

Culture & History

The Salish and Pend d'Oreille have many words for whitetail deer: Sx^wllé(sšn) means whitetail buck, Čuʔu(lix^w) means whitetail doe, and Słpaʔí means whitetail fawn. The Kootenai word for whitetail is Čupqa.

The Salish and Pend d'Oreille word for mule deer is Pwé(ščn) and the Kootenai word is Naqyitnik.

Both mule deer and whitetail deer were very important to the tribes. Deer are a common and consistent sources of food and their hides can be used to make a variety of clothing and tools.

Historically, deer were hunted year-round and whitetail deer were favored for their tastier meat. Meat often changes flavor based on what the animal eats and whitetail deer are much pickier than mule deer, who will eat nearly anything available.

Today, both whitetail and mule deer are hunted seasonally through hunting licenses and deer tags. On the reservation, only tribal members are allowed to hunt so that they can continue to utilize their traditional resources.

An Abundant Sight

Whitetail and mule deer are some of the most common animals found on the Bison Range. As they are free-roaming and not bothered by most fences, many of our deer live on and off the range as they please. The Mission Valley hosts a large population of both species and it is very common to see them out in the fields and along roads.

Due to the high population of deer in the valley, human and animal conflicts are common. The most frequent conflict is with vehicles, particularly during dawn and dusk, when deer are the most active.

Deer also cause issues with homeowners and farmers over gardens and livestock feed. Keep deer away from crops, flowers, and livestock feed can be a challenge. Roses and hay are often tastier and easier to digest than the plants found in the wild. Unfortunately, eating garden plants and livestock feed can cause deer to become reliant on people and may even boost an already large population. Like many other wild animals, it's best not to feed deer so they maintain their normal diet.

WHITETAIL & MULE DEER



Sx^wllé(sšn) - Čupqa
Pwé(ščn) - Naqyitnik

If you are interested in learning more about our wildlife, contact us at :

Phone: (406) 644-2211
CSKTBIISONRANGE@GMAIL.COM

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Interesting Facts

Whitetail and mule deer are part of the genus *Odocoileus*, which means 'hollow tooth'. There are three species of deer in this genus, whitetail, mule deer, and blacktail.

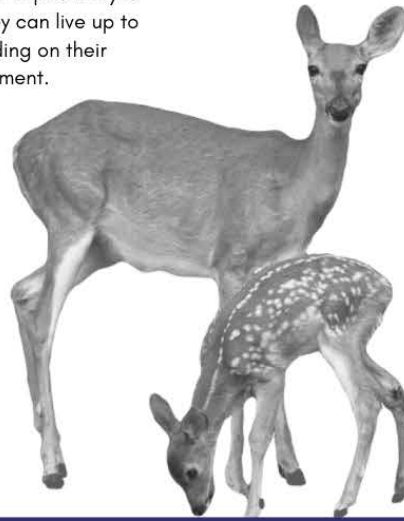
Mule deer are named for their large ears, like mules, while whitetails are named for their white tail, which goes up like a flag when they run from danger.

Both mule deer and whitetail bucks shed their antlers at the beginning of the year, January to February for whitetails and February to March for mule deer.

Both whitetail and mule deer are ruminants. A ruminant is an even-toed ungulate (hoofed) mammal that chews the cud regurgitated from its rumen (first stomach). The ruminants are comprised of cattle, sheep, antelopes, deer, giraffes, and their relatives.

Most deer are most active at dawn and dusk, when there is lower light. Deer have excellent hearing, sight, and smell so this is the best time for them to avoid predators.

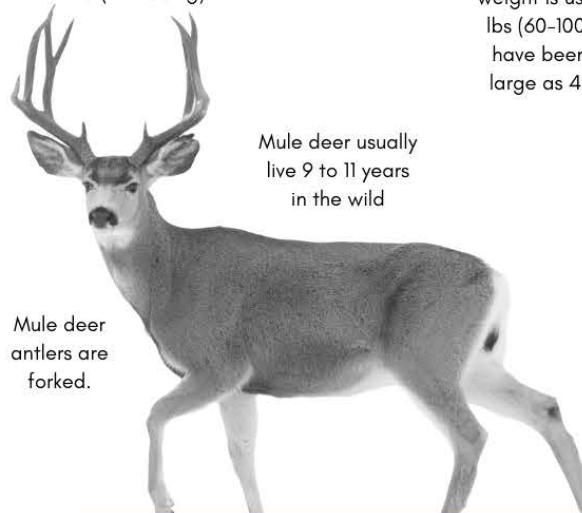
Whitetail deer life expectancy is 2-3 years but they can live up to 10-20 depending on their environment.



Average whitetail deer weight is 90-200 lbs (40-90 kg)

Їu(lix^w) & Słpa?pí - Whitetail Doe & Fawn

Average mule deer buck weight is 120-330 lb (44-150 kg)



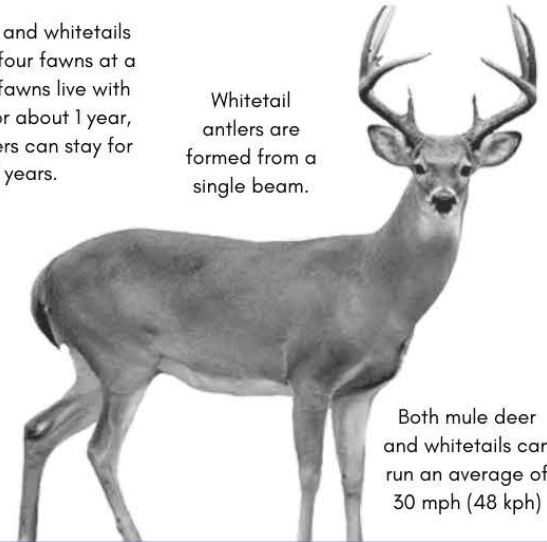
Mule deer usually live 9 to 11 years in the wild

Mule deer antlers are forked.

Їupqa - Mule Deer Buck

Mule deer usually have white faces and a black tip at the end of their tails.

Average whitetail buck weight is usually 130 - 220 lbs (60-100 kg) but some have been recorded as large as 400 lbs (181 kg)



Whitetail antlers are formed from a single beam.

Both mule deer and whitetails can run an average of 30 mph (48 kph)

Sx^wllé(sšn) - Whitetail Buck

Mule deer fawns stay with their mothers for 2-3 months.



Mule deer have longer ears than whitetails.

Average mule deer doe weight is 95-200 lbs (43-90 kg)

Їupqa - Mule Deer Doe

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Whitetail and Mule Deer: A Visitor Guide