

## “EEN WILT PAERT GESCHOOTEN”

*EEN van d'onse, genaempt Pieter Meerhoff (hem op de chirurgye verstaende) hadt een wilt paert boven in de manen geschooten, daerdoor onder de voet gevallen sijnde, voorsz. Meerhoff opgesprongen was met meninge om hem een hackzeenuw aff te snijden, maer sijn mes daertoe niet iijts genoegh hebbende kunnen vaerdigh krijgen, was 't paert met hem op ende drijvende over een revier gesprongen, dat hij der weder affviel ende al een slag in 't aengesicht gecregen had.*

*Dit paert was over 't gantsche lijff extraordinaire schoon g'appelt graeuw, behalven achter van 't cruys over de billen ende langs de bennen gevlampt met witte, hemelsblaewe ende bruyvroode streepen, wonderlijk schoon ende raer, hebbende recht als een paert mede cleyne ooren, een fray hoofft ende dunnen beenen het beste paert dat men wenschen mochte.*

*Sijnde 't ander slag, daer ons de Hottentoots de gevulde hooffden ende stucken vellen somtijts van gebracht hebben, met heel lange ooren, dogh extraordinary raer ende schoon wit ende castany-bruyvn gevlampt, bij d' onse mede seer veel in 't landt vernomen, hijtende na 't volcq als honden, recht als muylpaerden dat se oocq best gelijcken te wesen, want oocq van de Hottentoots verscheyden genaempt worden, te weten:*

*de paerden Haqua  
de muvlen Douqua*

*maer kunnen haer daar nich niet meer toe krijgen dat se ons eenige jonge levendigh hier brengen, wat ende hoeveel daer oocq belooft wort, apparent omdat se langs soo meer wel sien wij haer daermede te veel onder devotie weten te houden etc.*

*Die bostaande vertelling dateer uit November 1660 toe Pieter van Meerhoff as lid van die eerste ekspedisië wat deur Jan van Riebeeck die binneland ingestuur is naby die huidige Piketberg met dië sebra slaags geraak het. In Engels lees sy beskrywing soos volg:*

*One of our explorers, named Pieter Meerhoff (skilled in surgery) shot a horse in the neck, near the mane, and after bringing it down, jumped on to it with the intention of cutting one of the heel sinews, but as he could not draw his knife in time, the horse rose with him still astride, and immediately jumped a stream. This caused Meerhoff to fall, and he received a kick in the face.*

*The horse's whole body was an extraordinarily beautiful dapple grey, except that across the crupper and buttocks and along the legs it was most beautifully and strangely streaked with white, sky-blue and a brownish-red. It had small ears just like a horse's, a fine head and slender legs like the best horse one could wish for.*

*The animal could not have been of the same kind as those of which the Hottentots sometimes bring us stuffed heads and strips of hide, for the latter kind have very long ears, though they have extraordinarily rare and beautiful markings of white and chestnut-brown. Our people had also seen very many of this variety, which snapped at them like dogs, just as mules do, to which they may indeed best be likened. The Hottentots also distinguish the varieties by calling the horses Haqua and the mules Douqua. We cannot induce them to bring us any young living specimens, however much we promise them as rewards. Apparently they are beginning to realise more and more that we would thereby be the better able to keep them in submission.*

*Leiden quagga, not on exhibition but preserved in total darkness in the Rijksmuseum voor Natuurlijke Historie, Amsterdam*

(SA MUSEUM)



*This mounted foal of the extinct quagga housed in the S.A. Museum, Cape Town, is the only specimen of its kind in South Africa and one of the very few in the world.*

Meer as 70 jaar voor Van Meerhoff het 'n Dominikaanse priester by name Joao dos Santos met die Sambezi opgevaar en sy waarnemings omtrent die dierlewe opgeteken:

*Alongst the Banks runne wild Beasts Lions, Tygres, Ounces, Rhinocertes, Elephants, Buffals very fierce, wild Kine (like out tame) wilde Horses, in mane and neighing like ours, of cleere chestnut colour, somewhat dunne, they have smooth*

*straight horns like a Deare, without snags and cloven hoofs like an oxen . . . They have wild asses of Russetish colour, with horns and cloven feet which they call Merus, the flesh as good as kine. They have great varieties of wormes, and many Zevras made like mules, and like them holding their heads to their forelegs when they run, cloven footed, with strakes all over their body of white and blacke two fingers broad, the hair soft and smooth.*

## The Extinct “Quagga” and Zebras

THE name “quagga” is derived from the onomatopoeic Hottentot word “qua-ha” denoting the call made by this animal. However, the word “kwagga” is the equivalent in Afrikaans of “zebra” in English and applies to all the South African equids, namely the two extant species, viz. the mountain zebra (*Equus zebra*) and Burchell's zebra (*Equus burchelli*) as well as the one extinct species of the quagga (*Equus quagga*). Care should therefore be taken when assessing old records of “quagga” as these could possibly apply to any of the above three species.

There are three living species of zebra in the world, the third being Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*) which does not occur in Southern Africa.

(RIJKSMUSEUM, LEIDEN)



The last known living “quagga” (*Equus quagga*) died in a zoo in Amsterdam in 1883 and in the wild state the species may have survived in the O.F.S. until as late as 1873. The only photographs ever taken of a living “quagga” represents a female which lived in Regent's Park Zoological gardens in London from 1851—1872.

In South Africa, the home of the extinct “quagga” where once large herds roamed, the only specimen of an extinct “quagga” is that of a female foal which is preserved in the South African Museum, Cape Town. In the rest of the world probably not more than 20 mounted specimens of the extinct “quagga” exist.

Ruthless hunting, drought and disease appear to have been the main reasons for the extermination of the “quagga”.

## EXTINCT "QUAGGA"

*Equus quagga*

### CHARACTERISTICS

1. Striping whitish on dark background.
2. Striping restricted to foreparts only
3. No dewlap.

### DISTRIBUTION

South Western Cape, South and Eastern Karoo, parts of great Namaqualand. The Eastern limits were the O.F.S./ Natal border and it did not occur north of the Vaal River.



## BURCHELL'S ZEBRA

*Equus burchelli*

### CHARACTERISTICS

1. Broader black stripes on light background.
2. Black stripes down to belly.
3. No dewlap.

### DISTRIBUTION

South West Africa, Botswana, Northern Transvaal, north-eastwards to Kenya and Ethiopia.



## MOUNTAIN ZEBRA

*Equus zebra*

### CHARACTERISTICS

1. Broader black stripes on light background.
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2. White belly.
3. Dewlap present on throat.
4. Narrow transverse bands across rump forming a "grid-iron" pattern.

### DISTRIBUTION

In the South Western Cape as *Equus zebra zebra*.  
In South West Africa as *Equus zebra hartmannae*.



## GREVY'S ZEBRA

*Equus grevyi*

### CHARACTERISTICS

1. Numerous narrow almost vertical black stripes on light background.
2. White belly

### DISTRIBUTION

East Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia)

