

LIFE CYCLE OF THE BISON

THE BIRTH OF A BISON CALF



- Nine months after being bred, the cow will deliver her calf, typically late April to late June, again depending on the region. Bison calves are cinnamon or red in color and weigh around 40-50 pounds at birth.

Cows will typically leave the herd to give birth and the process doesn't take long, usually around an hour. **Within minutes, the calf will be standing and searching** for the mother's milk bag. Once the calf has had the first nutrient and antibody rich colostrum milk, it is ready to move out with the cow. The calves can traverse all types of terrain and even swim a river or stream at an early age.

MATURE BISON

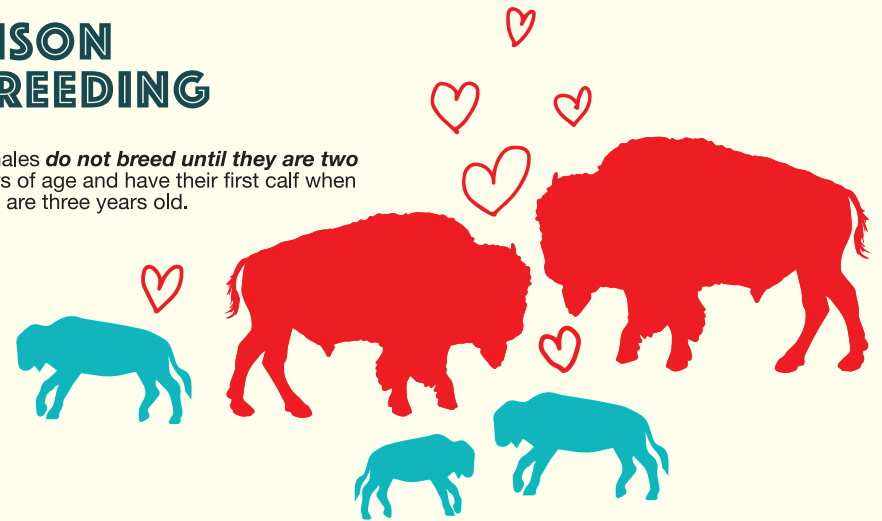
In domestic herds, older bulls, usually eight to ten years of age, are cycled out of the breeding herd and replaced with younger bulls. The **older bulls can be harvested for hunts or for meat purposes.**



If a bison is being raised for meat, they are ideally harvested around **18-24 months of age for bulls** and **24-28 months for heifers.**

BISON BREEDING

Females **do not breed until they are two** years of age and have their first calf when they are three years old.



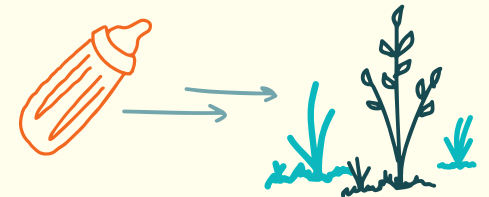
The rut takes place from early July to late September, depending on the climate and latitude. Bulls will travel for miles to find the cows once they come into heat (estrus).

During the rut, **bulls will court one cow at a time** and will fight off other bulls competing for that cow's attention.

CALF LIFE



At about two months of age, the bison calf begins develop shoulder humps and horn buds. They begin nibbling on grass and **mimicking the mother's habits within the first week after birth**. The calf begins to turn dark brown around four months of age.



Calves are usually weaned around seven to nine months of age.

Cows can live and be produce calves well into their twenties in domestic herds and usually fifteen to twenty years in the wild.



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