



The growing buggy and performance VW scene was promoted by an increasing number of publications worldwide. Petersen's *Complete Volkswagen Book* used buggies on the front covers of its first two annuals.

Despite the problems, the watchword throughout this whole blossoming buggy scene was 'fun', with a capital 'F'. Buggies had begun to make their appearance in many more areas than those for which they had originally been designed. The numerous buggy owners who wished to get together, and be with other like-minded enthusiasts, formed clubs. Manufacturers such as EMPI began to develop styling and performance accessories for buggies in a bid to capitalise on the developing - and huge - aftermarket parts industry. Publications such as *Dune Buggies and Hot VWs* and *Petersen's Complete Volkswagen* catered for armchair enthusiasts who wanted to find out more about the buggy scene, and to owners who wanted to know how to make their buggies go faster, handle better, and look like a million dollars.

Artist Walter Gotschke produced a series of beautiful paintings depicting the development of the VW over 5 decades. This is the one illustrating the year 1966, showing Beetles in the USA.



Bushwacker manufacturer KDM Enterprises moved into car rental for Hilton Hotels in Hawaii, Miami, Puerto Rico and Jamaica, and became the 7th largest auto maker in the US. Rental car colour theme for the buggies was metalflake with custom pinstriping. Photo: Mel Baker.

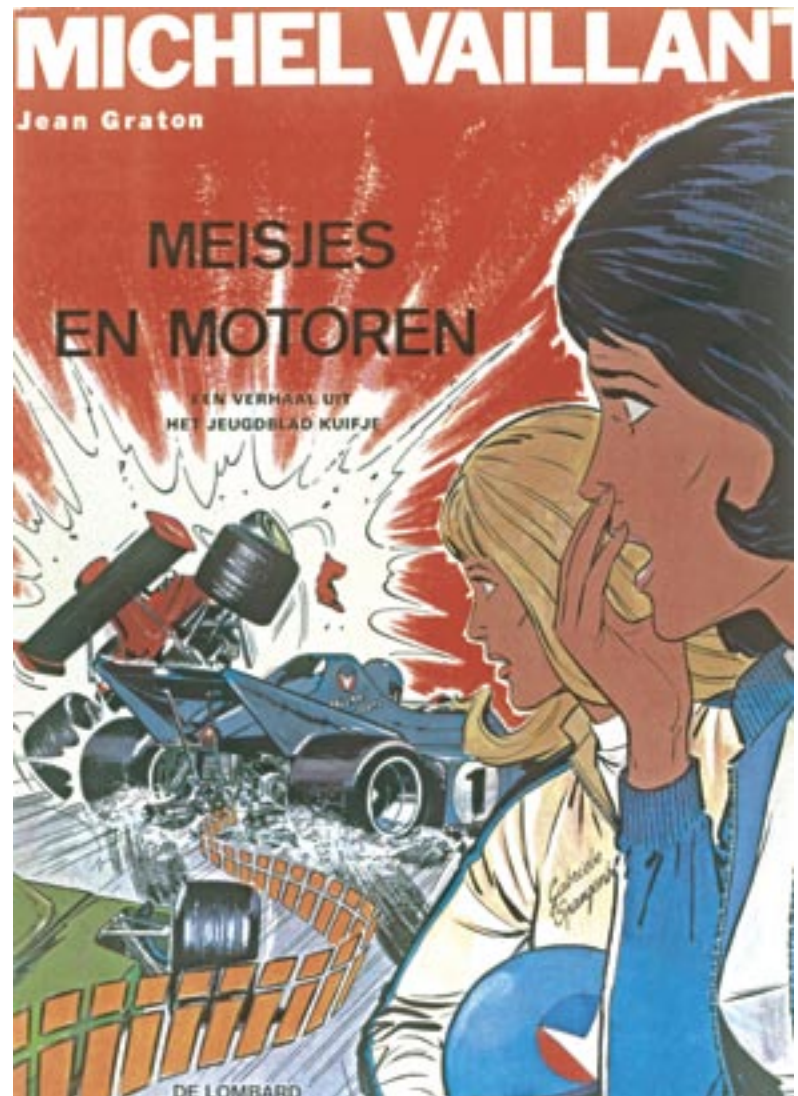



Promotional shot of the first Bushwacker car rental theme ... leopard skin top and interiors, and a tiger logo on the front hood. The hotel chain didn't opt for this style, but the '60s go-go boot babe cracking the whip apparently accompanied the delivery of the buggies. Photo: David Haskin.



Buggy-related ephemera has been produced since the dawn of the buggy itself. Inevitably, the continental love of comic books meant that a buggy would appear on the front cover of one sooner or later ...

As with all countries caught up in the motoring excitement that surrounded the idea of the buggy, it wasn't long before advertisers, film makers, and even comic book cartoonists introduced buggies into their work. The classic Michel Vaillant cartoon books were some of the many publications that featured buggies in various ways. For advertisers, the buggy was a dream come true. The buggies that appeared in many adverts of the early 1970s, shouting individualism and youth-culture, were as much about their ability to look colourful (and provide a useful prop for well-groomed models!) as anything to do with their off-road capabilities. Buggies appeared in adverts for holidays, ice-cream, cigarettes, and drinks with increasing regularity and for good reason: the open-topped nature of a buggy easily allowed cameras to focus on the models seated within, with no doors or roof to obstruct the shot. Buggies had another advantage: they were cheap and plentiful when other convertibles commanded a much higher price tag.



A blue and silver dune buggy is parked on a sandy dune. The vehicle features a deep blue body with metallic silver stripes running down the center. It has a roll-over protection structure (ROPS) made of chrome bars. The front has two round headlights and a license plate that reads "GHT 178D". The wheels are chrome with a multi-spoke design. The background shows a clear blue sky and some green trees.

The availability of the re-issued Manx led to a fresh wave of builders and manufacturers entering the buggy scene with plenty of new ideas. Metallic blue stripes over a deep blue gelcoat for the body, fully trimmed black interior with blue pinstriping, Torque Thrust wheels, forward-raked suspension, and chromed engine give this Manx a Hot Rod feel. Photo: Mike Key.

Designed by Somvang Sinhsattanak, and Jean-Christophe Bolle Reddat, the head of the Hoggar project, Peugeot's concept buggy was a hi-tech, modular construction, but with a very wild feline-like element. Photo: Peugeot.



The EX was hand-built by RM Corporation in Wixom, Michigan (race-preparation specialist-turned-concept-builder). Starting with some chalk-line drawings on the floor, the EX took just seven months to build, from design idea to rolling buggy. The appearance of a wild-looking, high-tech, go-anywhere machine, with bomb-proof engineering, evolved entirely during construction. Most of the exposed double-wishbone and coil-spring suspension (and most other chassis components) were machined from solid aluminium alloy billet, at a cost of a quarter of a million dollars for the machining alone! The quality of the engineering was so good that the chassis could comfortably handle 1000bhp, and still not break. The EX was designed to meet Ford's brief of 'a timeless toy/tool', and to enter an automotive area that the company had not explored before - pure fun. The design was intended to be a 'kid-catcher' in a bid to woo the lucrative youth market into the Ford family. With the EX it fairly succeeded, though the design itself remained a one-off.

If Peugeot's Touareg buggy wasn't wild enough, the company opted to introduce an even more radical buggy design at the Geneva Motor Show in 2003. The Hoggar was designed by Somvang Sinhsattanak and Jean-Christophe Bolle Reddat, who headed up the concept project. Named after a spectacular North African desert where the nomadic Touareg tribe lives, the buggy gave the impression of a feline creature, a wild animal lying in wait and ready to pounce. This starting point for the appearance was then augmented by the unrestricted free-form mechanical design, with its visible mechanical components. Aluminium was used extensively for lightness. Brown leather was used inside to extend the 'animal' association. Even the headlights were designed to make the buggy appear to have two half-closed eyes. Elegant and wild, high-tech and efficient, the Hoggar's modular design was a new and very different concept.

From concept to design and build, the Hoggar took five months. The expression of wild animal power was shown by having visible mechanical componentry, and an exterior styling that looked like a predator on the hunt. Photo: Peugeot.