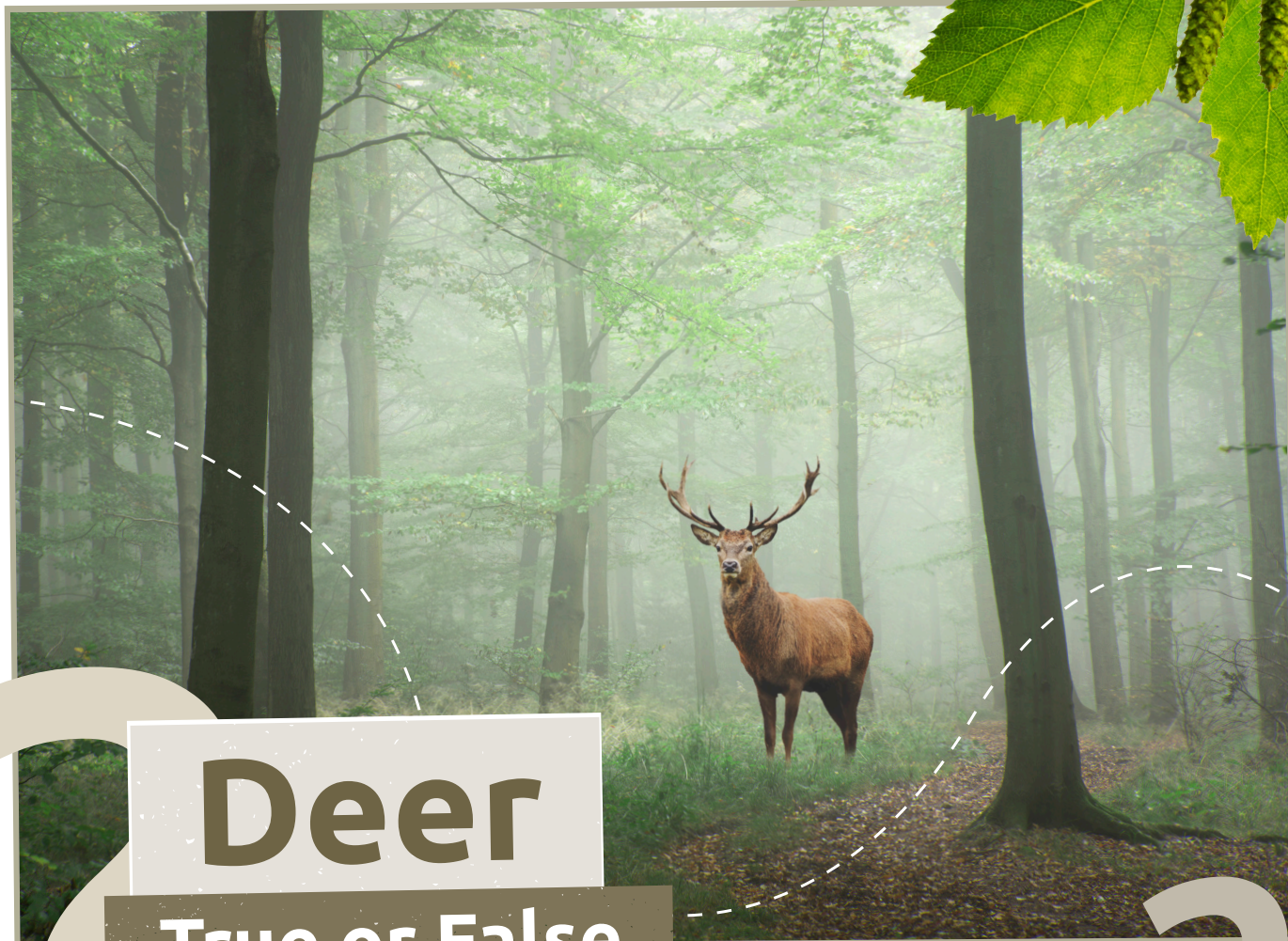




Forestry England



Deer

True or False

There is estimated to be 2 million deer living in the United Kingdom but we don't often get the privilege of seeing them. Take part in our active true or false game to learn a little more about these secretive mammals.

How to play



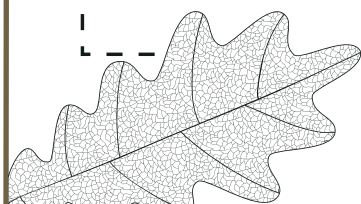
Ask everyone to stand up, this can be in a group or a line. You are going to ask the group one of the following true or false questions. If they think the answer is true then they leap to the left, if they think it is false they leap to the right.

If you have more space or a garden then make it a little more active. Decide two points, one for True and the other for False. Ask the children to run to the chosen points.

What can you discover about deer antlers?

Do some research on deer antlers in Britain and discover why some are called Monarchs.

- Have a go at drawing a set of antlers and label it with branches (tines or points) and pedicle.
- Names are given to deer depending upon the number of points their antlers have. Find out how many points the following stag names have – Royal stag, Imperial stag and Monarch.
- What are the antlers of a fallow deer called?
- How are horns and antlers different?



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True or False

Q: Deer are mammals that roam wild in the countryside, true or false?

A: True

Q: Deer are bright red and blue in colour?

A: False

Q: There are three deer species living in Britain?

A: False. There are 6 deer species, 2 are native (Red and Roe deer)

As a group can you name all 6 deer species found in Britain?

1. Red deer – this is the largest land mammal found in Britain. 2. Roe deer – along with Red deer Roe deer are native to Britain. 3. Fallow deer – this species was introduced by the Normans. 3. Sika deer – this species came from the far East. 4. Muntjac – came from China. 5. Chinese Water deer – originate from China and Korea. 6. The last 3 species arrived during the last 19th and early 20th Century by escaping from private collections.

Q: A male red deer is called as stag?

A: True. They can grow to 122cm tall, from floor to shoulder.

Q: Deer have horns that grow from the top of their heads?

A: False. They look like horns but they are called antlers. Antlers are an extension of the animal's skull and are made of bone.

Q: Each year the deer's antlers will fall off and regrow?

A: True. Their antlers will fall off (drop) after the breeding season. The following year they will grow a bigger set of antlers.

Q: Red deer 'drop' their antlers in the autumn?

A: False. For Red deer this happens in March – April time, but Roe deer drop theirs in November time.

Q: When the antlers grow they are covered in a furry skin called velvet?

A: True. Red deer grow back their antlers in August. When they start growing they are protected by velvet. The velvet contains nerves and blood vessels that feeds nutrients and oxygen to the growing bone. When growth is complete the velvet is rubbed off and the antler is described as clean.

Q: Fraying is a term used to describe when a male deer has been rubbing his antlers on a young tree?

A: True. Deer often rub their antlers to remove the velvet and mark their territory. This can cause problems for a forester who is trying to look after and grow trees. Rubbing their antlers on a young tree often leads to the tree bark being stripped off and the young trees being snapped in two, stopping them from growing. It can become a serious problem if there are a lots of deer in an area where new trees are planted.

Q: A female red deer is called a hind?

A: True

Q: A group of hinds is called a huddle?

A: False. A group of hinds is called a 'harem'. The only time male and females come together is during the breeding season. This is called the rutting season, as male deer will guard and sometimes fight (rut) to defend their territory.

Q: A red female hind will give birth to a single calf?

A: True. Calves are spotted at birth but these disappear after a few months.

Q: Deer can swim?

A: True. Deer are strong and able swimmers. They have been seen crossing rivers and lakes and even the sea to get to islands.

Q: Muntjac are often called the 'barking deer'?

A: True. Many deer make noises described as roars, grunts, bclches and whistles especially in the rutting (breeding) season. Muntjacs often bark repeatedly and are loud for their size. They can also 'scream' if frightened. An eerie noise to hear if you are out late at night.

Become a nature detective

Answer these questions and find out the best way to discover if deer have been present.

Q: A deer will leave hoof prints in soft ground, these are called 'slots'?

A: True. The 'slots' look similar to sheep and goat

Q: Deer droppings look like small cylinder shapes and are often found in a pile?

A: True. Deer droppings are called faunets

Jump to the left if you can answer the following questions:

Q: Can you name two more ways to discover if deer live near you?

A: Answers may include looking for droppings, footprints, droppings, hair/fur, nibbled trees, scratching posts, listening.....

Q: Can you name the best time to try and see deer?

A: Dawn and dusk – this is when deer are most active.

Q: Are deer carnivores or herbivores?

A: Herbivores – they graze on grass, tree shoots, small shrubs, brambles, acorns....