

## The Life, Extinction, and Rebreeding of Quagga Zebras

### *Significance for Conservation*

Quaggas were beautiful pony-sized zebras in southern Africa that had fewer stripes on their bodies and a browner body coloration than other zebras. Indigenous people hunted quaggas, portrayed them in rock art, and told stories about them. Settlers used quaggas to pull wagons and to protect livestock against predators. Taken to Europe, they were admired, exhibited, harnessed to carriages, illustrated by famous artists, and written about by scientists. Excessive hunting led to quaggas' extinction in the 1880s but DNA from museum specimens showed rebreeding was feasible and now zebras resembling quaggas live in their former habitats. This rebreeding is compared with other de-extinction and rewilding ventures and its appropriateness is discussed against the backdrop of conservation challenges – including those facing other zebras. In an Anthropocene of species extinction, climate change, and habitat loss, which organisms and habitats should be saved, and should attempts be made to restore extinct animals?

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# *The Life, Extinction, and Rebreeding of Quagga Zebras*

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*Significance for Conservation*

PETER HEYWOOD

*Brown University*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
**UNIVERSITY PRESS**

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
978-1-108-83160-4 — The Life, Extinction, and Rebreeding of Quagga Zebras  
Peter Heywood  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108831604](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108831604)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108917735

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First published 2022

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ Books Limited, Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Heywood, Peter (Biologist), author.

Title: The life, extinction, and rebreeding of quagga zebras : significance for conservation / Peter Heywood, Brown University, Rhode Island.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2022. |

Series: Ecology, biodiversity and conservation | Includes bibliographical references and index

Identifiers: LCCN 2021060144 (print) | LCCN 2021060145 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108831604

(hardback) | ISBN 9781108926911 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108917735 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Quagga—Africa, Southern. | Quagga—Conservation. | Quagga—Ecology. |

Quagga—Breeding. | BISAC: NATURE / Ecology

Classification: LCC QL737.U62 H49 2022 (print) | LCC QL737.U62 (ebook) |

DDC 599.665/7168—dc23/eng/20211216

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021060144>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021060145>

ISBN 978-1-108-83160-4 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-92691-1 Paperback

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*For Nancy, Ela, Wesley, Margaret, Ray, Hazel, Amos, Simon,  
and Marie*

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## *Acknowledgments*

My interest in quaggas began about fifteen years ago and there are many debts to be gratefully acknowledged. During this time (and for decades before) I taught at Brown University, which has provided me with sabbaticals and the facilities for scholarship. I am grateful to the administrators, colleagues, staff, and students who have aided me in many ways. The Brown University librarians have been unfailingly helpful, in particular Karen Bouchard, Ann Dodge, Frank Kellerman, Gayle Lynch, William Munroe, Erika Sevetson, and Kimberly Silva. The Pembroke Center Research Seminar, “Visions of Nature,” provided me with a broader context for considering wildlife; I am grateful to the other participants and the leader, Leslie Bostrom.

My visits to South Africa were made fruitful by the staff of the Iziko Museum, particularly Denise Hamerton and Vicky MacCrae; by Eric Harley, March Turnbull, and Bernard Wooding of the Quagga Project; and by Andrew Bank and Anja Macher, who helped me greatly. Special thanks are due to March Turnbull, who has provided valuable assistance and information over the years. I am indebted to Reinhold Rau – whom, unfortunately, I never had the pleasure of meeting – for publishing information about quaggas and for initiating the Quagga Project; without his work this book would have been incomplete.

I thank those people who answered my questions: Alan Barnard, Denise Hamerton, Graham Kerley, Sarah King, Hannes Lerp, Patricia Moehlman, David Morris, Carsten Renker, Oliver Ryan, Reinier Spreen, Keenan Stears, and Andrew Taylor. I owe a debt of gratitude to those who read and commented on sections of my manuscript: Saeideh Esmaeili, Megan Gura, Jacob Hennig, Patrick Malone, Peter Novellie, Dov Sax, March Turnbull, and Bernard Wooding; needless to say, the mistakes in this book are mine alone.

For editorial help, I am indebted to Susan Dearing, Priscilla Hall, Nancy Jacobs, Cathy Munro, Aleksandra Serocka, Jenny van der Meijden, Sindhuja Sethuraman, Indra Priyadarshini and Liz Steel. I am

Acknowledgments · xi

grateful to Judi Gibbs for preparing the index. I thank the series editor, Michael Usher, for seeking me out and guiding me through the process of preparing a book proposal.

The figures are from a variety of sources. I am grateful to Bruce Boucek and Camille Tulloss for preparing illustrations, to the librarians who photographed images that are no longer copyrighted, and to British Museum Images, the Rijksmuseum, the Royal College of Surgeons of England, the Teylers Museum, the National Archives and Record Services of South Africa, the Western Cape Provincial Parliament, the Quagga Project and the Zoological Society of London for the use of their images. I thank the following people for the use of their images: T. Bobosh, Yathin S. Krishnappa, Brenda Larison et al. and Bernard Wooding.

As this may be the only book that I'll ever write, I use this opportunity to record my gratitude to the broader circle of people who made my research and teaching possible. My thanks go to my parents and grandparents and the many people in Britain who supported and encouraged me, and to my teachers at Crumpsall Lane Primary School, Crumpsall Methodist Church, and North Manchester Grammar School who prepared me for a lifetime of learning. I am grateful to the faculty and staff of Queen Mary College, University of London, where I received my undergraduate and graduate degrees, and to the many people who have helped me subsequently.

For more than forty years, I have met regularly with Bill, Don, Harold, Howard, Mark, Mark, Patrick, and Rich; their friendship has been very important, and I record their names with affection. People that I never knew personally but who have improved my life in different ways include: Vasily Arkhipov, Hilda Porter, Richard B. Solomon and his wife, and Colin Sullivan.

Our children, Ela and Wesley, have had to listen to too many conversations about quaggas; I am grateful to them for their patience and for the happiness they have brought me. I dedicate this book to them, to my wife, Nancy, and to my sister, Margaret, and her family. Being in Africa with Nancy sparked new interests and she has been at my side through the research and writing of this book – alerting me to sources, commenting on chapters, being my computer consultant, and encouraging me. Life would have been very different without Nancy; I thank her with all my heart, and I look forward to our work, travel, and time together in the years to come.

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