

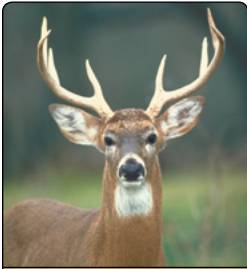
Wildlife Identification Guide

Antlers vs. Horns

Members of the deer family (which includes caribou, deer, elk, and moose) have antlers. Antlers are solid bone and are shed annually. They are one of the fastest growing natural materials in the world. Antlers grow from the tip while horns grow from the base. Except for caribou, only male deer have antlers.

Horns are found on bison, sheep, goats, and pronghorns. Unlike antlers, true horns are hollow and grow continuously. If broken, they do not grow back. They consist of a keratin sheath surrounding a core of bone. Female sheep have half-moon horns while rams have horns that are longer and heavier and curve around the sides of their heads. Female mountain goats have horns that are longer, straighter, and thinner than male goats. The horn sheath of a pronghorn has characteristics of both antlers and bones because it's made of keratin surrounding the bony core yet is shed annually.

White-Tailed Deer



Male Whitetail

Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife



Reddish-brown to blue-gray or tan coloring; underside of tail is white, producing a "flag" when raised off the

rump. Antlers on male primarily consist of main beam with tines growing from it. Maximum antler size occurs between 5–7 years of age.



Female Whitetail

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Habitat and Habits:

Range movements limited to one to three miles, depending on sex, age, and habitat. Herbivore. Lives up to 10 years. Male is polygamous with most whitetails in North America rutting in November. One to two spotted fawns typical.

How To Distinguish Adult White-Tailed Deer from Fawns*

Fawns

- Short, square bodies (look like a "briefcase" from a distance)
- Short necks and less muscle development
- Rarely have swaying backs or sagging bellies
- Ears appear large in comparison to head

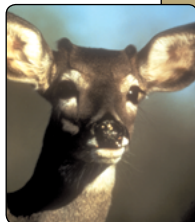
Adults

- Larger, rectangular-shaped bodies (look like a "suitcase" from a distance)
- Long necks



Courtesy of George Barnett

How To Identify Buck Fawns*

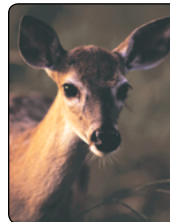


Courtesy of Wyman Meinzer

- Presence of developing antlers
- Head appears more flat and less rounded between ears

Briefcase Suitcase

How To Identify Doe Fawns*



Courtesy of George Barnett

- No developing antlers
- Head appears slightly rounded between ears

*Information courtesy of the Quality Deer Management Association: www.qdma.com

rut

The period of sexual excitement and breeding in deer

Black-Tailed Deer



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Smaller than mule deer with a less extensive range. Can be distinguished from mule deer by its blackish or brown coloring on top of tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in mixed open to wooded terrain along the Pacific Coast; only species of deer found in Alaska. Herbivorous. Lives up to 16 years. Male is polygamous; rut runs Oct.–Dec. One to two spotted fawns typical.

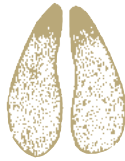


Pronghorn



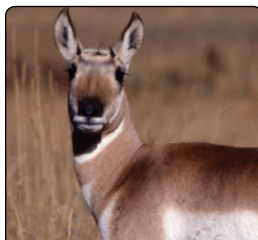
Male Pronghorn

Courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



White-hoofed with reddish to tan coloring. Large white rump patch, short white tail; rump hair stands

up when alerted or fleeing. Two broad white bands across neck. Male has large black jaw patch and larger, slightly curved horns with single prong growing forward.



Female Pronghorn

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Habitat and Habits: Lives in open prairies, plains, and brushlands. Herbivore. Lives up to 14 years. Male is polygamous; rut runs Aug.–Nov. Two grayish-brown fawns typical.

Bighorn Sheep



Male Bighorn Sheep

Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife



Dark brown to gray coloring; white rump

patch with short darker tail. Two heavy, tapering, curled brown horns on male; smaller and less curled on female.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in rocky, mountainous terrain, preferring bluffs or steep slopes. Herbivore.



Female Bighorn Sheep

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Lives up to 15 years. Male is polygamous; rut runs Nov.–Dec.; males engage in battles, butting heads. One small brown lamb typical.

Moose



Male Moose

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Dark brown with grayish legs. Large overhanging snout; dewlap on throat. Antlers on male are massive, palmate, and flat.

Habitat and Habits:

Lives in forests with lakes and swamps. Herbivore. Lives up to 20 years.



Female Moose

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Male is polygamous; rut runs Sept.–Oct. Usually one calf; light reddish-brown with dark stripe down back.

Mule Deer



Male Mule Deer

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Reddish coloring in summer and blue-gray in winter. Cream-

colored rump patch with black-tipped cream tail. Ears are larger than the white-tailed deer.

Antlers branch equally.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in forests, desert shrubs, thickets of shrubs or trees, grasslands, plains, foothills, and

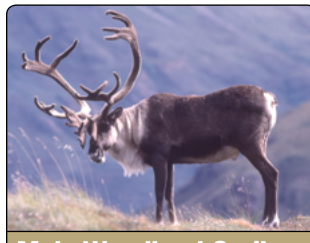


Female Mule Deer

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river bottoms. Herbivore. Lives up to 16 years. Male is polygamous; rut runs Oct.–Dec. One to two spotted fawns typical.

Woodland Caribou



Male Woodland Caribou

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Dark brown with whitish neck,

underside, rump, and above each hoof. All males and more than half of females have semi-palmated antlers with a prominent vertical tine

over nose. Females' antlers are smaller.

Habitat and Habits: Found in boreal coniferous forests, alpine tundra, and muskegs



Female Woodland Caribou

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(peat bogs). Herbivore. Lives up to 10–12 years. Male is polygamous; rut is late Sept. Grayish-brown fawns.

Elk



Male Elk

Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife



Dark brown to tan coloring; yellowish rump patch and tail. Large, spreading antlers on male.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in mountain pastures in summer and on wooded slopes in winter.

Herbivore. Lives up



Female Elk

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to 15 years. Male is polygamous; rut runs Sept.–Nov. Usually one calf; spotted until three months of age.

Wild Turkey



Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife

Large, long-legged bird; dark and iridescent body; featherless, reddish head. Male larger and more iridescent than female. Wild turkeys are native to North America and there are five subspecies: Eastern, Osceola (Florida), Rio Grande, Merriam's, and Gould's.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in open woodlands, brush country, thickets of shrubs or trees, river bottoms, and hardwoods. Lives up to 12 years. Polygamous males. Mating call is a gobble; normal calls are clucks, putts, and purrs. Nests in depressions; 6–20 whitish eggs.



Black Bear



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Color varies from black to cinnamon in West and black in East; face always brown; usually a small white patch on chest. Male much larger than female.

Habitat and Habits: Lives primarily in forest and swamps in East; in forest and wooded mountains in West. Omnivore. Lives up to 30 years. Nocturnal; usually solitary, except mother with cubs. Mates Jun.–Jul. Typically two cubs, born in winter.

Hunters must take extra precautions when hunting in areas where there are bears. For more information, visit this website:

<http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/livingWithWildlife/beBearAware/default.html>



Feral Hog



Courtesy of Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

A medium-sized, hooved mammal; descendent of the domestic hog. Varies greatly in color but most often black. Upper tusks curl up and out along sides of mouth. Wild hogs may be infected with swine brucellosis, which can be transmitted to people who come in contact with infected blood.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in forested mountainous areas, brushlands, dry ridges, and swamps. Omnivore. Lives up to 10–15 years. Travels in groups. Three to twelve young born anytime during the year.



Coyote



Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife

Medium-sized to large with gray to reddish-gray fur, more tan on legs, feet, and ears; dark-tipped tail; whitish belly and throat.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in prairies, open woodlands, shrublands, and variety of habitats. Carnivore. Lives up to 8–10 years. Mainly nocturnal but can be active anytime. Five to ten pups born Apr.–May.



Red Fox



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Medium-sized, reddish-yellow; can range from darker to lighter; bushy tail with white tip; usually dark legs and paws.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in mixed woodlands, farmland, and open country. Carnivore. Lives up to 10 years. Three to seven young born Apr.–May.



Mountain Lion (Cougar)



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Large, tan-gray cat with long, brownish-tipped tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives mainly in rugged mountains and sometimes in forests and swamplands. Carnivore. Lives up to 18 years. Makes a food “cache” out of uneaten prey. Mainly nocturnal; dens found in caves, rock crevices, and other concealed locations. Two spotted cubs can be born throughout year.



Porcupine



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Large rodent, size of small dog; chunky body with short legs. Color varies from black or brown in East and yellowish in West. Sharp spines on rump and tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in forests or in brushy areas. Herbivore; likes salt. Lives up to 7–8 years. Primarily nocturnal. Mates in fall; one young born May–Jun.



Eastern Fox Squirrel



Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife

Larger, rusty-yellowish with orange-red underside; bushy tail tipped with darker hairs.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in open woodlands, river bottoms, and pine forests with interspersed clearings. Herbivore. Lives up to 10 years. Two to five young born in Jan. and May.



Eastern Gray Squirrel



Courtesy of Ryan Hagerty

Medium-sized with inner yellowish-rusty and gray or white-tipped hairs; lighter underside; bushy tail with varying dark hairs tipped white or yellow.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in forests, river bottoms, pine forests interspersed with hardwoods, and clearings. Herbivore. Lives up to 15 years. Two to five young per litter.



Red Squirrel



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Smallest of tree squirrels in its range. Yellowish or reddish back and whitish belly; bushy tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in pine, spruce, or mixed hardwood forests. Nests in tree cavities or branches. Herbivore. Lives up to 10 years. Three to seven young born Mar.–Apr.



Virginia Opossum



Courtesy of Ed McCrea

Small- to medium-sized with gray to dark gray fur; whitish face and small ears; rat-like tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in woodlands, water, and farming areas. Omnivore. Lives up to three years. Nocturnal. Up to 14 young per litter several times a year. Young remain in mother's pouch for several months.



Mink



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Medium-sized with dark brown fur and white chin patch; tail slightly bushy.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in stream, pond, and lake habitats. Carnivore. Polygamous. Four to ten young born Jan.–Mar.



Common Muskrat



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Small-sized with brown to grayish-brown fur and grayish underside; black, scaly tail; partially webbed hind feet.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in marshes, ponds, and streams. Omnivore, feeding on aquatic vegetation, frogs, and small fish. Two to six young per litter; 2–3 litters per year.



American Beaver



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Medium-sized, brown rodent; naked tail, scaly and paddle-shaped. Large, chestnut-colored front teeth; webbed short feet for swimming.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in streams, ponds, or lakes. Constructs houses of sticks, logs, and mud or burrows in banks; builds dams serving as habitat. Lives up to 11 years. Two to four kits born Apr.–Jul.



Striped Skunk



Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife



Medium-sized with black fur and white stripes from head to tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in semi-open prairies, thickets of shrubs or trees, and mixed woods near water. Omnivore. Mostly nocturnal. Five to six young born in May.

Black-Tailed Jackrabbit



Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife

Medium-sized; grayish-brown fur with large black-tipped ears and black streak on top of short tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in prairies, shrublands, and semi-arid deserts. Herbivore. Lives up to 5–6 years. Two to four young per litter.



Eastern Cottontail Rabbit



Courtesy of William Janus

Small-sized with brownish-gray fur with cottontail; large ears but not as large as jackrabbit.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in heavy brush in forests, farmlands, thickets of shrubs or trees, swamplands, and weed patches. Herbivore. Lives up to 3–4 years. Four to seven young per litter; 3–4 litters per year.



Snowshoe Hare



Somewhat larger than cottontail rabbit. In summer, yellowish to grayish brown coloring with white underside; brown on top of tail. In winter, all white with dark tips on ears.

Habitat and Habits: Found in mixed spruce forests, wooded swamps, and brushy areas. Do not dig burrows or build nests but use natural shelters and depressions and rest under branches or bushes. Herbivore. Four to six young per litter; two to three litters per year.

Prairie Dog



Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife

Small-sized with tan to reddish fur; small ears and light-colored underside; black-tipped short tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in dry upland prairies in colonies or “towns” of burrows. Herbivore mostly but may eat some insects. Lives up to 7–8 years. Three to five young born Mar.–Apr.



Common Raccoon



Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife

Medium-sized with dark and light mixed fur and distinctive black mask across white face. Small- to medium-sized ears; ringed tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in woods near cliffs and water. Omnivore. Lives up to 7–10 years. Nocturnal. Two to seven young born Apr.–May.



American Badger



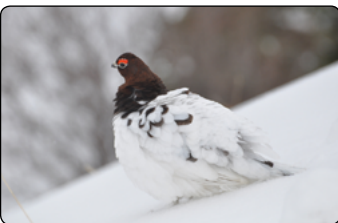
Courtesy of Texas Parks & Wildlife

Medium-sized with short black legs and yellowish-gray hair. White stripe over head to nose; white cheeks; black patch in front of each ear. Long front claws for digging.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in open grasslands, deserts, and thickets of shrubs and trees. Carnivore, feeding mainly on small rodents. Lives up to 12 years. Two to five young born Feb.–May; one litter per year.



Ptarmigan



Three species: willow, rock, and white-tailed. Mottled brown in summer; all white in winter. Males have red comb over both eyes. Have distinctive feathered feet to help them navigate on frozen ground.

Habitat and Habits: Live in sparsely timbered or treeless areas;

favors willow-lined waterways, alpine areas, and arctic tundra. In winter, remain close to shrubby slopes and valleys.

Dusky (Blue) Grouse



Courtesy of Khanh Tran

Male is gray with orange-yellow or red comb over eye; yellow skin on neck; gray band at end of dark tail. Female is brown with dark tail.

Habitat and Habits: Lives in coastal rain forest and just below mountain timberline. Makes a “whoop, whoop, whoop, whoop” call. Nests in shelter of stumps or rocks; 5–10 cream-colored eggs with brown spots.