

Sichuan Takin

Scientific Name: *Budorcas taxicolor*

Class: Mammalia

Order: Artiodactyla

Family: Bovidae



Head and body length can range from 39 to 93 inches; tail length from 3 to 5 inches; shoulder height from 27 to 55 inches, and weight from 330 to 880 pounds. The horns can be up to 25 inches in length. The fur is shaggy, and the coloration varies from yellowish-white through straw-brown to blackish-brown. There is a dark stripe along the back. The build is heavy and ox-like, and the front limbs are stout. The lateral hooves (dewclaws) are large, the profile convex, and the muzzle is hairy. The horns, carried by both sexes, are fairly massive and transversely ribbed at the bases. They arise near the midline of the head, turn abruptly outward, then sweep backward and upward.

Range

E. Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, N. Assam, N. Burma, and Central & Southern China

Habitat

Dense thickets near the upper limit of tree growth at around 3,000 to 14,000 feet above sea level.

Gestation

200 to 220 days

Litter

Normally 1

Behavior

The takin prefers dense thickets near the upper limit of tree growth. It makes narrow paths through this thick growth, which is used regularly in passing to and from grazing grounds and salt licks. It moves slowly and deliberately but can leap nimbly from rock to rock on rough slopes. There are regular seasonal migrations between alpine areas in summer and forested valleys in winter. Takin sometimes spend much of the day in dense vegetation and emerge in late afternoon and early morning to feed. On cloudy and foggy days, it may remain active throughout the day. They are reported to be generally herbivores, and primarily browsers. They may push over or break saplings 3 to 4 inches in diameter. They require a substantial amount of minerals and have been known to travel long distances to reach salt licks, where they may congregate in large numbers and remain for several days. They gather in large herds during the summer, but in winter disperse into smaller bands for movement to lower elevations. When alarmed an individual gives a warning cough to alert the others, and they quickly dash for the safety of dense underbrush.

Reproduction

Birth weights range from 11 to 15 pounds. There is normally a single kid, and within 3 days it can accompany its mother anywhere.

Wild Diet

Forbs and deciduous leaves in summer; twigs & evergreen leaves in winter