

Cherokee Stories

Cherokee Animal Tales

“This is what the old men told me as a boy...”



With these words the Cherokees told their stories, not with “once upon a time,” as we do today. From generation to generation these stories were passed down, not in written word, but orally from those we would now call storytellers.

The animals of long ago were different from the ones we see today. The first animals were much bigger, stronger, and perfect. They could perform impossible feats and had supernatural powers.

These animals were not seen as less than mankind, but considered equal to man and spoke the same language. They had their own society that was much like that of the Cherokee, with their own clans and tribes. They were like “super animals” when compared to the animals of today.

Those animals of long ago are gone now. They ascended to the world above that the Cherokee people call “Galunlati,” and they are still there to this day. The animals that live among us now are imitations of the great ones. These stories of the old ones live on to teach and entertain. These animals played tricks, danced, and learned valuable lessons (which was the point of the stories in the beginning of their time).

