

BISON VS. BUFFALO



Plains bison: *Bison bison*

Though many use the names interchangeably, there's quite a difference between bison and buffalo. Here are some interesting facts to help you tell them apart!



Water buffalo: *Bubalus bubalis*

Habitat: Plains, Forests, & Grasslands

Climate: Colder temperatures, moderate-high snow fall

Native to: North America, South America, Europe

Domesticated: No

Traditional Uses: Meat, hides, material for tipis, & tools

Current Pop: 12,000 - 15,000 pure bison

Diet: Grass & hay

Size: 700-2,000 lbs

Lifespan: 13-21 years

Appearance: Large herbivore with four legs, large head, large hump, and heavy, shaggy fur over the head, shoulders, and front legs. *Bison bison* have a 'topknot' of fur on the top of their heads, while woods bison do not. Woods bison also have shorter fur around their shoulders and legs and are often taller than plains bison.

Habitat: Rugged terrain (cape buffalo) & mild terrain (water buffalo)

Climate: Warmer temperatures & humid climate

Native to: Asia (water buffalo) & Africa (cape buffalo)

Domesticated: Yes (water buffalo) & No (cape buffalo)

Traditional Uses: Meat, milk, & cattle

Current Pop: 250 million (water buffalo); 900,000 (cape buffalo)

Diet: Grass

Size: 1,800 - 2,000 lbs

Lifespan: 23-30 years (water buffalo); 15-25 (cape buffalo)

Appearance: Large herbivore with four legs, smaller heads, wide frame, and large, curved horns that form sweeping arches. Horns are not sharp on *Bubalus bubalis* but are sharp on cape buffalo.

BISON RANGE HISTORICAL TIMELINE

1870's



A Ojispé man named Little Falcon Robe received approval from tribal leaders to bring orphaned bison calves to the Flathead Indian Reservation to start a conservation herd.

Late 1800's



The bison calves grew into the largest herd of plains bison in the world under the management of Charles Allard & Michel Pablo.

Early 1900's



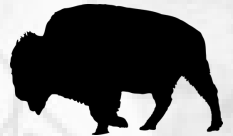
U.S. Federal Government opens up the Flathead Indian Reservation to non-Indian homesteading, resulting in Michel Pablo having to sell the herd to off-Reservation parties.

1908



May 23rd - President Theodore Roosevelt signed legislation creating the National Bison Range.

1909



October - First bison arrive at the National Bison Range, purchased by the National Bison Society from the Conrad herd in Kalispell. 36 of the 40 bison were originally from the Pablo-Allard herd.

2020



December 27th - The 2016 National Bison Range Restoration Act was incorporated into the Montana Water Rights Protection Act in 2019 and passed in 2020, giving Bison Range management to the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

2008



Centennial Celebration & Birthday Bash

1982



New visitors center built with displays open to the public.

1966



Self guided auto tour trips allowed around Red Sleep Mountain Drive.

1959



Bid Medicine dies at age 26. His remains were put on display at the Montanan Historical Society's Montana Museum in Helena, MT.

1934



Civilian Conservation Corps starts work on the Red Sleep Mountain Auto Tour Drive, front gate, and day use area.

1933



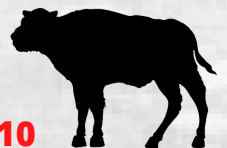
May 3rd - Big Medicine, the first white calf born on the National Bison Range, is born with blue eyes and a brown topknot.

1921



December 22nd - Executive Order 3569 designates the National Bison Range as "refuges and breeding grounds for birds".

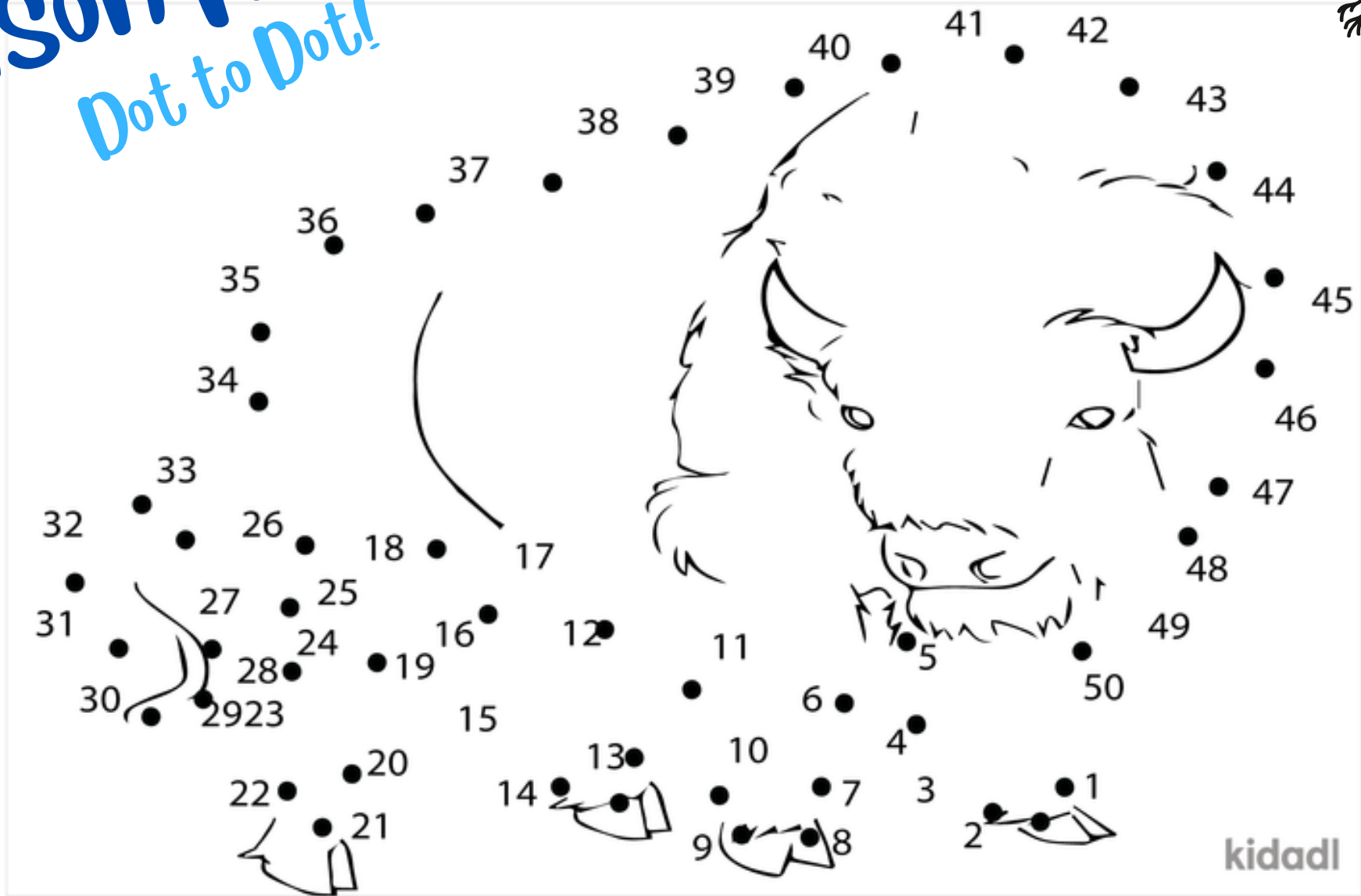
1910



First bison calves born on the National Bison Range.

Bison Range

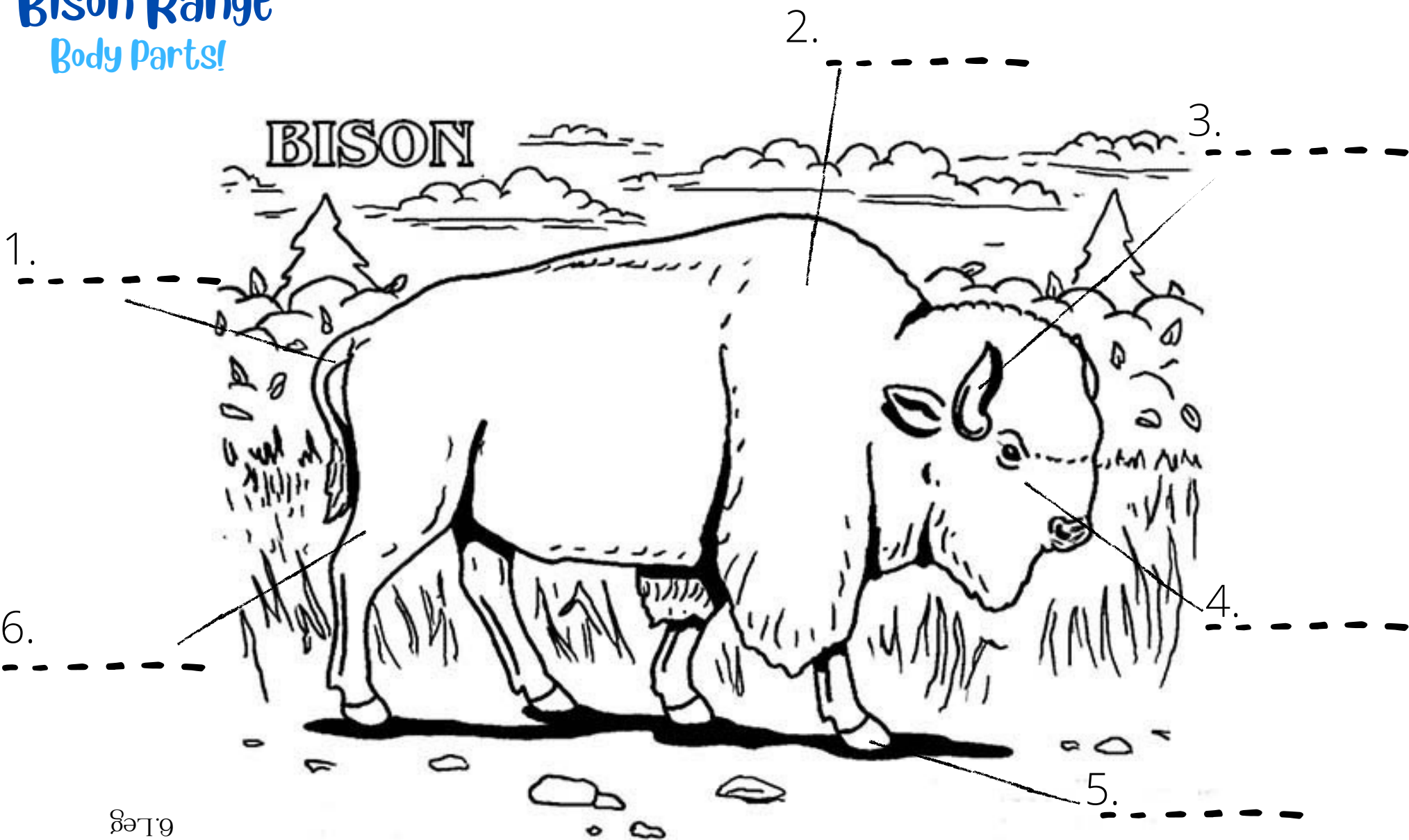
Dot to Dot!



Connect the dots to form the picture!

Bison Range
Body Parts!

BISON



- 1 Tail
- 2 Hump
- 3 Horn
- 4 Head
- 5 Hoof
- 6 Leg

Can you match the body parts to the bison?

Head Horn Leg Hoof Tail Hump