

Himalayan Serow

Features

The Himalayan Serow, also known as *Capricornis thar*, is a goat-antelope species found in the Himalayan region of India, Nepal, and Bhutan. The male Himalayan Serow typically stands at around 90 cm tall at the shoulder and weighs between 60-80 kg, while the females are slightly smaller, standing at around 75 cm tall and weighing between 35-45 kg.

The Himalayan Serow has a shaggy coat that is dark brown to black in color, with a lighter underbelly. Both males and females have small, backward-curving horns that grow up to 15 cm long, which they use for self-defence and territorial displays.

One of the unique features of the Himalayan Serow is their preorbital glands, located just below their eyes, which produce a musky scent used for communication and marking their territory. They are also known for their incredible agility, being able to climb steep slopes and rocky terrain with ease.

In terms of behaviour, the Himalayan Serow is typically solitary, although they have been known to form small groups during the winter months. They are primarily active during the early morning and late afternoon and are known for their shy and elusive nature, often avoiding human contact.

Food Habits

Himalayan Serows are herbivores and feed on a variety of plants, including grasses, leaves, and shrubs. They are adapted to their mountainous habitat and can survive on sparse vegetation in areas where other herbivores may struggle to find food.

Habitat

The Himalayan Serow is found in the high-altitude forests and alpine meadows of the Himalayan region, including parts of India, Nepal, Bhutan, and China. In India, they are primarily found in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.

Vulnerable Species

The Himalayan Serow is considered a vulnerable species, with a declining population in many areas, including India. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the global population of the Himalayan Serow is estimated to be between 10,000 and 25,000 individuals, but accurate population estimates for India are not available.

Habitat loss and fragmentation due to human encroachment, development, and infrastructure projects, such as roads and hydroelectric projects, are major threats to the Himalayan Serow in India. Poaching for their meat, hides, and horns is also a significant problem, particularly in remote areas where law enforcement is weak.

Additionally, climate change is affecting the Himalayan region, altering the species' habitat and impacting their food sources. This can lead to population declines and local extinctions.

Protected Areas

The Himalayan Serow is found in several protected areas and national parks in India.

Great Himalayan National Park is located in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh and is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, including the Himalayan Serow. It is spread over an

area of 1,171 square kilometres and is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Gangotri National Park is located in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand and is home to the Gangotri glacier, the source of the river Ganges. The park covers an area of 2,390 square kilometres and is home to a variety of wildlife, including the Himalayan Serow.

Namdapha National Park is located in the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh and is the largest protected area in the Eastern Himalayas. It is home to a rich diversity of flora and fauna, including the Himalayan Serow.

Khangchendzonga National Park is located in the state of Sikkim and is home to the third-highest mountain peak in the world, Mount Khangchendzonga. The park covers an area of 1,784 square kilometres and is home to a variety of wildlife, including the Himalayan Serow.