



NILGAI or BLUE BULL



Boselaphus tragocamelus

STATUS

- Lower risk.

ORIGIN

- Indian peninsula.

HABITAT

- The Nilgai inhabits glades in open woodland as well as low hilly country at the base of mountains in scattered brush or grassy steppes.
- Much of their habitat has been destroyed.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- Nilgai live in small herds which are territorial. These may be herds of cows and calves or bachelor herds.
- The Nilgai is not shy and herds are easily approached.
- Nilgai are "creatures of habit" and tend to use the same paths, waterholes, defecation and resting places.
- Nilgai often rise on their hind legs when browsing.

DESCRIPTION

- The Nilgai is the largest Asian antelope.
- The females and young have a brownish colour while the males have a smooth, bluish coat.
- Males have black tufts on the throat and white patches on their throats, ears, noses and legs.
- The black and white bands above their hooves create confusion in predators when the herd is running.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- In India, with a mainly Buddhist population, they are not usually hunted for their meat.
- They are not targeted by trophy hunters as their horns are short.
- Although closely related to the Bushbuck, Nyala and Kudu of Africa they have no near relatives in India.
- The Nilgai's main predator is the tiger.