

Name _____



Deer: Graceful and Gentle Creatures

Deer are beautiful and graceful animals that can be found in forests, fields, and sometimes even in our neighborhoods. They are known for their gentle nature and their big, soulful eyes. Let's learn more about these amazing creatures!

What Do Deer Look Like?

Deer come in many different shapes and sizes, but they usually have slender bodies covered with soft, brown fur. Their fur helps them stay warm in the winter and blend into their surroundings. One of the most recognizable features of a deer is its long legs. These legs help them run fast when they need to escape from danger. At the top of their heads, deer have a pair of antlers, which are like big, branched horns. Only male deer, called bucks, have antlers. Female deer, called does, usually do not have antlers.

Where Do Deer Live?

Deer live in various parts of the United States, and you might see them in your own backyard if you live near the woods or in a rural area. They are also found in forests, meadows, and near rivers. Sometimes, they venture into suburban areas looking for food.

What Do Deer Eat?

Deer are herbivores, which means they eat plants. They enjoy munching on leaves, twigs, grass, and even fruits. In the winter when food is scarce, they might nibble on bark from trees. It's important to remember not to feed deer in your backyard because they can find their own food in nature and feeding them human food can be harmful to their health.

How Do Deer Move?

Deer are excellent jumpers and runners. They can leap over tall fences and run as fast as 30 miles per hour! Their large ears help them hear sounds like footsteps, so they can quickly escape from predators like wolves or coyotes. When they need to hide, they can be very sneaky and blend into the background, making it hard for other animals to spot them.

Family Life

Deer are social animals and often live in groups called herds. The herds are usually led by a female deer, or a doe. Baby deer, known as fawns, are born with white spots on their fur. They stay hidden in tall grass or bushes when they are very young to stay safe from predators. Does are very protective of their fawns and will keep a close eye on them.

Conservation

Deer are important to our environment. They help control the population of plants by eating them, and they also provide food for predators like wolves and cougars. It's essential to protect their habitats and not disturb them so that they can continue to thrive in the wild.

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Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What do deer use their long legs for?
2. What are the branched horns on a deer's head called?
3. What do deer eat?
4. How do deer stay safe from predators?
5. What are baby deer called, and why do they have white spots on their fur?