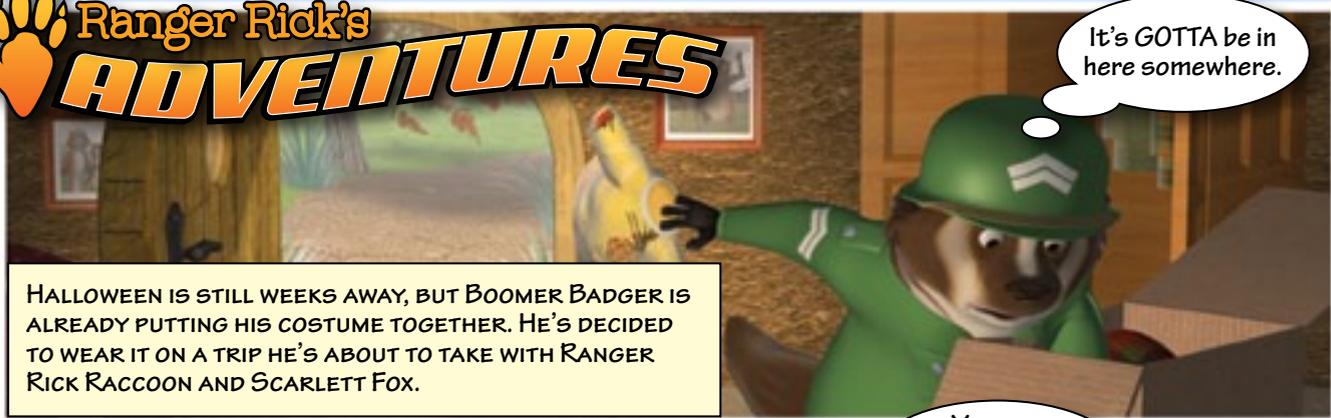


Ranger Rick's ADVENTURES

HALLOWEEN IS STILL WEEKS AWAY, BUT BOOMER BADGER IS ALREADY PUTTING HIS COSTUME TOGETHER. HE'S DECIDED TO WEAR IT ON A TRIP HE'S ABOUT TO TAKE WITH RANGER RICK RACCOON AND SCARLETT FOX.



It's GOTTA be in here somewhere.



Ah—here it is! My official U.S. Army bugle!



Yeow—my ears! What's he up to NOW?

Come on, Boomer—it's time to go!



Corporal Boomer Badger, bugler extraordinaire, reporting for duty!

Oh, Boomer! October has just begun, and you're already dressed up for Halloween?



Well, maybe you'll want a soldier on this trip. Who knows what dangers we'll face?

You're too much, Boomer.



Boomer, can you put a sock in that thing? We've had enough noise for one day!

Yeah, Boom. Besides, we need to set up camp.

THE GANG IS HEADED TO VIRGINIA TO SEE SCARLETT'S COUSIN REDDY. REDDY HAD E-MAILED SCARLETT, SAYING THAT A GREAT SURPRISE WAS IN STORE FOR HER IF SHE CAME TO VISIT. SCARLETT, RICK, AND BOOMER AGREED TO GO AND CHECK IT OUT.

A LITTLE WHILE LATER...



I can't wait to see Reddy tomorrow!

I can't wait to discover Reddy's surprise!

EARLY NEXT MORNING...



For a soldier, bugle duty begins at dawn!



Gotta get out in the open so the sound carries as far as possible!



BLEEEEE-UP! BLEEEEE-UP! BLEEEEE-UP!



WEEEE-unk WEEEE-unk WEEEE-unk

Hmm—must be some kind of echo.



BLEEEEE-UP! BLEEEEE-UP! BLEEEEE-UP!



That's no echo! And what are those sharp things sticking up? Weapons?

WEEEE-unk WEEEE-unk



Whoa! HELP!

THIS IS AN ANGRY BULL ELK ON THE RUN, AND HE'S STOPPING FOR NO ONE!



Rick, Scarlett! DO something!



How can we, Boomer? He's too big—too angry!

Got only one chance...



Are you all right, Boomer?

What did you do to make that elk so angry?

umph umph

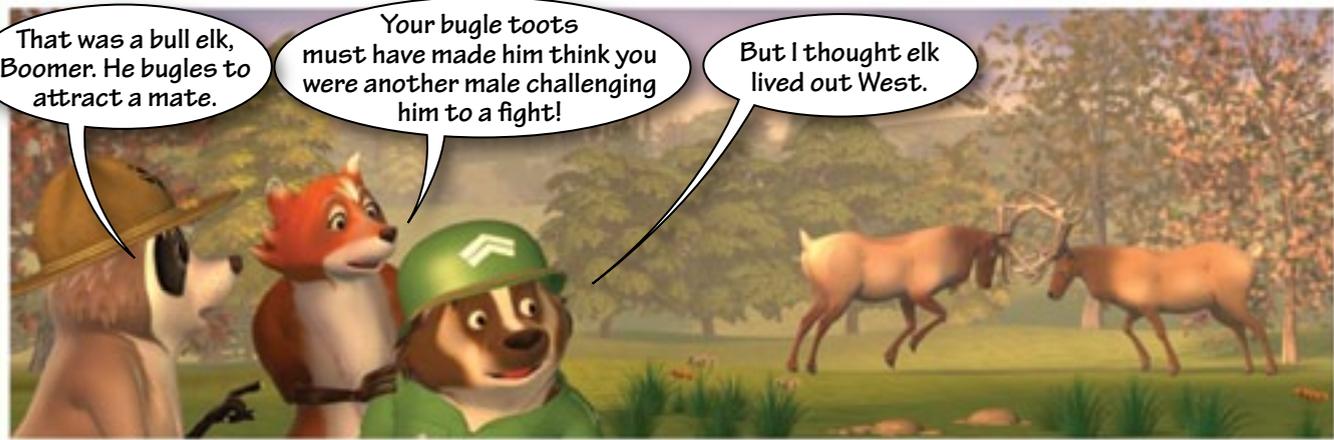


WEEEE-unk
WEEEE-unk



WEEEE-unk
WEEEE-unk

I don't know. I was just bugling, and he came charging out of nowhere.



That was a bull elk, Boomer. He bugles to attract a mate.

Your bugle toots must have made him think you were another male challenging him to a fight!

But I thought elk lived out West.



That's my surprise: Elk have come to Virginia!



So elk are back—great news, Reddy.

CLAP



This is definitely something to bugle about! Don't you agree, Boomer?

Very funny, Scarlett.



Cousin Reddy! It's been so long!

Yeah—glad you could make it.



AFTER THE INTRODUCTIONS, REDDY TELLS THE GANG THAT ELK HAD LONG DISAPPEARED FROM THE EASTERN UNITED STATES, BUT THEN SOME WERE BROUGHT BACK FROM WESTERN STATES. NOW THERE ARE THOUSANDS LIVING IN THE EAST AGAIN.



By the way, Boomer. I never knew badgers could climb trees. How'd you manage that?

A good soldier can do anything when he puts his mind to it!

MORE FACTS

- Elk are a huge species of deer. A full-grown male (bull) can weigh up to 700 pounds—more than twice the size of a white-tailed deer.
- Even larger were the elk that once roamed across eastern North America, from Canada to the southern Appalachian Mountains. But then early settlers destroyed the elk's habitat. They cut down the forests and turned the land into farms. They also hunted elk for their meat and hides. By 1877, the eastern elk was extinct.

Elk still survived in the West. So beginning in the early 1900s, some of these elk were brought East to live in places where elk once thrived.

• In 1998, about 1,500 elk were brought to eastern Kentucky. That herd quickly grew and now has more than 11,000 elk—the largest herd east of the Mississippi River. About 150 of these elk have migrated into Virginia, where people are trying to make sure they have a happy new home!

