



Sika Deer

Cervus nippon

Quick facts

Order Cetartiodactyla

Conservation status

GB N/A - non-native

RE CE E V NT LC DD

England N/A

Scotland N/A

Wales N/A

Global *Least concern*

GB trend *Increasing*

Size Body 138 - 179 cm. 50 - 120 cm at the shoulder. Males larger than females.

Weight Up to 190 kg

Life span 16 - 26 years



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Native to Japan, the sika deer was introduced into England and Scotland in the 1870s. It is now widespread and expanding in Scotland, particularly in the west. It is also present in much of Northern Ireland, but patchier in England and Wales.

Habitat

Prefers coniferous woodlands and heathlands associated with acidic soils, but other habitats are used as populations expand.

Behaviour

Forms large herds where they are locally numerous, but otherwise usually seen singly or in small groups (often segregated by sex). Most activity is at night or around dusk and dawn.

Diet & Feeding

Browsing and grazing herbivore that takes a variety of food plants.

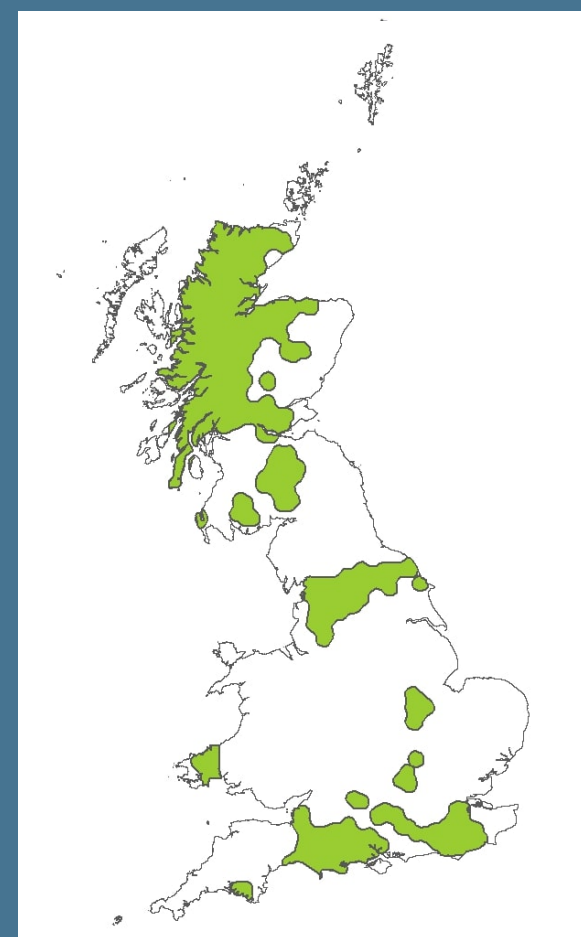
Reproduction

Males and females come together during the rut, which occurs late September - November. A single calf is born in May or June. It can hybridise with the red deer, and although first generation crosses have characteristics of both species, subsequent backcrossing makes many hybrids hard to detect.

Conservation & Threats

Sika can be a serious pest in commercial forestry - scoring tree trunks can let in disease, and they also browse on young trees. The main concern is hybridisation with the native red deer. It is therefore now illegal to transfer sika or red deer (which may, in fact, be hybrids) to Hebridean islands that retain good numbers of pure red deer.

Range



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