

CHITAL DEER or AXIS DEER



Cervus axis

STATUS

- Common

ORIGIN

- India and Sri Lanka

HABITAT

- Chital live in lowland plains or lower hills among bushes, trees or in bamboo forests.
- They prefer to live in areas near a stream.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- Herds of up to several hundred occur.
- Herds include stags, hinds and young.

DESCRIPTION

- Their coats are bright reddish-brown on the back with white underparts.
- Their fur has lines of conspicuous white spots, even when fully grown.
- Males have slender antlers up to 75cms in length.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Chital swim well and take readily to water.
- Antlers are shed at any time of the year.
- Fawns are born at any time of the year.
- Predators are pythons, wild dogs (dhole), tigers and leopards.
- Chital are grazers (grass eaters) and browsers (eating from branches).
- They feed in the morning and evening, resting in the midday heat.
- Chital follow troupes of monkeys through the forest. They eat a lot of the discarded fruit that monkeys throw away, and are pre-warned when predators are near.