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THE MAMMALS AND BIRDS OF KASHMIR AND THE ADJACENT HILL PROVINCES

BEING NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

BY

COL. A. E. WARD

PART V

(Continued from page 524 of this volume.)

(With one plate and three text figures.)

¹ *CERVIDAE*: The Deer (contd.)

The Shou.—*Cervus wallichi*.

There seems to be little doubt as to the habitat of this fine deer, which may be briefly stated as Northern Bhutan and the Tangpo and Brahmaputra Valleys and Southern Tibet.

Not many Shou have been shot by Europeans, but several pairs of horns have been purchased or given to travellers.

The head figured on the plate is in the Bombay Natural History Society's collection. Plate 1 also shows a Stag shot by Major A. de C. Rennick, who kindly sent me the photograph. Rowland Ward gives the measurements:—

Outside curve	Girth	Tip to tip	Points
46"	5 and $\frac{7}{8}$	25"	5 + 5

Colonel F. M. Bailey, to whom I am much indebted, shot a Shou on September 12, 1913; the description was published in *The Field*, October 3, 1914. Reference can only be made to Bombay Natural History Society's Journal, XXIV, No. 1, where Bailey's interesting notes from Southern Tibet are published.

Hodgson, many years ago, presented a head ($55\frac{3}{4}$ " \times $6\frac{1}{2}$ ") of ten points to the British Museum. Major Rennick also gave his specimen and Mr. A. O. Hume had two or three pairs of horns and

¹ The previous article on the *Cervidae* of Kashmir appeared on pages 253 *et seq.* of this volume.—EDS.

these he bequeathed to the same Museum. Colonel Bailey also found horns of 54" and Colonel Tanner brought down from Northern Bhutan a beautiful head, of the same length. This was in Simla for some years and was greatly admired. I do not know from where Lydekker copied the Shou's head he shows as a typical specimen, but it is very like Tanner's. The brow antler appears to be short, as is the case generally with the Hangul or Kashmir Stag, but exceptions are found to occur in both species—the third tine is shorter than the second in most antlers. On Major Rennick's specimen the brow antler is well developed.

Compared with the Kashmir Hangul the skull of the Shou is very much larger: the Hangul's skull is in extreme length from 15½" to 16" whilst the skull of a Shou is 17½" and Blanford gives a measurement of 18¼".

Judging from the comparatively few antlers about whose identity there is no doubt, the number of points are, like the Kashmir Stag, normally 5 + 5 in number; but one of Mr. Hume's specimens was 7 + 6, and Rowland Ward gives two others as 8 + 6 and 6 + 5. Again, Lydekker mentions a head with 13 points from a valley not far from Lhasa.

The Shou is amongst the largest of the Red deer, the antlers are not unlike those of the Hangul, the beam bends forward from the trez tine and the shape of the beam is not unlike that of the Spotted deer.

The subdivision of the Shou deer into two races appears to be unjustifiable, and the report of its existence near the sacred lakes of Mansarowar appears to be untrue, anyone who has gone up the Sotlej to its source must know that there is no grazing or browsing to be had. Not very far to the southward is the Tarai where there are no Shou, and the Tarai is the only forest in which this huge deer could exist.

Thorold's Deer.—*Cervus albirostris*.

Thorold's Deer is of medium size; it is brown in colour with the inner portion of the ears white; so also is the muzzle. The yellow on the buttocks is very plainly to be seen. There is no trez tine.

It is believed that Przewalski first obtained this deer, and Dr. Thorold undoubtedly obtained two specimens north of Lhasa; in consequence arose the name of 'Thorold's' deer or '*Cervus thoroldi*.' The habitat is northwards and north-eastward of Lhasa.

The largest horn is mentioned on page 31 of Rowland Ward's *Records of Big Game* (eighth edition of 1922).

Length of horn on outside curve	Tip to tip	Widest inside	Points
47"	34¼"	36½"	5 + 5

The locality is Central Tibet: what is exactly meant by Central Tibet it is difficult to determine, but probably the habitat given above is more appropriate.

The only photograph I have is not my property nor do I know where the horn was found,

Knowing so little about the deer I propose to conclude this portion of the article with the remark that Thorold's deer is a distinct species.

Having now dealt with the Elaphine group of deer let us take up the beautiful Roe that is called the Siberian Roe deer or the Asiatic Roebuck.

Genus *CAPREOLUS*: ROE DEER.



The Siberian Roe.—*Capreolus pygargus*.

THE SIBERIAN ROE.—*Capreolus pygargus*.

The common native name is *Illik*. The late Mr. Church writes on the subject of this animal, giving details of its pursuit. The distribution is the Altai, parts of the Caucasus, Turkestan, etc.¹

¹ The typical race is from the Semiretshinsk Altai,

The Thian Shan race is called '*tianschanicus*'. Some of the finest heads are from the Thian Shan, notably one shot by Col. C. B. Wood, who very kindly contributed the beautiful photograph.

Length on outside curve	Circumference	Tip to tip
17"	4 $\frac{3}{8}$	12 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

These are Rowland Ward's measurements. One longer is mentioned on page 85 of his records. Numbers of this animal have been shot.

Years ago I arranged with the late Rajah Sir Amar Singh to endeavour to import and acclimatize the Siberian, or as it is generally called, the Manchurian Roe in the State Game Reserves belonging to His Highness the Maharajah. The plan fell through when I left Kashmir in 1908; since then, the importation of this Roe has been talked about. Roe deer are difficult to deal with in captivity, but if they could be brought down safely they ought to do well, provided the leopards and Indian martens could be kept down. The climate of Kashmir would be quite suitable.

Genus *Muntiacus* : BARKING DEER.

The BARKING DEER.—*Muntiacus vaginalis*.

The Barking deer is widely known in India and in the Himalayas as the *Khakur*. I have never heard the name *Jungly Bakri* except in parts of the Central Provinces.

The range includes India, Burma, the Malay Peninsula, Siam, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, etc. The several races that are distributed over this wide area need not be dwelt upon in the present paper. A short-horned species known as *Muntiacus crinitrons* occurs in Eastern China.

Distribution. Throughout most parts of India, in Burmah, Ceylon, etc.—in most of the hilly tracts.

Most sportsmen have shot the Barking deer, coming on the nimble little animal suddenly in the more open forest, or hearing its peculiar startled call in the dense ringal clumps or amongst bush jungle—the startled call is distinctly a bark of fright.

Personally, I have always had a dislike to shooting this delightful deer owing, as I do to it, success in getting a tiger, that was the terror of the lower Siwalik Hills, and in ridding the vicinity of hill stations of dog-eating leopards.

The Barking deer has long upper teeth or tusks protruding from the gums. With these tusks the animal can cause gashes. Gunga, a grand companion who followed me for years, was once badly cut in the fleshy part of the thumb, by the tusks of a Muntjac; the wound took weeks to heal.

If the Barking deer can be got to feed and are allowed to be loose they thrive well. Being inordinately fond of grain, they must be carefully guarded on the march. A tame barking deer used to jump up into a Bunniah's cart; finally it succumbed to eating too much grain.

Dunbar Brander puts the weight of a good buck at 48 lb., height at shoulder 24 inches. A female weighed close on 38 lb., that is an

abnormal weight. The average of five very large bucks was—height, 26"; weight 46 lb. A really good horn is given on page 217 in Mr. Dunbar Brander's delightful work, *Wild Animals in Central India*.

Horn outside curve
7"

Girth
3 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

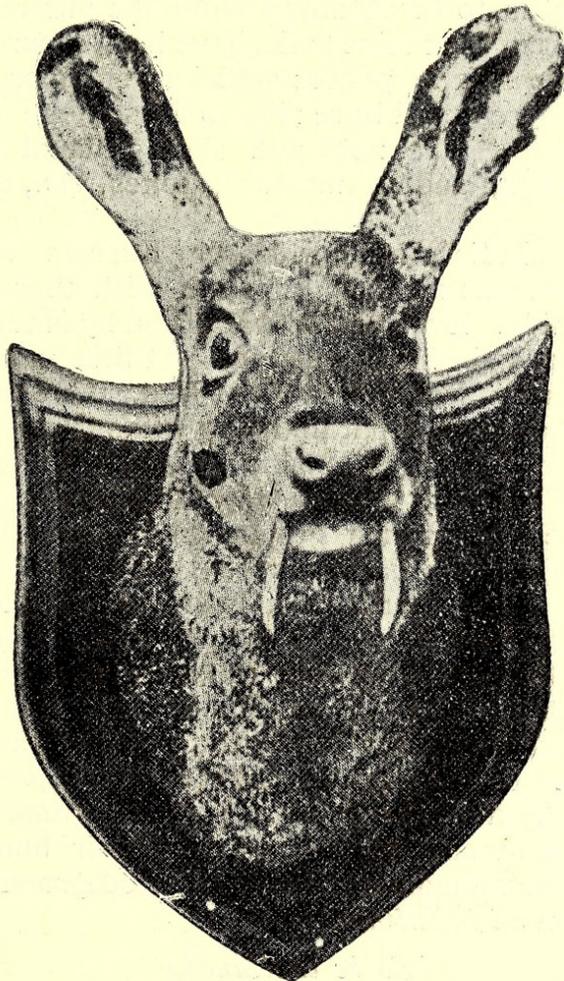
Tip to tip
3 $\frac{1}{8}$ "

The hairy pedicle which carries the horn measures about 4". Barking deer cast their horns annually. I see no reason to doubt this fact, undoubtedly the horns are shed in the summer months when few sportsmen care to tramp about amongst the hills, and as the horns are generally hard by October the idea has been formed that this deer does not shed its horns year by year. Living as I have done in the jungles throughout the year I have always seen hornless muntjac in July and August and have frequently picked up fallen horns.

The colouring varies from dark to fairly light red; the stomach, under the jaw and part of the throat are white as a rule.

Females are said to be of a lighter red, but this is not very marked.

Genus *Moschus* : MUSK DEER.



The Musk Deer.—*Moschus moschiferus moschiferus*.

THE MUSK DEER.—*Moschus moschiferus moschiferus*.

Kastura (=Musk) is the native name in most of the Himalayas—*Rebjo* in Laddak. *Rous* and *Kastura* in Kashmir.

Distribution.—The Himalayas extending from the East to Gilgit on the west. Found also in China and Siberia. The Chinese race to the westward is called *Moschus moschiferus sijanicus*.

The Musk deer varies considerably in size, ranging from 22 to 30 lb. in weight with a shoulder height of about 19 inches; the hind quarters have frequently a height of 21 to 22 inches. The fur is coarse and brittle, in fact, the body covering is more in the nature of soft spiky hair, which breaks easily. This renders the skin useless as a trophy.

This deer is hornless in both sexes. The only trophy obtainable is the pair of tusks in the upper jaw, which measure from about 2 to 3½ inches; these tusks are imbedded in the gums. The maximum total length of the tusk is about 3½ to 4 inches. The glandular pouch which holds the musk is greatly sought after, as much as Rs. 32 being, at times, paid for what is called the musk pod. Consequently in spite of all precautions Musk deer are decreasing in numbers year by year, and, but for this deer being preserved as a 'royalty', (i.e., belonging to the ruling chief), it would have become extinct in Kashmir.

Very little sport is to be obtained from the pursuit of the Musk Deer. After a pair of the canine tusks have been secured these small animals should be left in peace; sufficient enemies exist, without bringing the modern small bore rifle to lessen the numbers of a forest-living animal. The nets and shot guns of poachers and leopards, wild dogs, Indian martens, foxes, etc., all prey on the Musk deer.

Years ago at Badiar in the Jinsar Forests of the United Provinces an effort was made to populate with these deer a fairly large tract of hillside. Every aid was afforded by nature and suitable food, shade, rocks and shrubs existed. At first many Musk deer tenanted the country which was preserved. One morning, whilst out after Cheer pheasants, I put up many without any beaters, a few years afterwards not a single Musk deer was to be found, they had all dispersed. This only shows how fruitless it is to try and interfere with the laws which govern wild animal life. Whether the Musk deer objected to being overcrowded, or had eaten up the selected portions of the herbage it is impossible to say—perhaps disease had occurred—it is useless to speculate. Undoubtedly it is always the case that overcrowding causes disease and at that we must leave it. But for the intervention of man, wild animals would still be plentiful, the reproduction of the jungle fauna if left alone would be balanced by nature, the numbers would possibly fluctuate as the vermin gained the ascendancy; as the game decreased the flesh-eating animals would wander off to better hunting grounds, the numbers of the animals on the devastated ground would again increase and so on *ad infinitum*.

(To be continued)



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