

= Bohor reedbuck =

The bohor reedbuck (*Redunca redunca*) is an antelope native to central Africa . The animal is placed under the genus *Redunca* and in the family Bovidae . It was first described by German zoologist and botanist Peter Simon Pallas in 1767 . The bohor reedbuck has five subspecies . The head @-@ and @-@ body length of this medium @-@ sized antelope is typically between 100 ? 135 cm (39 ? 53 in) . Males reach approximately 75 ? 89 cm (30 ? 35 in) at the shoulder , while females reach 69 ? 76 cm (27 ? 30 in) . Males typically weigh 43 ? 65 kg (95 ? 143 lb) and females 35 ? 45 kg (77 ? 99 lb) . This sturdily built antelope has a yellow to grayish brown coat . Only the males possess horns which measure about 25 ? 35 cm (9 @.@ 8 ? 13 @.@ 8 in) long .

A herbivore , the bohor reedbuck prefers grasses and tender reed shoots with high protein and low fiber content . This reedbuck is dependent on water , though green pastures can fulfill its water requirement . The social structure of the bohor reedbuck is highly flexible . Large aggregations are observed during the dry season , when hundreds of bohor reedbuck assemble near a river . Males become sexually mature at the age of three to four years , while females can conceive at just one year of age , reproducing every nine to fourteen months . Though there is no fixed breeding season , mating peaks in the rainy season . The gestation period is seven and a half months long , after which a single calf is born . The calves are weaned at eight to nine months of age .

The bohor reedbuck inhabits moist grasslands and swamplands as well as woodlands . The bohor reedbuck is native to Benin , Burkina Faso , Burundi , Cameroon , Central African Republic , Chad , Democratic Republic of Congo , Ethiopia , Gambia , Ghana , Guinea , Guinea @-@ Bissau , Kenya , Mali , Mauritania , Niger , Nigeria , Rwanda , Senegal , Sudan , Tanzania and Togo . The animal is possibly extinct in Ivory Coast and Uganda . Reckless hunting and loss of habitat as a result of human settlement have led to significant decline in the numbers of the bohor reedbuck , although this antelope tends to survive longer in such over @-@ exploited areas as compared to its relatives . The total populations of the bohor reedbuck are estimated to be above 100 @, @ 000 . Larger populations occur in eastern and central Africa than in western Africa . The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) rates the bohor reedbuck as of Least Concern .

= = Taxonomy = =

The scientific name of the bohor reedbuck is *Redunca redunca* . The animal is placed under the genus *Redunca* and in the family Bovidae . It was first described by German zoologist and botanist Peter Simon Pallas in 1767 . The three species of *Redunca* , including the bohor reedbuck , are the least derived members of the tribe Reduncini (except the genus *Pelea*) . The order of size in the genus *Redunca* is an evidence supporting the descent of the reduncines from a small ancestor .

Five subspecies of the bohor reedbuck have been recognized :

R. r. bohor Rüppell , 1842 : Also known as the Abyssinian bohor reedbuck . It occurs in southwestern , western and central Ethiopia , and Blue Nile (Sudan) .

R. r. cottoni (W. Rothschild , 1902) : It occurs in the Sudds (Southern Sudan) , northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo , and probably in northern Uganda . *R. r. donaldsoni* is a synonym .

R. r. nigeriensis (Blaine , 1913) : This subspecies occurs in Nigeria , northern Cameroon , southern Chad and Central African Republic .

R. r. redunca (Pallas , 1767) : Its range extends from Senegal east to Togo . It inhabits the northern savannas of Africa . The relationship of this subspecies to *R. r. nigeriensis* is not clear .

R. r. wardi (Thomas , 1900) : Found in Uganda , eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and eastern Africa . *R. r. ugandae* and *R. r. tohi* are synonyms .

= = Physical description = =

The bohor reedbuck is a medium @-@ sized antelope . The head @-@ and @-@ body length is typically between 100 ? 135 cm (39 ? 53 in) . Males reach approximately 75 ? 89 cm (30 ? 35 in) at the shoulder , while females reach 69 ? 76 cm (27 ? 30 in) . Males typically weigh 43 ? 65 kg (

95 ? 143 lb) and females 35 ? 45 kg (77 ? 99 lb) . The bushy tail is 18 ? 20 cm (7 @. @ 1 ? 7 @. @ 9 in) long . This reedbuck is sexually dimorphic , with males 10 % to 20 % larger than females and showing more prominent markings . Of the subspecies , *R. r. cottoni* is the largest , whereas *R. r. redunca* is the smallest .

This sturdily built antelope has a yellow to grayish brown coat . Generally , the bohor reedbuck is yellower than other reedbucks . The large and diffuse sebaceous glands present on the coat make the coat greasy and give it a strong odour . Juveniles are darker than the adults as well as long @-@ haired . While *R. r. bohor* appears yellowish gray , *R. r. wardi* is richly tinted . The undersides are white in color . A few distinct markings can be observed ? such as a dark stripe on the front of each foreleg ; white markings under the tail ; and a pale ring of hair around the eyes and along the lips , lower jaw , and upper throat . However , *R. r. redunca* lacks dark stripes on its forelegs . The males have thicker necks . Its large , oval @-@ shaped ears distinguish it from other antelopes . There is a round bare spot below each ear . Apart from sebaceous glands , bohor reedbuck have a pair of inguinal glands and vestigial foot glands , and four nipples . A bohor reedbuck can survive for at least ten years . The tracks of the bohor reedbuck are slightly smaller than those of the southern reedbuck .

As a prominent sign of sexual dimorphism , only males possess a pair of short , stout horns , that extend backward from the forehead and hook slightly forward . The horns measure about 25 ? 35 cm (9 @. @ 8 ? 13 @. @ 8 in) . However , some Senegalese individuals have longer and wide @-@ spreading horns . In comparison to the other reedbucks , the bohor reedbuck has the shortest and most hooked horns . The longest horns are observed in *R. r. cottoni* , which are hooked less than normal and may curve inwards . In contrast to *R. r. cottoni* , *R. r. bohor* has short and stout horns , with hooks pointing forward . The length of the horns of an individual of a certain region seems to be related to the population density in that region to some extent . While short horns are observed in individuals of eastern Africa , where populations are dispersed , longer and wide @-@ spreading horns are found on animals in the Nile valley , where populations are concentrated .

= = = Ticks and parasites = = =

The bohor reedbuck is host to several parasites . The most notable helminths found in the bohor reedbuck are *Carmyerius papillatus* (in the rumen) , *Stilesia globipunctata* (in the small intestine) , *Trichuris globulosa* (in the caecum) , *Setaria* species (in the abdominal cavity) , *Dictyocaulus* species (in the lungs) and *Taenia* cysts (in the muscles) . Other parasites include *Schistosoma bovis* , *Cooperia rotundispiculum* , *Haemonchus contortus* , species of *Oesophagostomum* , *Amphistoma* and *Stilesia* . The common ticks found on the bohor reedbuck are *Amblyomma* species and *Rhipicephalus evertsi* .

= = Ecology and behaviour = =

Bohor reedbuck are active throughout the day , seeking cover during the daytime and grazing in the night . A large proportion of the whole day is spent on feeding and vigilance . They can easily camouflage in grasses and reeds , and hide themselves rather than running from danger . When threatened , they usually remain motionless or retreat slowly into cover for defense , but if the threat is close , they flee , whistling shrilly to alert the others . It hides from predators rather than forming herds in defense . Many predators , including lions , leopards , spotted hyenas , African wild dogs and Nile crocodiles , prey on the reedbuck .

If shade is available , females remain solitary ; otherwise they , along with their offspring , congregate to form herds of ten animals . Female home ranges span over 15 ? 40 hectares (37 ? 99 acres ; 0 @. @ 058 ? 0 @. @ 154 sq mi) , while the larger territories of males cover 25 ? 60 hectares (62 ? 148 acres ; 0 @. @ 097 ? 0 @. @ 232 sq mi) . These home ranges keep overlapping . As the daughters grow up , they distance themselves from their mothers ' home ranges . Territorial males are much tolerant ; they may even associate with up to 19 bachelor males in the absence of females . As many as five females may be found in a male 's territory . Territorial bulls drive out their

sons when they start developing horns (when they are about a year @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half old) . These young males form groups of two to three individuals on the borders of territories , till they themselves mature in their fourth year . Large aggregations are observed during the dry season , when hundreds of bohor reedbuck assemble near a river .

Two prominent forms of display among these animals is whistling and bounding . Instead of scent @-@ marking its territory , the reedbuck will give a shrill whistle to make the boundaries of its territory be known . As it whistles , it expels air through its nose with such a force that the whole of its body vibrates . These whistles , usually one to three in number , are followed by a few stotting bounds . This behaviour is also used to raise alarm in herds . In this , the reedbuck raises its neck , exposing the white patch on its throat , but keeping the tail down , and leaps in a way similar to the impala 's jumps , landing on its forelegs . This is accompanied by the popping of the inguinal glands in the legs . Fights begin with both opponents holding their horns low , in a combat stance ; followed by the locking of horns and pushing one another . These fights can even lead to deaths .

= = = Diet = = =

A herbivore , the bohor reedbuck prefers grasses and tender reed shoots with high protein and low fiber content . This reedbuck is dependent on water , though green pastures can fulfill its water requirement . A study of the bohor reedbuck 's diet in Rwenzori Mountains National Park (Uganda) revealed that , throughout the year , the most preferred species was *Sporobolus consimilis* . Other grasses the animals fed on included *Hyparrhenia filipendula* , *Heteropogon contortus* and *Themeda triandra* , all of which are species commonly found in heavily grazed grasslands . Bohor reedbuck preferred *Cynodon dactylon* and *Cenchrus ciliaris* in the wet season , and switched to *Sporobolus pyramidalis* and *Panicum repens* in the dry season . Though they rarely feed on dicots , these can include *Capparis* and *Sida* species . On regularly burnt pastures , the bohor reedbuck feeds on *Imperata* species , while in places close by water sources , it eats *Leersia* and newly sprouted *Vossia* species (like *topi* and *puku*) .

Primarily a nocturnal grazer , the bohor reedbuck may also feed at daytime . A study showed that feeding peaked at dawn and late afternoon . In the night , two feeding peaks were observed once again : at dusk and midnight . They traverse a long way from their daytime refuges while grazing . Seasonal differences in the amount of time spent while grazing in a particular area is possibly related to the availability and quality of grasses there . The bohor reedbuck often grazes in association with other grazers such as hartebeest , *topi* , *puku* and *kob* . In Kenyan farmlands , the reedbuck may feed on growing wheat and cereals .

= = = Reproduction = = =

Males become sexually mature at the age of three to four years , while females can conceive at just one year of age , reproducing every nine to fourteen months . Though there is no fixed breeding season , mating peaks in the rainy season . Fights for dominance take place in some particular " assembly fields " , where up to 40 males may assemble in an area of 1 hectare (2 @.@ 5 acres ; 0 @.@ 0039 sq mi) . Some parts of these grounds are the main attractions - marked with dung and urine . The reason behind the attractiveness of these few spots for sexually active males is the oestrogen in the females ' urine .

Courtship begins with the dominant male approaching the female , who then assumes a low @-@ head posture and urinates . Unresponsive females run away on being pursued by a male . A male keen on sniffing the female 's vulva keeps flicking his tongue . As they continue their " mating march " , the male licks the female 's rump and persistently attempts mounting her . On mounting , the males tries to clasp her flanks tightly . If she stands firmly , it is a sign that she is ready to mate . Copulation is marked by a single ejaculation , after which both animals stand motionless or a while , and then resume grazing .

The gestation period is seven and a half months long , after which a single calf is born . The mothers keep their offspring concealed for as long as eight weeks . The mother keeps within a

distance of 20 ? 30 m (66 ? 98 ft) of its calf . Nursing , usually two to four minutes long , involves licking the whole body of the calf and suckling . The infant is suckled usually once in the day and one to two times at night . The female 's previous calf usually resists separation . At the age of two months , the calf begins grazing alongside its mother , and seeks protection from her if alarmed . Though after four months the calf is no more licked , it may still be groomed by its mother . The calves are weaned at eight to nine months of age .

= = Habitat and distribution = =

The bohor reedbuck inhabits moist grasslands and swamplands as well as woodlands . It is found in two kinds of habitat in northern Cameroon : the seasonally flooded grasslands rich in grasses like *Vetiveria nigritana* and *Echinochloa pyramidalis* (in the Sahelo @-@ Sudan region) and Isoberlina woodlands (in the Sudano @-@ Guinean region) . Often found on grasslands susceptible to floods and droughts , the bohor reedbuck can adapt remarkably well to radical seasonal changes and calamities . It is not so widespread as the bushbuck due to its habitat requirements . In some margins of its range , the bohor reedbuck shares its habitat with the mountain reedbuck . The ranges of the bohor reedbuck and southern reedbuck extensively overlap in Tanzania .

Endemic to Africa , the bohor reedbuck is native to Benin , Burkina Faso , Burundi , Cameroon , Central African Republic , Chad , Democratic Republic of Congo , Ethiopia , Gambia , Ghana , Guinea , Guinea @-@ Bissau , Kenya , Mali , Mauritania , Niger , Nigeria , Rwanda , Senegal , Sudan , Tanzania and Togo . The animal is possibly extinct in Ivory Coast and Uganda . Formerly widespread in western , central and eastern Africa , its present range extends from Senegal in the west to Ethiopia in the east . Among the three reedbuck species , bohor reedbuck is the most widespread in Tanzania . Its status in Burundi , Eritrea , Ghana and Togo is uncertain , while it is rare in Niger and Nigeria .

= = Threats and conservation = =

Reckless hunting and loss of habitat as a result of human settlement have led to significant decline in the numbers of the bohor reedbuck , although this antelope tends to survive longer in such over @-@ exploited areas as compared to its relatives . Natural calamities , like drought , are also major threats . While populations have declined in northern Cameroon due to degradation of floodplains through the construction of upstream dams , their habitat has been destroyed in Chad and Tanzania due to expansion of agriculture and settlement . Several deaths occur due to roadkill and drowning as well . During the dry season , bohor reedbuck are hunted with dogs and nets in Uganda . Reedbuck with the largest horns are prized by hunters .

The total populations of the bohor reedbuck are estimated to be above 100 @,@ 000 . Though the populations are decreasing , it is not sufficiently low to meet the Near Threatened criterion . Thus , the IUCN rates the bohor reedbuck as of Least Concern . Around three @-@ fourth of the populations survive in protected areas . Populations of the reedbuck are either declining or uncertain in Boucle du Baoulé National Park (Mali) ; Comoé National Park (Ivory Coast) ; Mole and Digya National Parks (Ghana) . Numbers in the Akagera National Park , where its last @-@ known populations in Rwanda exist , have seen a steep fall .

Though populations have substantially decreased in western Africa , bohor reedbuck still exist in Niokolo @-@ Koba National Park (Senegal) ; Corubal River (Guinea @-@ Bissau) ; Kiang West National Park (Gambia) ; Arly @-@ Singou and Nazinga Game Ranch (Burkina Faso) . Larger numbers occur in eastern and central Africa , mostly in protected areas such as Bouba Ndjida (Cameroon) ; Manovo @-@ Gounda St. Floris National Park (Central African Republic) ; Bale Mountains National Park (Ethiopia) ; Murchison Falls National Park and Pian Upe Wildlife Reserve (Uganda) ; Maasai Mara (Kenya) ; Serengeti National Park , Moyowosi @-@ Kigosi and Selous Game Reserve (Tanzania) .