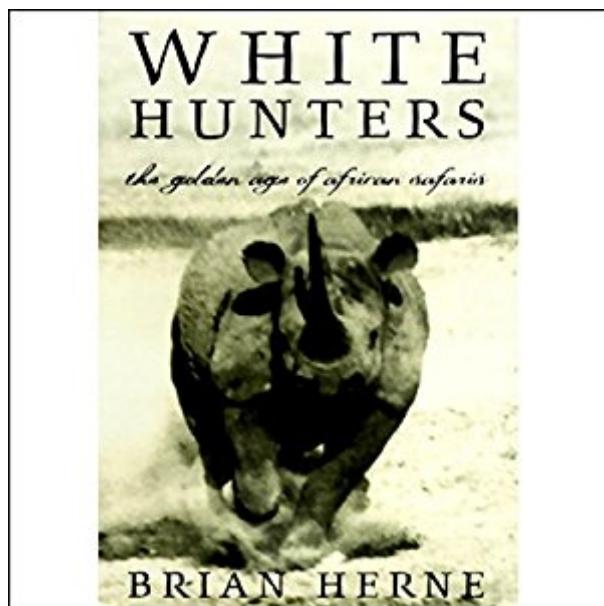


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# White Hunters



## Synopsis

[Read by Simon Vance] A little over 100 years ago, East Africa was terra incognita to most whites: a land largely unmapped, sparsely settled by Europeans, and teeming with wildlife. It was the hunter-adventurer's paradise, and by the early 20th century a small, lionhearted clan of explorers and big-game hunters began leading safaris there for money. They became the legendary White Hunters, men who led manifold adventurers in pursuit of the world's biggest, most dangerous, and most sought-after game. -- White Hunters is a nostalgic and densely-packed history of these men and their adventures, from the turn of the century until the 1970s, when politics, a growing population, civil strife, and concern about species destruction intervened. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I enjoyed this book very much. A lot of stories about the old and new White Hunters of Africa. From Cunningham and Schillings to Ker and Downey. Hunting is about over with for Africa. These are some great stories. I am not a hunter. This is about the people and the adventure of Safaris. A lot about animals they hunted. Lots of times the animal wins. Many of these hunters died doing what they loved to do. I highly recommend this book..

The story would be helped by more overview telling the reader how the profession peaked and faded. It would also help to map out the people who were active during each given time period. Finally, some hunters were mentioned but little detail was provided. In particular J. A. Hunter was

mentioned several times in conjunction with other hunters, but little detail was provided other than a bit about his arrival in 1908. A fast Wikipedia search confirmed my suspicion that he had a long and significant career but he may not have been as colorful as some of the hunters who were featured. Unfortunately the author dangled the name, suggesting that more was to be learned yet he left me to search on my own.

I guess I wasn't sure what to expect from this book, essentially a series of brief biographies about the men who, starting in the early 20th century, began offering their services as guides for wealthy westerners to come hunt big game in Africa. I found the writing style quite dry and very little adventure in the telling, despite the subject material. Would not read again I can not highly recommend this one.

Good stories, great insight into a culture that no longer exists, and an unintentional commentary on colonial Africa versus independent Africa. Very readable and interesting. Lots of info on European and American celebrities, as well. Only negative is that the introductions to different hunters begin to get predictable...brief descriptive paragraph with superlatives varying only in physical descriptions, but almost interchangeable.

Brian Herne has done an admirable job analyzing the excitement of big game hunting and the contributions white hunters and game wardens have made to the preservation of Africa's wildlife and their natural habitat. I was also very impressed by his vivid, accurate and responsible depiction of the horrors of the Mau Mau uprising, a phenomenon that has been more or less whitewashed in recent years by politically correct pantywaists -- e.g., Edgerton. I must say, however, that Mr. Herne's description of the hunt is not as lively as others I've read. Ruark comes to mind, as does Capstick (whom Mr. Herne neglects to mention). To be sure, Capstick can come across as a bit of a clown on occasion, but he's an adrenaline-pumping writer. I wonder why Mr. Herne failed to mention him (and others -- e.g., Bull). After all, virtually every white hunter there ever was is discussed in this book, which is arguably a mistake. "White Hunters" is too long and so congested with characters that Mr. Herne loses sight of what should be the ultimate goal of such a book -- to get our adrenaline pumping. I do recommend "White Hunters," but I would have preferred a tighter, more focused and more exciting effort.

The book has a simple, easy set up. Each chapter deals with an individual or group of individuals

who went to hunt or live in Africa. The next chapter deals with people who, usually, were trained by the folks in the earlier chapters. Or were related by birth. Or shoot at. It is a history of 20th Century Africa person by person. Hunters, ivory collectors, photographers, families, soldiers, Hollywood stars, trackers and criminals. Death, romance, big game hunting and humor all rolled up in one book. With politics, world history and unexplored territories tossed in for good measure. With a few maps and lots of black and white photos, this is a must for anybody interested in big game hunting, Africa or world history.

I've read this book at least twice and it's just an enjoyable read about the history and the adventures of professional hunters and hunting in Africa. Good read for anyone interested in the Golden Age of safari and on.

This book will add to an understanding of the now vanished world of colonial East Africa. For those who are viscerally anti-hunting, this will be a book that will probably not be considered, and that is a pity, because it is about more than hunting -- though there's plenty enough to satisfy fans of Capstick, Hunter, et al. Mr. Herne's homage to a special breed of men (and women), white and black, is well written and ideal for leisurely reading and rereading. It is brimming with anecdotes both amusing and hair-raising. I've given my copy away and am now ordering another. White Hunters is a worthwhile addition to the library of the sportsman or the person interested in colonial Africa, from the late 19th century to independence. Whether relating stories of such early white hunter legends as Selous, Cunningham and Black, or the role played by white hunters in the oft-mismatched British campaigns against German-led guerilla operations in WWI, or the horrors faced by white settlers during the Mau Mau troubles of the '50s, these tales never bog down. One of my favorite hunters, by the way, was "Shagbag" Collins. On a parallel note, I would recommend, *The Life of My Choice* by Sir Wilfred Thesiger and *Home from the Hill* by Hilary Hook, though I'm not sure of the current availability of either of these books.

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