



**CHECKLIST OF  
INDIAN UNGULATES**

**Class : MAMMALIA**

**Order : PERISSODACTYLA and ARTIODACTYLA**

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## INTRODUCTION

Mammalian fauna are found in diverse habitats ranging from the snowy Himalaya of Ladhak to the hot Thar Desert of Rajasthan as well as in the thick rain forests of north-east India. According to Wilson and Reeder (1993), there are 4629 mammalian species under 1135 genera, 136 families and 26 orders in the World whereas India comprises 401 species under 180 genera, 45 families and 13 orders which constitute about 8.6 percent of the global mammalian species (Alfred *et al.*, 2006a). Among the 13 orders in India, the order Perissodactyla (odd-toed ungulates) contain 3 species under 2 families of the 18 species under 3 families occurring worldwide and constituting 16.6 percent of global odd-toed ungulates. The order Artiodactyla (even-toed ungulates) is represented by 31 species under 5 families out of 220 species and 10 families of the World, which is about 14 percent of global even-toed ungulates.

With the exception of the Tapirs, all the existing odd-toed ungulates occur in the old world (Prater, 1980). These hoofed mammals belong to the order Perissodactyla while Oxen, Goats, Sheep, Deer, Pigs and Antelopes belong to the order Artiodactyla or even-toed ungulates. The family Bovidae of the order Artiodactyla is the largest family containing 19 species under 3 subfamilies, which includes all Goats, Sheep, Oxen, Gazelles and Antilopes.

Almost all the species of subfamily Caprinae, 3 species of subfamily Antilopinae, one species of family Cervinae and one species of family Moschidae are distributed in different hilly tract of north-eastern states, J & K, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal in different altitude ranging from 800 m to 6500 m.

They are mainly confined to the temperate forests or the alpine-regions of Himalaya. The Urial, Wild Sheep is restricted to the barren sun-scorched hills of Sind, Buluchistan and Punjab (Prater, 1980).

The Nilgiri tahr, *Hemitragus hylocrius* is the largest and the only endemic wild Goat of India and is found in Nilgiri Hills, Eravikulam-Rajamalai, Eastern slope of Anaimalai Hills, Top Slip and Parambikulum, etc. (Chakraborty, 2000). The population of these mountain Goats is



greatly reduced due to habitat destructions, settlements, plantation, grazing, disease, hunting and poaching for illegal trade. Their flesh, skin, horn, body wool, skull mount, tail, fat, blood etc., are used for commercial purposes. Some of them hybridize with domestic Goats and suffer from contagious disease from domestic animals (Chakraborty, 1994). As a result, they have become threatened.

The subfamily Caprinae are the true Mountain Ungulates. The subfamily Antilopine possess some species like the Tibetan Antelope or Chiru (*Pantholops hodgsonii*) and the Tibetan Gazelle (*Procapra picticaudata*), the subfamily Cervinae which has the Kashmir Stag (*Cervus elaphus*), the family Moschidae having the Forest Musk Deer (*Moschus chrysogaster*) and the Alpine Musk Deer (*Moschus fuscus*), and finally the subfamily Bovinae with the Yak (*Bos grunniens*) may also be treated as Mountain Ungulates.

To have a comprehensive idea on the distribution, status, threats and trade of Indian ungulates (Odd-toed and Even-toed hoofed mammals), this checklist is prepared with illustration of each species. For further details Alfred *et al.* (2002, 2006b) and Wildlife Preservation (2006) can be seen.



## Order PERISSODACTYLA

Blandford (1888-91), Prater (1980) and Walker *et al.* (1968) provided the general account of the Indian species. The genus *Rhinoceros* has been reviewed by Pocock (1945) and further studies on the taxonomy and skull structure of the family Rhinocerotidae were made by Groves (1967a) and Chakraborty (1972). Detailed taxonomic revision of Equidae alongwith distribution of the different species was also done by Groves (1986). Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) and Groves and Mazak (1967), Grubb (in Wilson and Reeder, 1993) provided the list of the Indian species, their synonyms and distribution.

The order Perissodactyla represented in India by two families, two genera and three species.

Family EQUIDAE Gray, 1821

Genus *Equus* Linnaeus, 1758

1758. *Equus* Linnaeus, *Syst. Nat.*, 10th ed., 1 : 73

*Type specis* : *Equus caballus* Linnaeus, 1758

The genus contains two Indian species :

1. *Equus onager*
2. *Equus kiang*.

1. *Equus onager* Boddaert, 1785  
Indian Wild Ass, Kulan



Photo Courtesy : Biswajit Roy Chowdhury



1785. *Equus onager* Boddaert, *Elench. Anim.*, : 160.

*Type locality* : Near Caspian, Kasbin, North-west Iran.

*Regional name* : Hindi : Ghor Khar.

*Distribution* : India : Runn of Kutch (Gujarat).

*Elsewhere* : Russia, Ukraine, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkmenia and Uzbekistan.

*Indian subspecies* : *khur*.

*Synonyms* : *bahram*, *blanfordi*, *dzigguetai*, *hamar*, *hemippus*, *indicus*, *khur*, *kulan*, *syriacus*.

*Conservation Status* : IWPA : Schedule I, Part I, RDB : VU; CITES : Appendix I, as *E. hemionus khur*.

*Trade* : Body parts *viz*; Skin and Meat.

*Threat* : Poaching, disease and competition with livestock.

*Remarks* : Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) treated *onager* as a subspecies of *E. hemionus* Pallas. Groves and Mazak (1967), Groves (1986) and Schlawe (1986) included *onager* in *hemionus*. However, Bennett (1980) considered *onager* a distinct species.

## 2. *Equus kiang* Moorcroft, 1841 Kiang, Tibetan Wild Ass

1841. *Equus kiang* Moorcroft, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces*, 1 : 312.

*Type locality* : Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, India.

*Regional Name* : Hindi : Ghor Khar.



*Distribution* : India : Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim.

*Elsewhere* : China, Nepal and Tibet.

*Indian subspecies* : *kiang*.

*Synonyms* : *equioides*, *holdereri*, *nepalensis*, *polyodon*, *tafeli*.

*Conservation Status* : IWPA : Schedule I, Part I; RDB : VU; CITES



: Appendix II as *E. hemionus kiang*; CAMP : VU (Nationally), DD (Globally).

*Trade* : Body parts *viz*; Skin and Meat.

*Threat* : Poaching, habitat destruction and competition with livestock.

*Remarks* : Ellerman and Morison-Scott (1951) considered *kiang* as a subspecies of *E. hemionus* Pallas. Groves and Mazak (1967), Bennett (1980) separated *kiang* from *hemionus*. However, Schlawe (1986) regarded *kiang* as a subspecies of *hemionus*.

## Family RHINOCEROTIDAE Gray, 1821

### Genus *Rhinoceros* Linnaeus, 1758

1758. *Rhinoceros* Linnaeus, *Syst. Nat.*, 10th ed., 1 : 56.

*Type species* : *Rhinoceros unicornis* Linnaeus, 1758.

The genus contain one Indian species

1. *Rhinoceros unicornis*.

### 3. *Rhinoceros unicornis* Linnaeus, 1758

#### Indian Rhinoceros; Great One-horned Rhinoceros

1758. *Rhinoceros unicornis* Linnaeus, *Syst. Nat.*, 10th ed., 1 : 56.

*Type locality* : Assam Terai, India.

*Regional names* : Hindi : Gainda, Gargadan; Bangla : Gondar.

*Distribution* : India : Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, introduced in Dudhwa National Park.





*Elsewhere* : Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam.

*Indian subspecies* : None.

*Synonyms* : *asiaticus*, *indicus*, *jamrachii*, *stenocephalus*.

*Conservation Status* : IWPA : Schedule I, Part I; RDB : EN; CITES : Appendix I; CAMP : EN (Nationally), DD (Globally).

*Trade* : Body parts *viz*; horn, Skin and blood, urine etc. used as traditional medicine.

*Threat* : Habitat destruction and poaching

*Remarks* : Concise review of the species was done by Laurie *et al.*, (1983).

## Order ARTIODACTYLA

Detailed account of taxonomy and distribution of Indian Artiodactyla are available in Blanford (1888-91), Lydekker (1898), Walker *et al.* (1968) and Prater (1980). Systematic list of the species of Artiodactyles, their distribution, synonyms and taxonomic aspects have been dealt by Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951), Corbet and Hill (1992) and Grubb (in Wilson and Reeder, 1993). Taxonomy of genera *Procapra*, *Moschus*, *Gazella*, *Antilope* and *Cervus* was discussed by Groves (1967b, 1969, 1976, 1981, 1982), while that of *Naemorhedus* by Groves and Grubb (1985).

The order Artiodactyla is represented in India by 31 species, 20 genera and five families, out of which one species is endemic.

Family SUIDAE Gray, 1821

Subfamily SUINAE Gray, 1821

Genus *Sus* Linnaeus, 1758

1758. *Sus* Linnaeus, *Syst Nat.*, 10th ed., 1 : 49.

*Type species* : *Sus scrofa* Linnaeus, 1758.

The genus contains two Indian species :

1. *Sus salvanius*.
2. *Sus scrofa*.