch of the Hare family, and it is a fine family if I do say so. My cousin Jumper is a true Hare, and the only difference between us is that he is bigger, has longer legs and ears, changes the color of his coat in winter, and seldom, if ever, goes into holes in the ground. The idea of trying to tell me I don't know about my own relatives."

Jenny Wren suddenly became sober. "Peter," said she very earnestly, "take my advice and go to school to Old Mother Nature for awhile. What I have told you is true, every word of it. You have a cousin down in the Sunny South who spends half his time in the water. What is more, I suspect that you and Jumper have other relatives of whom you've never heard. Such ignorance would be laughable if it were not to be pitied. This is what comes of never having traveled. Go to school to Old Mother Nature for a while, Peter. It will pay you." With this, Jenny Wren flew away to hunt for Mr. Wren that they might decide where to make their home for the summer.

Peter tried to believe that what Jenny Wren had told him was nothing but a story, but do what he would, he couldn't rid himself of a little doubt. He tried to interest

himself in the affairs of the other little people of Old Orchard, but it was useless. That little doubt kept growing and growing. Could it be possible that Jenny Wren had spoken the truth? Could it be that he really didn't know what relatives he had or anything about them? Of course Old Mother Nature could tell him all he wanted to know. And he knew that whatever she might tell him would be true.

Finally that growing doubt, together with the curiosity which has led poor Peter to do so many queer things, proved too much for him and he started for the Green Forest to look for Old Mother Nature. It didn't take long to find her. She was very busy, for there is no time in all the year when Old Mother Nature has quite so much to do as in the spring.

"If you please, Old Mother Nature," said Peter timidly but very politely, "I've some questions I want to ask you."

Old Mother Nature's eyes twinkled in a kindly way. "All right, Peter," she replied. "I guess I can talk and work at the same time. What is it you want to know?"

"I want to know if it is true that there are any other members of the Rabbit and the Hare family besides my big cousin, Jumper, who lives here in the Green Forest, and myself."

Old Mother Nature's eyes twinkled more than ever. "Why, of course, Peter," she replied. "There are several other members. You ought to know that. But then, I suppose you don't because you never have traveled. It is surprising how little some folks know about the very things they ought to know most about."

Peter looked very humble and as if he felt a little bit foolish. "Is—is—is it true that way down in the Sunny South I have a cousin who loves to spend his time in the water?" stammered Peter.

"It certainly is, Peter," replied Old Mother Nature. "He is called the Marsh Rabbit, and he is more nearly your size, and looks more like you, than any of your other cousins."

Peter gulped as if he were swallowing something that

went down hard. "That is what Jenny Wren said, but I didn't believe her," replied Peter meekly. "She said she had often watched him swimming about like Jerry Muskrat."

Old Mother Nature nodded. "Quite true. Quite true," said she. "He is quite as much at home in the water as on land, if anything a little more so. He is one member of the family who takes to the water, and he certainly does love it. Is there anything else you want to know, Peter?"

Peter shifted about uneasily and hesitated. "What is it, Peter?" asked Old Mother Nature kindly. "There is nothing in the Great World equal to knowledge, and if I can add to your store of it I will be very glad to."

Peter took heart. "If—if you please, Mother Nature, I would like to learn all about my family. May I come to school to you every day?"

Old Mother Nature laughed right out. "Certainly you may go to school to me, old Mr. Curiosity," said she. "It is a good idea; a very good idea. I'm very busy, as you can see, but I'm never too busy to teach those who really want to learn. We'll have a lesson here every morning just at sun-up. I can't be bothered any more to-day, because it is late. Run along home to the dear Old Briar-patch and think up some questions to ask me to-morrow morning. And, by the way, Peter, I will ask YOU some questions. For one thing I shall ask you to tell me all you know about your own family. Now scamper along and be here to-morrow morning at sun-up."

"May I bring my cousin, Jumper the Hare, if he wants to come?" asked Peter, as he prepared to obey Old Mother Nature.

"Bring him along and any one else who wants to learn," replied Old Mother Nature kindly.

Peter bade her good-by in his most polite manner and then scampered as fast as he could go, lipperty-lipperty-lip, to the dear Old Briar-patch. There he spent the remainder of the day thinking up questions and also trying to find out how much he really did know about his own family.



PETER RABBIT. The familiar Cottontail Rabbit whom everybody knows and loves.



JUMPER THE HARE. The Northern or Varying Hare in summer and winter coat.

## CHAPTER II

### PETER AND JUMPER GO TO SCHOOL

Hardly had jolly, round, red Mr. Sun thrown off his rosy blankets and begun his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky when Peter Rabbit and his cousin, Jumper the Hare, arrived at the place in the Green Forest where Peter had found Old Mother Nature the day before. She was waiting for them, ready to begin the first lesson.

“I am glad you are so prompt,” said she. “Promptness is one of the most important things in life. Now I am very, very busy these days, as you know, so we will begin school at once. Before either of you ask any questions, I am going to ask some myself. Peter, what do you look like? Where do you live? What do you eat? I want to find out just how much you really know about yourself.”

Peter scratched one ear with a long hind foot and hesitated as if he didn't know just how to begin. Old Mother Nature waited patiently. Finally Peter began rather timidly.

“Of course,” said he, “the only way I know how I look is by the way the other members of my family look, for I've never seen myself. I suppose in a way I look like all the rest of the Rabbit family. I have long hind legs and short front ones. I suppose this is so I can make long jumps when I am in a hurry.”

Old Mother Nature nodded, and Peter, taking courage, continued. “My hind legs are stout and strong, but my front ones are rather weak. I guess this is because I do not have a great deal of use for them, except for running. My coat is a sort of mixture of brown and gray, more brown in summer and more gray in winter. My ears are longer for my size than are those of most animals, but really not very long after all, not nearly as long for my size as my cousin Jumper's are for his size. My tail doesn't amount to much because it is so short that it is hardly worth calling a tail. It is so short I carry it straight up. It is white like a little

bunch of cotton, and I suppose that that is why I am called a Cottontail Rabbit, though I have heard that some folks call me a Gray Rabbit and others a Bush Rabbit. I guess I'm called Bush Rabbit because I like bushy country in which to live."

"I live in the dear Old Briar-patch and just love it. It is a mass of bushes and bramble-tangles and is the safest place I know of. I have cut little paths all through it just big enough for Mrs. Peter and myself. None of our enemies can get at us there, excepting Shadow the Weasel or Billy Mink. I have a sort of nest there where I spend my time when I am not running about. It is called a form and I sit in it a great deal."

"In summer I eat clover, grass and other green things, and I just love to get over into Farmer Brown's garden. In winter I have to take what I can get, and this is mostly bark from young trees, buds and tender twigs of bushes, and any green plants I can find under the snow. I can run fast for a short distance, but only for a short distance. That is why I like thick brush and bramble-tangles. There I can dodge. I don't know any one who can beat me at dodging. If Reddy Fox or Bowser the Hound surprises me away from the dear Old Briar-patch I run for the nearest hollow log or hole in the ground. Sometimes in summer I dig a hole for myself, but not often. It is much easier to use a hole somebody else has dug. When I want to signal my friends I thump the ground with my hind feet. Jumper does the same thing. I forgot to say I don't like water."

Old Mother Nature smiled. "You are thinking of that cousin of yours, the Marsh Rabbit who lives way down in the Sunny South," said she.

Peter looked a wee bit foolish and admitted that he was. Jumper the Hare was all interest at once. You see, he had never heard of this cousin.

"That was a very good account of yourself, Peter," said Old Mother Nature. "Now take a look at your cousin, Jumper the Hare, and tell me how he differs from you."

Peter took a long look at Jumper, and then, as before,

scratched one ear with a long hind foot. "In the first place," said he, "Jumper is considerably bigger than I. He has very long hind legs and his ears are very long. In summer he wears a brown coat, but in winter he is all white but the tips of those long ears, and those are black. Because his coat changes so, he is called the varying Hare. He likes the Green Forest where the trees grow close together, especially those places where there are a great many young trees. He's the biggest member of our family. I guess that's all I know about Cousin Jumper."

"That is very good, Peter, as far as it goes," said Old Mother Nature. "You have made only one mistake. Jumper is not the biggest of his family."

Both Peter and Jumper opened their eyes very wide with surprise. "Also," continued Old Mother Nature, "you forgot to mention the fact that Jumper never hides in hollow logs and holes in the ground as you do. Why don't you, Jumper?"

"I wouldn't feel safe there," replied Jumper rather timidly. "I depend on my long legs for safety, and the way I can dodge around trees and bushes. I suppose Reddy Fox may be fast enough to catch me in the open, but he can't do it where I can dodge around trees and bushes. That is why I stick to the Green Forest. If you please, Mother Nature, what is this about a cousin who likes to swim?"

Old Mother Nature's eyes twinkled. "We'll get to that later on," said she. "Now, each of you hold up a hind foot and tell me what difference you see."

Peter and Jumper each held up a hind foot and each looked first at his own and then at the other's. "They look to me very much alike, only Jumper's is a lot longer and bigger than mine," said Peter. Jumper nodded as if he agreed.

"What's the matter with your eyes?" demanded Old Mother Nature. "Don't you see that Jumper's foot is a great deal broader than yours, Peter, and that his toes are spread apart, while yours are close together?"

Peter and Jumper looked sheepish, for it was just as Old

Mother Nature had said. Jumper's foot really was quite different from that of Peter. Peter's was narrow and slim.

"That is a very important difference," declared Old Mother Nature. "Can you guess why I gave you those big feet, Jumper?"

Jumper slowly shook his head. "Not unless it was to make me different," said he.

"I'm surprised," said Old Mother Nature. "Yes, indeed, I'm surprised. You ought to know by this time that I never give anybody anything without a purpose. What happens to those big feet of yours in the winter, Jumper?"

"Nothing that I know of, excepting that the hair grows out long between my toes," Jumper replied.

"Exactly," snapped Old Mother Nature. "And when the hair does this you can travel over light snow without sinking in. It is just as if you had snowshoes. That is why you are often called a Snowshoe Rabbit. I gave you those big feet and make the hair grow out every winter because I know that you depend on your legs to get away from your enemies. You can run over the deep snow where your enemies break through. Peter, though he is small and lighter than you are, cannot go where you can. But Peter doesn't need to depend always on his legs to save his life. There is one thing more that I want you both to notice, and that is that you both have quite a lot of short hairs on the soles of your feet. That is where you differ from that cousin of yours down in the Sunny South. He has only a very few hairs on his feet. That is so he can swim better."

"If you please, Mother Nature, why is that cousin of ours so fond of the water?" piped up Peter.

"Because," replied Old Mother Nature, "he lives in marshy country where there is a great deal of water. He is very nearly the same size as you, Peter, and looks very much like you. But his legs are not quite so long, his ears are a little smaller, and his tail is brownish instead of white. He is a poor runner and so in time of danger he takes to the water. For that matter, he goes swimming for pleasure. The water is warm down there, and he dearly loves to paddle



*Robt. Agassiz Puert. Aes.*

THE MARSH RABBIT. This cousin of Peter Rabbit is a famous swimmer.

about in it. If a Fox chases him he simply plunges into the water and hides among the water plants with only his eyes and his nose out of water.”

“Does he make his home in the water like Jerry Muskrat?” asked Peter innocently.

Mother Nature smiled and shook her head. “Certainly not,” she replied. “His home is on the ground. His babies are born in a nest made just as Mrs. Peter makes her nest for your babies, and Mrs. Jumper makes a nest for Jumper’s babies. It is made of grass and lined with soft fur which Mrs. Rabbit pulls from her own breast, and it is very carefully hidden. By the way, Peter how do your babies differ from the babies of your Cousin Jumper?”

Peter shook his head. “I don’t know,” said he. “My babies don’t have their eyes open when they are born, and they haven’t any hair.”

Jumper pricked up his long ears. “What’s that?” said he. “Why, my babies have their eyes open and have the dearest little fur coats!”

Old Mother Nature chuckled. “That is the difference,” said she. “I guess both of you have learned something.”

“You said a little while ago that Jumper isn’t the biggest of our family,” said Peter. “If you please, who is?”

“There are several bigger than Jumper,” replied Old Mother Nature, and smiled as she saw the funny look of surprise on the faces of Peter and Jumper. “There is one way up the Frozen North and there are two cousins way out in the Great West. They are as much bigger than Jumper as Jumper is bigger than you, Peter. But I haven’t time to tell you about them now. If you really want to learn about them, be here promptly at sun-up to-morrow morning. Hello! Here comes Reddy Fox, and he looks to me as if a good breakfast would not come amiss. Let me see what you have learned about taking care of yourselves.”

Peter and Jumper gave one startled look in the direction Mother Nature was pointing. Sure enough, there was Reddy Fox. Not far away was a hollow log. Peter wasted no time in getting to it. In fact, he left in such a hurry that he forgot to

say good-by to Old Mother Nature. But she didn't mind, for she quite understood Peter's feelings, and she laughed when she saw his funny little white tail disappear inside the hollow log. As for Jumper, he promptly took to his long legs and disappeared with great bounds, Reddy Fox racing after him.