Ctesias is hunting Unicorns

The first written reference in Western literature to a single-horned "wild ass." Appears in the 4th century B.C. A Greek doctor named Ctesias traveled through Persia (now Iran), in the service of the Persian king, where he heard many tales from Indian travelers about creatures back home. Later writing them down, he described "wild asses as large as horses" that had white bodies, red heads and dark blue eyes, and "a horn on the forehead, which is about a foot and a half in length." He also said that the horns were multicolored, and that the animals were so swift and powerful that "no creature, neither the horse or any other, could overtake it."

Of course, more than likely, Ctesias had never actually seen this creature himself, but was relying on other people's accounts. As unicorn expert (yes, they do exist), Odell Shepard explained in *The Lore of the Unicorn*, Ctesias most likely fused details of multiple creatures, including the Indian rhinoceros, to create this fantastical being. But during that era it was common for stories to travel great distances by word of mouth, and as Aristotle argued, when the tale made its way to him, was this single-horned, silvery being any more absurd to imagine than a giraffe or an elephant?

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