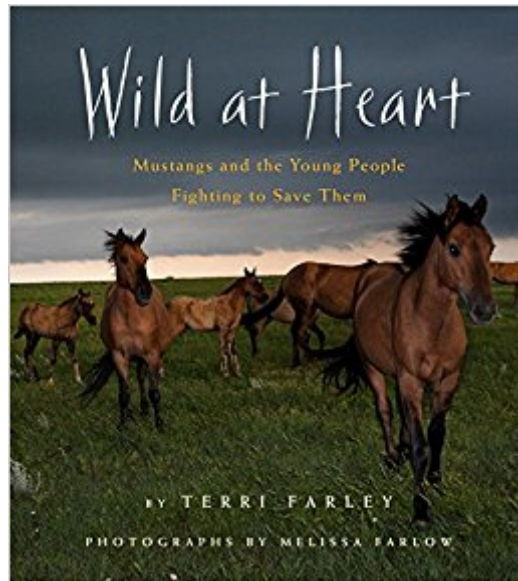




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# **Wild At Heart: Mustangs And The Young People Fighting To Save Them**



## Synopsis

Mustangs have thrived for thousands of generations. But now they are under attack from people who see them as pests. The lucky ones are adopted. Some are sent to long-term holding pens; more and more are sold for slaughter. But courageous young people are trying to stop the round-ups and the senseless killings. They are standing up to the government and big business to save these American icons. With eye witness accounts, cutting-edge science, and full-color photographs, Terri Farley and Melissa Farlow invite readers into the world of mustangs in all its beauty, and profile the young people leading the charge to keep horses wild and free. Includes notes and sources, index, and glossary.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1140 (What's this?)

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Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.9 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 36 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #336,965 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #112 in [Books > Children's](#)

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[Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans](#) #366 in [Books](#)

[> Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Farm Life](#)

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

## Customer Reviews

[View larger](#) A Conversation with Terri Farley The author of Wild at Heart chats about the beauty of wild mustangs, her work to further their cause, and a little about horse poop.

How did you first become motivated to write about the plight of the wild mustangs? Growing up on the outskirts of Los Angeles, I lived a protected childhood far from horses. I never even tame ones. I saw horses on television and occasionally went to a riding stable, but when I imagined

wild horses roaming free with the wind in their manes, they captured my heart. When I heard they were being killed for pet food, the injustice and greed shocked me. I became part of Wild Horse Annie (Velma Johnston)'s children's campaign to save the West's wild horses. Mustangs already had my heart. Wild Horse Annie educated my head so that I knew why they had to be protected. What are the biggest takeaways you want readers to take from the book? From the start I had three goals: 1) Open the door so readers worldwide see beyond wild horses' beauty to their value. 2) Show readers what happens before, during and after wild horse round-ups. Even devoted horse folks may not know their history, science and natural lifestyle. 3) I want people to see they're not alone. Millions of individuals with nothing to gain financially want wild horses to survive.

Are there any particular mustangs you've encountered in your research that inspired you? I was on the range in January 2010 when an ivory and adobe-colored Medicine Hat mare was taken from her home in the Calico Mountains of Nevada. I saw her transferred to a government facility ironically called Broken Arrow where she was accidentally penned with young stallions. She was eventually rescued and corralled with females, but not before she suffered facial lacerations and other injuries. Eventually the Medicine Hat mare was put up for sale. She was not eligible for adoption because she was over 10 years old. This meant she could be sold "without limitation." A big, long-bodied mare, she could have gone to a kill-buyer, but I was fortunate enough to outbid everyone in an online auction. The Medicine Hat mare was captured not far from the lands of the prophet Wovoka. Inspired by the Ghost Dance religion and poem "Ghost Dance" by Sara Littlecrow-Russell, I named this resilient mare Ghost Dancer and freed her in a 5,000 sanctuary with a young sorrel horse captured on the same day, in the same place. The Medicine Hat mare wasn't mine to name really, but we have a bond. From my first sight of her, I haven't stopped envisioning her life from her early coltish days in the Calico Mountains to the day the helicopters came for her and took her freedom. That story is not in WILD AT HEART, but I am writing it, through her eyes, now. If you had to describe your average wild mustang in five words, what would those words be? Intelligent, strong, self-sufficient, playful and brave.

What is one interesting fact you learned about wild mustangs that the average person might not know? It's about horse poop! Wild horses' digestive systems

don't process seeds. They just pass through the horse and fall to the ground in a little ball of fertilizer. So, wild horses are inadvertent farmers of their own food. (Sorry, horse owners, fertile seed is pretty much processed out of the food for domestic horses). What are some ways the average person could get involved in joining the wild mustang movement? Easiest of all is to construct a Google alert for wild horses. You can't take a stand unless you know what's happening. Once you know, you can tell legislators speaking on your behalf to stand up for the legal rights of wild horses. Through reading articles that pop-up on these alerts, you'll learn who is currently helping or hurting wild horses, and you can pay attention and learn where your voice is needed. Then, continue to educate yourself. Compare sources in what you read or hear to the citations in Wild at Heart's bibliography and end notes. Although it's not totally comprehensive, I've included lots of information. In addition, consult trusted authorities such as American Wild Horse Preservation and The Cloud Foundation.

Gr 5 • Wearing her heartfelt agenda on both sleeves, Farley focuses on the plight of feral horses in this country, which are, in her view, being brutally rounded up by the thousands and either relocated or auctioned to "kill buyers" for animal food. Along with statistics (which, she claims, are hard to pin down due to government "secrecy and disorganization"), she presents comments from researchers, uncomfortably explicit eyewitness reports from observers, and even a set of tweets that she sent during an auction as evidence of ongoing cruel treatment and poor management. In appeals to the emotions that are underscored by Farlow's lyrical photos of mustangs running free or posing in graceful stances, Farley also describes the social behavior of wild horses, their history on this continent (cogently arguing that they are still "native species" despite having died out and later reintroduced by European settlers), and the achievements of rescue workers from early champion Velma Johnston to nine young current activists. VERDICT An urgent call to action, supported with detailed endnotes and a substantial bibliography. • John Peters, Children's Literature Consultant, New York City

"Gorgeously written, richly photographed and passionately argued, WILD AT HEART will ignite the hearts of every horse lover. Thank you, Teri Farley and Melissa Farlow, for bringing us the truth about America's wild mustangs and burros--and for giving us the courage to rise up in defense of these native animals, to allow them to once again thrive in their rightful home." • Sy Montgomery, author of Kakapo Rescue, a Sibert Award winner "Anyone who cares about wild

horses should read this book. So should anyone who cares about how science is being abused to justify flawed management policies masquerading as "responsible conservation".

•Dr. Ross MacPhee, Curator of Mammalogy/Vertebrate Zoology, American Museum of Natural History "Fast-paced and factual, *Wild at Heart* weaves history, evolution, behavior, and first person accounts of North America's native wild horses into a unique and highly entertaining book."

•Ginger Kathrens, Emmy Award-winning producer, cinematographer, author of natural history books and articles, and biographer of the wild stallion Cloud "An urgent call to action, supported with detailed endnotes and a substantial bibliography."

•School Library Journal "A sweeping introduction to the wild horses of the American West, their past, present, and possible future. Farley, well-known for her wildly popular middle-grade series *Phantom Stallion*, divides her subject into several parts, opening with the heartfelt story of Wild Horse Annie, one of the first activists determined to save wild horses from abuse and slaughter, and ending with the equally warm stories of several teens working for the same cause."

•Kirkus "Interspersed throughout the text are various eyewitness accounts that detail the actions of activists, photographers, and advocates, both on the range and at auctions...exceptionally eye-catching photography, and a final chapter on children and teens involved in the fight to save wild horses is particularly evocative and will surely usher in a new generation of activists."

•Booklist

Terri Farley's book, *Wild At Heart*, is both informative and inspirational. While the book is heart-felt, it is not an overly emotional plea, but rather a fact-based, comprehensive characterization of the plight of wild horses and burros in an environment where private economic interests looking to leverage subsidized public lands for personal gain have consistently worked to undermine legal protections afforded to wild horses and burros, often ignoring both law and science. While one of the book's stated goals is to focus on many outstanding young advocates who are actively engaged in the struggle to ensure fair, humane, and just protections for wild horses and burros, this is not, strictly speaking, a "kids book" as it covers historical, scientific, legal, and current management practice without flinching. It is in fact, a book for young as well as adult readers, and especially for those who wish to understand the major drivers and nuances that characterize this important issue. While *Wild At Heart* is structured a bit unconventionally, being laced with fictional re-creation, personal experience, and eye witness accounts, the overall effect is to enhance, support and energize the narrative from multiple perspectives. For the same reason, the generous and stunning photography of National Geographic contributor Melissa Farlow must be mentioned. There are few people more qualified to tell this story

that Terri Farley whose commitment and advocacy efforts reach back to the days of Velma Johnson, aka Wild Horse Annie, and the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, enacted to protect these magnificent animals in their native ranges. If you want to quickly understand this issue, it is hard to imagine a better entry point, or that, having read the book, you'll not want to see a more just and humane set of solutions to this unfolding management crisis.

Absolutely the Best Book Ever. I can't put it down

beautiful pictures from Nat Geo photographer and great cause to support wild horses

I love this book! The text is beautiful and the photos are wonderful. The book arrived as promised, and I'm happy to have it!

Awesome book at the cruelty our government treats our wild mustangs on public land.

Beautiful Book!

Great book. Love it!!!!

Great book. Thought I reviewed it already. Pretty sure I did.

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