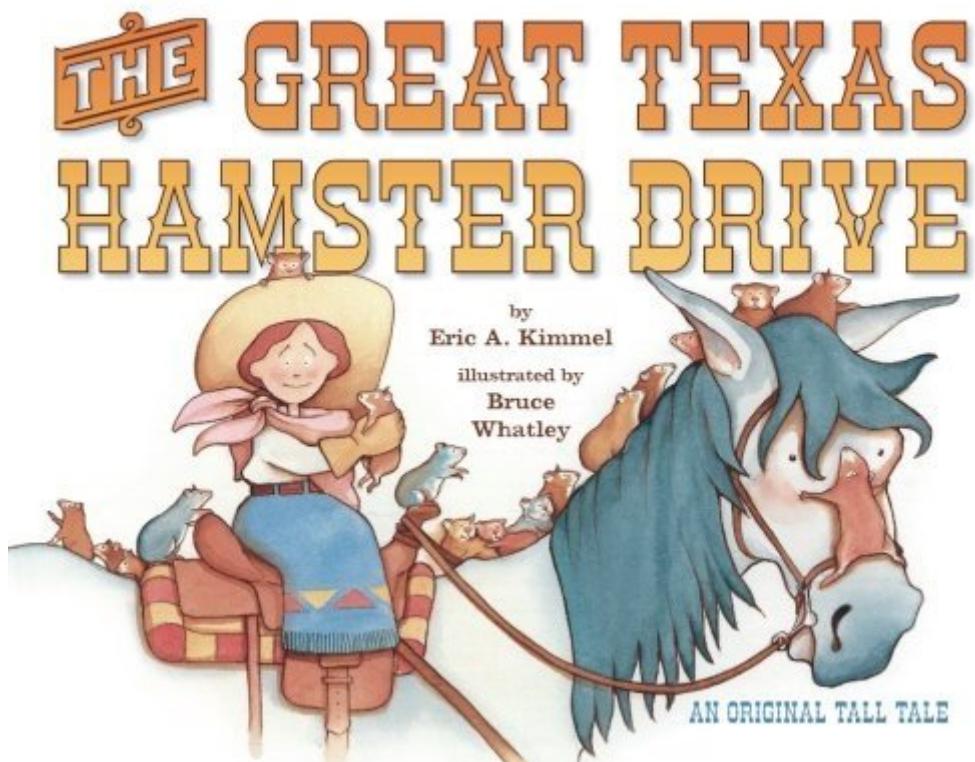


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# The Great Texas Hamster Drive



## **Synopsis**

One day, Pecos Bill's daughter Sal announces she wants a pet hamster. Her father agrees to get her two, and before she knows it, the hamsters multiply. First there are five. Then fifteen. Then twenty-eight hamsters. Eventually thousands are running around the range. They eat all the grass. They drive the longhorns away from the waterholes. Something has to be done! Why not ship them off to Chicago as city pets? And so The Great Texas Hamster Drive takes off and that's just the beginning of more trouble for Pecos Bill, Sal, and the whole family. Bruce Whatley's vibrant water color illustrations bring the Southwest to life in this endearing tale.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Slue Foot Sal, Pecos Bill's daughter, wants a pet hamster. Well, she gets two hamsters and the trouble begins because the hamsters start being fruitful and multiplying. This is a cute, funny story based on the Pecos Bill tall tales. The illustrations are wonderful and fit the story perfectly. My only complaint - I bought the Kindle version of the book and the wording of the book is small, blurry and difficult to read.

Our family greatly enjoyed The Three Cabritos, The Three Little Tamales and Cactus Soup, all by this same author. Those three were all great retellings of classic stories with good illustrations. Based on our appreciation of those books, we decided to try The Great Texas Hamster Drive. Unfortunately, this book was average at best and lacked the charm and appeal of the author's other works. Like Kimmel's other books, the story starts with a known character - Pecos Bill and his family. His daughter wants a pet and is given two hamsters that do what hamsters will do. Two hamsters quickly become several thousand, which are posing a threat to the cattle and something must be done. The name of the book gives away what comes next. Although the premise had promise, the story itself was flat and lacked the colorful atmosphere and characterizations of U.S.-Mexico border culture which are always apparent in the stories I'd noted. I also did not care for the artwork of the illustrator as much. Unless you really want all of the author's work, I'd select one of his other books to buy.

If you plan on reading this via a phone or a smaller tablet don't bother. I have a larger tablet (Samsung Note 10.1), and at certain portions it's barely readable - small, blurry, very poor quality. The entire book is in an image format, even the text. I don't understand why images can't be manipulated to a larger size. It's ridiculous. Not easy for a child to read unless it's on a computer or larger tablet because the words are too small. And the images are blurry on some pages. As for content, it starts out with promise but everything is wrapped up pretty quickly. There's not much to it. EDITED TO INCLUDE: It turns out the text can be increased in size so I added a star and brought this up to three stars. Cute book, but rather thin and insubstantial and the images do not increase in size. So small devices will show tiny images. But I have to add that I am tickled - reads our reviews and this evening I was contacted by a Kindle CS person who pleasantly informed me that the TEXT in this book can be double tapped and increased in size. (but not the images.) He also let me know I can give a review via the order page that will go directly to the publisher and I will most certainly do that because books that are image heavy should allow readers to increase the size of the images as well. Publishers save a lot of money on digital publishing and while I'm glad they're finding a way to continue publishing for profit, this kind of miserly approach does not serve them. A book that is laden with images should not be static. The images should have the same feature as the text, allowing for magnification. That said, KUDOS to for caring!

A story about the daughter of tall tale legend Pecos Bill rounding up hamsters and herding them to Abilene could be - and should be - a rip-roaring, belly-laughing highly unbelievable adventure worthy

of the name Pecos. Sadly, "The Great Texas Hamster Drive" is not. In the book, we meet Slue Foot Sal, youngest child and only daughter of Pecos Bill and his wife Slue Foot Sue. Little Sal wants herself a pet, since all her brothers have one. But rather than a timber wolf or rattlesnake as her brothers suggest, Sale wants a hamster. Bill can't quite tell a hamster from a mouse, but nonetheless, what Little Sal wants, she gets. She gets two, in fact, so that one doesn't get lonely. Only problem is, the two hamsters are a boy and a girl. So soon Sal has five hamsters. Then fifteen. Then thousands. Sure enough, the little critters get loose. They terrorize the longhorns and eat all the grass. So Bill, Little Sal and the rest of the family have to round up the little menaces and get them to Abilene where they can be loaded on a train and sent back to the catalogue man. Now, you'd think that Pecos, who, after all, dug the Rio Grande, could handle this little rodeo with ease and flair. But Pecos, having now become the cowboy equivalent of a soccer mom, loses control of the show and Cookie has to save the day. It's Cookie who figures out how to get the hamsters out of the prairie dog town they've disappeared into, although quite why it worked remains a little beyond me. That seems to be the only major mishap along the way, and soon the little rodents are on their way back to Chicago. All is well. Until Little Sal decides on her next pet. This book offers a few minor chuckles and the drawings are reasonably well done and cute. But neither the story nor the illustrations are terribly memorable. Check it out at the library. Don't spend your money on it.

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