

Muntjac deer

Muntiacus reevesi

Invasive: High impact

Species profile

- Habitat:** Terrestrial. Areas with a diversity of vegetation is preferred. Low woodland (coniferous or deciduous) urban and suburban parks, large and small gardens, arable farmland and scrub.
- Distribution in Ireland:** Localised in some areas in the east of the country.
- Status:** Not established.
- Family name:** Cervidae.
- Reproduction:** Capable of breeding all year round. Generally give birth to a single fawn. Gestation period of 210 days.

Identifying features

- Height:** Small in stature up to 50cm for males and 47cm for females. Hunched back. Considerably smaller than other fully grown deer species in Ireland.
- White tail:** When disturbed it shows a conspicuous white tail, which can be seen as the animal is fleeing.
- Tusks:** Muntjac deer have elongated and curved canine teeth, which they use for territorial fights.
- Face:** Distinctive facial markings forming a V-shape in males and a diamond shape in females. Large dark scent glands visible below each eye.

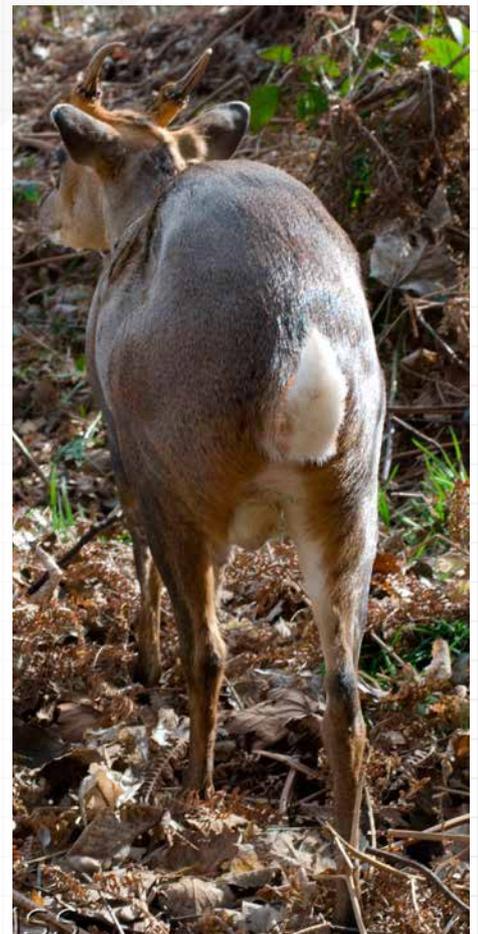


Muntjac deer showing facial markings
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Muntjac deer showing humped back, small antlers and tusk

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Muntjac deer showing white tail

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Threats

At high densities, they can alter the structure of woodland layers which can negatively impact on other wildlife.

In woodlands, muntjac deer can prevent tree regeneration and the development of the shrub layer if occurring in high densities.

Muntjac deer are often involved in road traffic accidents in the UK, which is of serious concern to human well-being.

Seasonal change

Spring: Rich red-brown coat, with buff-coloured belly fur.

Winter: Grey-brown coat, with forelegs almost black on front, especially in males.

Similar species

- Other juvenile species of deer.
- Can also be mistaken with adult Irish mountain hares and red foxes



Muntjac deer beside nettles © Nora Chapman

