

# Is That a... Vampire Deer? Meet the Siberian Musk Deer

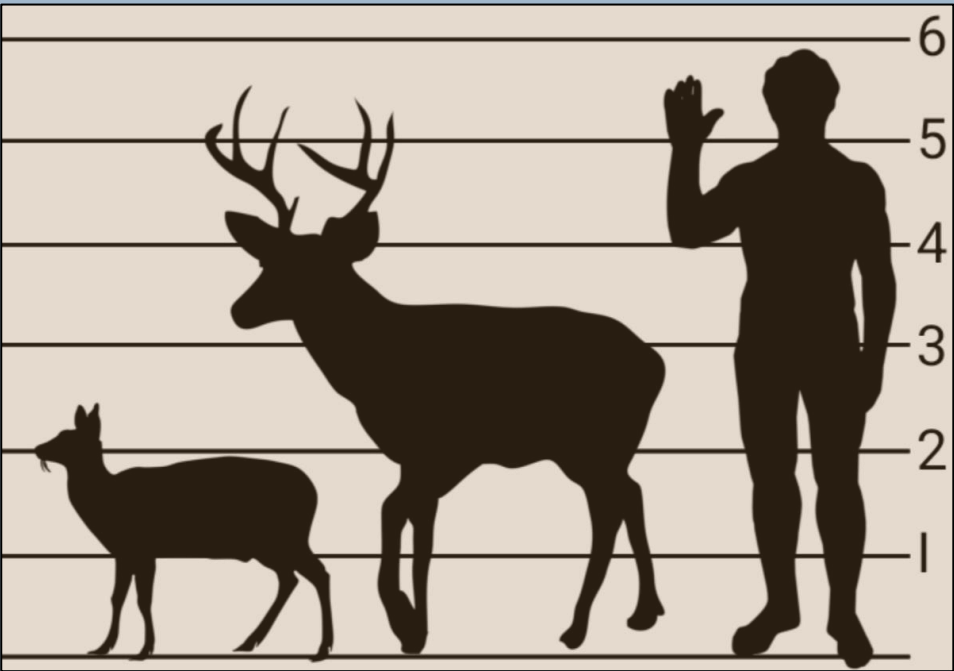
## About the Siberian Musk Deer (*Moschus moschiferus*)

- A member of the family Moschidae, musk deer are not true deer!
- Very small, weighing under 40 pounds and are under 2 feet tall at the shoulders
- Have large ears, a short tail, long and strong hind legs, a small chest, and an arched back
- Males have a musk gland, which they use to mark territory and attract females

Musk deer lack antlers! Instead, males have long upper canine teeth that give them a distinct, vampire-like appearance. These tusks continue to grow for their entire lives, reach up to 10 cm long, and are used to defend themselves from predators and their territory from other males!



## Musk Deer next to Whitetail Deer and Person



## Threats and Conservation Status

Musk deer are often hunted for their musk. It is used in things like traditional medicine and perfume. Their population is declining due to hunting. They are listed as vulnerable on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List of Threatened Species and under Appendix II of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), meaning trade is limited. It is hoped that this limitation will help prevent them from becoming threatened.



**Range:** between Siberia and the Himalayas (dark area on map)

**Habitat:** forests and rocky areas

**Diet:** herbaceous plants during the summertime, but mostly bushy lichens found on trees and rocks during the wintertime

**Predators:** lynxes, wolverines, and yellow-throated martens (a small, weasel-like mammal)



My intended audience for this informational artifact would be the lay audience. I envisioned this as an exhibition label or sign for a setting like a zoo, so anyone could view it if they are interested in learning about Siberian musk deer. Because the audience may know little or nothing about this species or other information mentioned, I made the sign pleasing to look at and easy for the average person to understand. This sign would serve the purpose of quickly teaching the audience a bit about the Siberian musk deer. It informs the viewer about physical appearance, habitat, diet, predators and conservation status. I explained certain points to make them easier for the average person to understand, in order to convey the information effectively. For example, I stated that Siberian musk deer are within the family Moschidae but clarified that this meant they aren't true deer, because the average person probably wouldn't know that true deer are within the family Cervidae. I also wrote out what IUCN and CITES stand for and what Appendix II is, because the average person may not know about this agreement or its meaning.

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