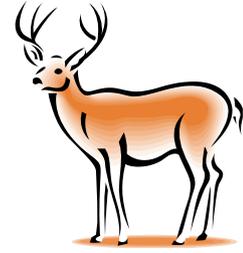




Fact Sheet - Deer



TERMS:

SMALLER VARIETIES

Buck	is an adult male deer
Doe	is an adult female deer
Fawn	is a young deer

LARGER VARIETIES

Stag, bull	is an adult male deer
Cow	is an adult female deer
Calf	is a young deer

THE RED DEER

Hart	refers to an adult male red deer over 5 years old
Hind	refers to an adult female red deer
Havier	is a castrated male deer
Herd	is a group of deer of any kind

INTERESTING FACTS:

- Deer is both used as singular and plural.
- Deer are ruminant (cud chewers) mammals similar to cattle, sheep, goats, etc.
- Originally, in England, the word “deer” referred to all wild animals.
- Deer have good night vision.
- Deer are excellent jumpers and swimmers.
- All deer have a scent gland above their eyes which they use to mark territory. This is done by rubbing this area against trees and saplings. These “rubs” allow hunters to track the deer.
- Most fawns are born with their fur covered with white spots, but generally lose these spots by the end of their first winter.
- Fawns and their mothers usually stay together for approximately one year.
- Unlike the caribou in North America, reindeer is often domesticated.
- Scandinavians and other nomadic people of northern Asia use the reindeer for food, clothing and transport.



HISTORY:

Deer are indigenous to all continents except Australia and Antarctica. Originally introduced in the 19th century from Europe and Asia as game animals by European settlers, Australia is now home to six species of deer - fallow, red, chital, hog, rusa and sambar. While deer continue to be farmed for venison, the wild populations are causing significant environmental damage.

In 1980, it was estimated that Australia had about 50,000 wild deer. Most of these lived along the east coast of Australia. However, with the emergence of deer farming, deer numbers started to grow. It is estimated that there are now over 200,000 in Australia with about 30,000 living in the wild in Queensland after having escaped from deer farms. Fallow, red, rusa and chital deer are the main deer that have established populations.

Hunting laws vary from state-to-state depending how deer has been classified as a pest. In some states deer can only be hunted during a hunting season and a permit or license is required.

By 2008, all species of feral deer were declared as Class 1, Class 2 or Class 3 pest animals. A feral deer is any deer that are not confined in a deer-proof enclosure. Reason being:

- They can cause damage to agricultural crops and gardens in outer suburban areas.
- They are hazardous on suburban roads and major highways.
- Large numbers of deer also pose a threat to the environment.



HABITATE / DIET:

Deer live predominantly in grassy forests. In Australia these areas include rainforests, eucalypt forests and farmlands. Deer prefer open areas within forests because it allows for the sun to shine on the undergrowth which allows grasses, weeds, and herbs to grow that deer like to eat.

They prefer to eat grass but they also eat the leaves of shrubs, trees and herbs, bark and some fruit.

Sometimes deer live in herds with up to 30 deer and other times live as individuals. Deer mate during autumn with usually a single fawn born eight to nine months later.



BREEDS OF DEER:

Deer belong to the cervidea family. This includes white-tailed deer, black-tailed deer, elk, moose, red deer, reindeer (caribou), fallow deer, roe deer and chital.

Australia is home to six main breeds.

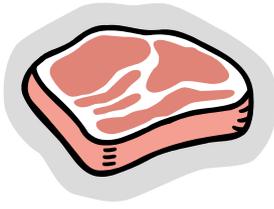
- The CHITAL was the first species of deer introduced into Australia in the early 1800s. Its preferred habitat is a well watered open forest environment. Chital deer keep their spots.
- The HOG deer is much smaller than the chital and although they may be seen groups, it lives and acts as an individual.
- The RUSA is a tropical species, originally from Java. It is closely related to the sambar, but smaller in stature.
- The SAMBAR is a tropical species originally from Ceylon, India and Malaysia.
- The FALLOW deer is one of the most widely distributed deer around the world. It is a medium sized deer that prefers an open forest environment with access to denser areas for cover when necessary. Fallow deer are born with spots, which fade as they grow.
- The RED deer is also widely spread throughout the world and have adapted to a wide range of habitats. Red deer initially have spots when they are born, which complete fade away.

For photos and more information refer to www.adrf.com.au



ANTLERS:

- All male deer have antlers. Sometimes female deer have a small stub. The only female deer with antlers are reindeer (caribou).
- Male and female reindeer grow and shed new antlers each year.
- Antelopes come from the same family of deer but their horns are permanent.
- To attract “does” in the mating season “bucks” use their antlers to fight one another. They do this by lowering their heads and charging each other.



DEER PRODUCTS:



Deer meat is called “venison” and the organ meat is called “humble” or “umble”.

In Medieval England pies were filled with chopped or minced parts of an animal’s heart, liver, lungs or kidneys, particularly from deer and it was referred to as the “humble” or “umble” pie.

Deer is both hunted and farmed. The main products from deer farming are venison and velvet antler. Velvet antler is the immature antler and it is widely used in traditional Asian (particularly Chinese) medicine. Other parts of deer are also used in traditional Asian medicine including the tail, sinews, heart and blood.

In Australia deer are usually sold directly to processors. The processor will then organize the transportation, slaughtering, boning, packaging and marketing of the deer.

Around 85 per cent of all venison produced in Australia is exported, principally to Europe.

The Deer Farmers Federation of Australia represents farmers, processors, transporters, breed organisations and any other party involved in the deer industry.