

Indian Hog Deer

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Species

Why in News?

A rare albino hog deer was recently spotted roaming freely inside Assam's famous Kaziranga National Park.

- **Scientific Name** - *Axis porcinus*
- It is a *small, solidly built deer*, named for its hog-like running style.
- **Habitat** - Dense grasslands, floodplains (Indo-Gangetic plains), riverine valleys.
- **Distribution** - It is found across South Asia and Southeast Asia, including northern India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and western Thailand.
- **Name** - Its name comes from its characteristic mode of locomotion, *hog-like running style* — running with its head lowered to duck under obstacles rather than leaping.

Key Features

- **Size** - Males stand about 70 cm at the shoulder and weigh ~50 kg, while females are smaller at ~61 cm and 30 kg.
- **Appearance** - The coat shifts seasonally - thick dark-brown winter coat, reddish-brown in summer; often a dark dorsal stripe with light spots along the back.
- Males grow three-tined antlers (brow tine + forked top), shed yearly.



- **Behaviour** - Hog deer are crepuscular—active in the morning and late afternoon—and may extend nocturnal activity in hotter or threatened zones.
- **Reproduction** - They are seasonally breeding; gestation lasts ~220-230 days, generally yielding one fawn, which weighs ~2.0-2.7 kg at birth.
- **Predators** - Include tigers, leopards, dholes and sometimes the Burmese python.
- **Conservation Status**
 - IUCN - Endanger
 - WPA, 1972 - Schedule I
- **Threats** - Habitat loss, presence of invasive species, poaching & hunting.

Quick Fact

Albino Hog Deer

- **Mutation** - Due to a rare genetic mutation known as *albinism*, the animal entirely lacks melanin pigment.
- **Appearance** -It has a striking, snow-white coat, pale hooves, pinkish skin features, and translucent, light-colored eyes.
- **Rarity** - Albino hog deer are almost never seen in the wild; folklore mentions “white deer,” but clear documentation is rare.



Other rare white wildlife in India

- Albino saltwater crocodiles - Odisha's Bhitarkanika National Park
- Albino Indian bison or Gaur - Western Ghats.

References

1. [First Post | Rare white albino hog deer spotted in Kaziranga](#)
2. [Thai National Park | Indian hog deer](#)