

INDIAN ANTELOPE or *BLACKBUCK*



Antilope cervicapra

STATUS

- Lower Risk - Near Threatened (IUCN 2003). Up from Vulnerable (IUCN 1996)
- The numbers and distribution of Indian antelope have been greatly reduced due to uncontrolled hunting (for trophies) and because farmland is encroaching on its territory.
- In recent years there has been an increase in numbers in protected areas.

ORIGIN

- Central India and Pakistan.

HABITAT

- Indian antelope live in open woodlands and grasslands
- They are now rarely found outside of protected reserves.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- Indian antelope live in breeding herds up to 50. Each herd has one dominant male.
- Other males form bachelor herds.
- They have a life span of up to 15 years.
- The males scent-mark trees, bushes etc. to mark their territories. They have scent glands on the face below the eyes.
- Sparring males lower their heads and lock horns, pushing and twisting.

DESCRIPTION

- Indian antelope are a medium sized antelope.
- Females and young have uniformly light-brown coat with white on the face and belly.
- Males develop dark brown upper parts and outside of legs at about 3 years.
- Males grow spiral horns up to 70 cms long.



POINTS OF INTEREST

- Indian antelope can run at speeds of up to 90 km/h. Whilst running they can take strides of up to 6 metres and can leap over 2 metres high
- They once needed this speed to out-run their main predator, the now extinct Asiatic cheetah.