

# Reeve's/Chinese Muntjac



Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Chordata  
Subphylum: Vertebrata  
Class: Mammalia  
Order: Artiodactyla  
Family: Cervidae  
Genus: *Muntiacus*  
Species: *reevesi*



Photo courtesy of Lynne Panebianco

## Habitat

- **In the Wild:** This small species of deer, native to China and Taiwan, prefers to live in forests with dense vegetation. They have been introduced to the United Kingdom.
- **Exhibit Location:** Wildlife Trails

## Characteristics

- Height: 16-20 inches; Length: 24 inches; Weight: 24-35 pounds
- Males develop small 2-3 inch antlers and inch-long tusk-like upper canine teeth, which are used for fighting and defense. Females develop smaller canines and small bony knobs instead of antlers.
- Colors range from dark brown to yellow or grayish-brown, with white markings. Their face is tan and their forehead and nose are black.
- Historically, the Chinese muntjac was found in China. The Reeve's muntjac, a darker color, was found in Taiwan. However, both are actually the same species.
- Both sexes have large scent glands below the eyes used for scent marking. Males have a dark "v" pattern on their foreheads; females have a "diamond" shape.
- **Lifespan: In the Wild** 10 years; **In Captivity** 16 years

## Behaviors

- Muntjacs forage from dawn through late evening and are considered pests in some areas where their foraging causes damage to hardwood trees.
- Muntjacs are most active at dusk and dawn, and can be active throughout the night. During the day they usually rest.
- When alarmed, they make a loud bark-like sound that gives them the nickname, "barking deer." Males may also use this sound for mating purposes; females often make a mewling sound in response. Males use their tusks to fight with other males in a mating ritual.
- They are solitary and territorial animals with excellent hearing and eyesight. They will frequently drive away other herbivores (plant eaters) from their territory. Males defend territory by scent marking, depositing heaps of dung, and aggressively repelling intruders using their canine teeth and/or antlers.
- **Enrichments at the Zoo:** stealing from the pandas; large whole fruit, veggies, mister in summer, running from pandas

## Reproduction

- Sexual maturity is reached at 7 months of age. Females become fertile within their first year and mating occurs throughout the year. They can produce fawns (one at a time) at intervals of about 7 months.
- Fawns are born 7 months after mating and weigh about 20 ounces. The young are weaned after about 2 months. The fawns are camouflaged with spots that fade away as they age.
- Females tend to remain close to their mothers' range, but males move farther away.

## Diet

- **In the Wild:** bramble, ferns, ivy, tender shoots, hardwood tree bark, grass, fallen fruit
- **At the Zoo:** apples, carrots, peanuts, grapes, grain, hay, grass

### **Conservation Status**

- **IUCN status:** none; **CITES Appendix:** not listed (status common)
- Due to problems this species causes in highly sensitive conservation areas, shooting controls it. The numbers are decreasing as there is no control on hunting this species.
- This animal is also hunted for its meat and skin.
- Road deaths are common and the predation on fawns causes serious mortality rates.
- Predators: leopards, tigers, pythons, humans, foxes

### **Did You Know?/Fun Facts**

- Both the Latin and common names refer to John Reeves, Assistant Inspector of Tea for the East India Company in 1812.
- Some muntjacs have escaped from zoos or have been purposely released and have formed feral (wild) populations in Britain and France.

### **Sources:**

- ARKive: Images of Life on Earth, (2004). Reeve's muntjac (*muntiacus reevesi*). Retrieved Oct. 28, 2005, from ARKive: Images of Life on Earth Web site: [http://www.arkive.org/species/ARK/mammals/Muntiacus\\_reevesi/more\\_info.html](http://www.arkive.org/species/ARK/mammals/Muntiacus_reevesi/more_info.html).
- Fox, D. and P. Myers. 2001. "Cervidae" (On-line), Animal Diversity Web. Accessed October 28, 2005 at <http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Cervidae.html>.
- The Big Zoo, (2005). Reeves' muntjac. Retrieved Oct. 28, 2005, from The Big Zoo.com Web site: [http://www.thebigzoo.com/Animals/Reeves\\_Muntjac.asp](http://www.thebigzoo.com/Animals/Reeves_Muntjac.asp).
- World Deer, (2005). The reeve's muntjac *muntiacus reevesi*. Retrieved Oct. 28, 2005, from World Deer Web site: <http://www.worlddeer.org/reevesmuntjac.html>.