**Rangifer tarandus**

**System:** Terrestrial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kingdom</th>
<th>Phylum</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Family</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animalia</td>
<td>Chordata</td>
<td>Mammalia</td>
<td>Artiodactyla</td>
<td>Cervidae</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Common name**

peary caribou (English), caribou (French), Norwegian reindeer (English), North American caribou (English), Eurasian reindeer (English), reno (Spanish)

**Synonym**

**Similar species**

**Summary**

Introduced intentionally to the subantarctic islands of Kerguelen and South Georgia, populations of Rangifer tarandus (reindeer) have had a significant impact on native vegetation of the islands due to grazing and trampling.

**Species Description**

*Rangifer tarandus* is a social deer, and can form regional herds of 50,000 to 500,000 animals which band together during spring, although these herds are generally comprised of single-sex subgroups of 10 to 1,000 individuals (Hentonen & Tikhonov, 2008). *R. tarandus* is highly nomadic and may travel 5,000km in a year. Population densities are generally very sparse, about 0.5 animals per square kilometre, however during their migration; this may reach numbers of over 19,000 animals per square kilometre (Hentonen & Tikhonov, 2008).

**Lifecycle Stages**

Usually one or two *Rangifer tarandus* calves are born, which wean at about 6 months and reach maturity 2.5-3.5 years. Individuals can live up to 20 years (Hentonen & Tikhonov, 2008). From birth to one year of age, both sexes double their crown to tail length and achieve 80 - 90% of their final adult size. Also during this period, both sexes increase their weight seven-fold (Leader-Williams & Ricketts, 1982(a)). Conception can occur from around 1.5 years of age.
Habitat Description

*Rangifer tarandus* are adapted to their cold environments by having a very thick coat and by having shirt tails. They can smell lichen and other foodstuffs under snow which is a special adaptation. Their major predators are bears and wolves (Hentonen & Tikhonov, 2008). *R. tarandus*’s primary habitat is Arctic and sub-Arctic tundra, open montane and woodland habitats, and is often on high mountain slopes and in alpine zones of 2,300 – 3,000 meters. *R. tarandus* typically feeds on lichens, mosses herbs, ferns, grasses, and shoots and leaves of deciduous shrubs and trees (especially *Salix* spp. (willow) and *Betula* spp. (birch) (Hentonen & Tikhonov, 2008).

Reproduction

In *Rangifer tarandus* rutting takes place around October. Young are born around May and June, with the gestation period being about 228 days (Hentonen & Tikhonov, 2008). During the reproduction period, males lose twice as much body tissue as females, as more energy is put into the development of antlers than in pregnancy and lactation (Leader-Williams & Ricketts, 1982(a)).

Nutrition

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Principal source:

**Compiler:** Comité français de l’UICN (IUCN French Committee) & IUCN SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG)

**Review:**

**Pubblcation date:** 2010-10-04

**ALIEN RANGE**

[1] ARGENTINA  
[1] CHILE  
[1] FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS)  
[3] FRENCH SOUTHERN TERRITORIES  
[1] SOUTH GEORGIA AND THE SOUTH SANDWICH ISLANDS  
[1] UNITED STATES

Red List assessed species 2: EN = 1; LC = 1;  
*T. abbreviatus* LC  
*S. pribilofensis* EN

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

32 references found for *Rangifer tarandus*

**Management information**

Bell, Cameron M. & Robert A. Dieterich, 2010. Translocation of reindeer from South Georgia to the Falkland Islands, *Rangifer, 30 (1), 2010*  


Cook, S., Poncet, A. P. R., Cooper, D. J., Herbert, D. and Christie. Glacier retreat on South Georgia and implications for the spread of rats. Antarctic Science. Published online by Cambridge University Press 17 Feb 2010 doi:10.1017/S0954102010000064


Information on alien species from British Overseas Territories. Available from: http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3660 [Accessed 10 November 2009]


Summary: This database compiles information on alien species from British Overseas Territories. Available from: http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3660 [Accessed 10 November 2009]
GLOBAL INVASIVE SPECIES DATABASE
FULL ACCOUNT FOR: Rangifer tarandus

ITIS (Integrated Taxonomic Information System), 2008. Online Database Rangifer tarandus (Linnaeus, 1758)
Summary: An online database that provides taxonomic information, common names, synonyms and geographical jurisdiction of a species. In addition links are provided to retrieve biological records and collection information from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Data Portal and bioscience articles from BioOne journals. Available from: http://www.itis.gov/servlet/SingleRpt/SingleRpt?search_topic=TSN&search_value=180701 [Accessed 12 March 2008]


Leader-Williams, N., 1985. Chapter 6b: The Sub-Antarctic Islands -Introduced Mammals, in Key Environments Antarctica (Edi W. N. Bonner And D. W. H. Walton, Published in Collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
Summary: Available from: https://www.kent.ac.uk/dice/publications/KeyEnvs_IMs.pdf [Accessed May 2010]


