

The British Deer Society



As the leading wild deer organisation in the UK, the British Deer Society works to enable the deer of the United Kingdom to exist and flourish in today's environment ensuring their future is secure for generations to come.

The British Deer Society:

- Runs courses and provides training to ensure that, whatever your interest in deer, you will receive the best quality training to develop your individual skills and knowledge.
- Undertakes and funds research projects ensuring that deer, their issues and their threats are scientifically explored and understood.
- Provides a team of technical experts that work to prime and influence governmental and public bodies to ensure that any legislation or regulation is practical and sensible and has deer welfare as its primary objective.
- Works to ensure that there is a sustainable, healthy population of deer in the UK that can exist in harmony with the environment and the people that live there, look after it, or visit it.

Membership

Over 6,000 members support our charitable remit to promote the welfare of British deer. It's easy to join and as a member you will also receive a copy of our journal, *Deer*, four times a year, as well as membership of a local branch with its social activities, range days, talks and demonstrations.

Join us online at www.bds.org.uk

Shop

You'll find a wide range of books, DVDs, and stalking essentials in our online shop as well as BDS clothing, seasonal gifts and cards.

Shop online at www.bds.org.uk



British Deer Society – the deer experts

There are six species of deer living freely in the British countryside. Each species has specific characteristics which make it well-suited for the variety of habitats found across the country and highly adaptable to environmental changes. A mixture of native and introduced species, they make a valuable contribution to Britain's biodiversity and are some of our most engaging British mammals.

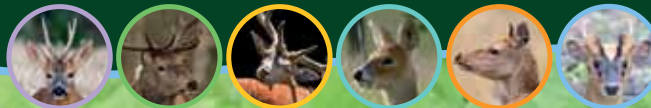


Photo courtesy of Sue Westlake Guy



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Wild Deer of the UK



IDENTIFYING Reeves' Muntjac Deer

Muntiacus reevesi



Photo courtesy of Charles Smith-Jones

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What you will see



Size

Reeves' Muntjac deer are a small but stocky species of deer that stand at around 0.44 to 0.52m tall at the shoulder. When fully grown males (bucks) weigh between 10 to 18kg as adults and females (does) weigh 9 to 16kg. By comparison an average adult man in Britain is 1.77m high and weighs 79kg.

Coat

Muntjac are a russet brown colour for most of the year, turning to a dull grey in winter.

Rear

Characteristically, muntjac have a 'hunched' appearance, as their rumps are higher than their shoulders. They have a wide, flat tail, which is raised erect to display a white underside when disturbed.

Head

Muntjac males have small antlers on top of a long fur-covered base (pedicle). These are usually straight with no branching. The face of the male is striped with pronounced downward black lines, light coloured cheeks and very large facial glands below the eyes. The ears are oval-shaped. Does have no antlers and a dark crown patch on their heads.

What you'll hear



Vocalisation

Also known as the 'barking deer', muntjac vocalise in many different situations. The bark is repeated and loud for its size. Muntjac also scream when frightened. Does and offspring communicate with a series of squeaks.

Look out for



Tracks and Signs

Muntjac make very small hoof prints (slots), about 2.5cm long.



Lifestyle



Feeding

Diet varies depending on where the animals live. They browse small amounts of nutritious plants such as herbs and shrubs.

Social organisation

Muntjac are solitary or found in buck/doe pairs, or with their young. Small territories are held year-round by bucks, but they are generally tolerant of other males nearby. Does' home ranges overlap and cover several bucks' territories. The deer are active throughout the day and night but are most likely to be active at dawn and dusk.



Photo courtesy of Sue Westlake Guy

Breeding

Muntjac does are capable of breeding at seven months old and breed all year round. Does produce a single fawn after a gestation period of seven months. A doe is ready to mate again days after giving birth leading to a potentially rapid population growth.

Humans and Deer

Muntjac cause relatively little damage to commercial vegetation. However, due to their increasing numbers and density they are becoming of significant environmental concern. Muntjac do produce good venison but stalking of the species has yet to become commercially viable. The most significant issue with their proliferation is the increase in road traffic accidents with threats to both humans and welfare of the animals themselves.

Where you'll find them

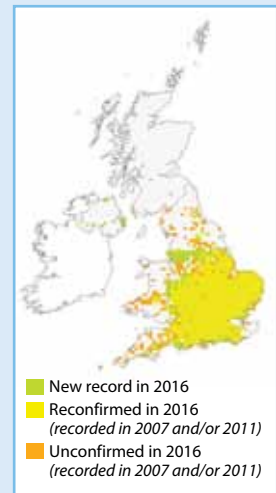


Origins

Muntjac were named in 1812 after John Reeves of the East India Company. The deer originated in south east Asia and were introduced to Britain by the Duke of Bedford at Woburn Park, Bedfordshire in the early 20th century. Feral populations were quick to establish from both escapees and deliberate releases.

Population and Distribution

Muntjac deer have proved highly successful at establishing themselves in the British countryside. They are found throughout the country, although with fewer numbers in the north and west. Muntjac deer are quick to exploit new habitats and are rapidly increasing in number and range.



Habitat

Like most other deer, muntjac were originally residents of deciduous and coniferous woodland. Increasingly however they are being found in more habitats throughout the country, and are now present in urban areas and gardens with shrubby borders. They prefer areas with a diverse range of low-level dense vegetation.



Photo courtesy of Charles Smith-Jones