



DESERT MULE DEER
MEXICO, Sonora
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PHOTO ENTRY
131 1/8

Buro, Venado mula del desierto (Sp), Maultierhirsch (G), Cerf mulet du desert (F).

DESCRIPTION The desert mule deer is similar to the Rocky Mountain mule deer, although slightly smaller, paler in color and with a smaller rump patch. The typical desert mule deer (*crooki* race) has a comparatively small forehead patch and a dark line running partway down its tail. The southern mule deer (*fuliginatus* race) is dark-colored with a dark line down its back and almost no white on the tail. The peninsula mule deer (*peninsulae* race) is pale with a dark line down its back and more white on its tail than the southern mule deer. In all desert mule deer, the antlers are not as heavy or as high as in Rocky Mountain mule deer. Desert mule deer racks tend to have wide spreads, and many lack brow tines.

BEHAVIOR Has adapted successfully to extremely harsh conditions—great heat and also intense cold, meager forage, scarce water, and lack of vegetative cover.

HABITAT Desert and semi-arid regions.

DISTRIBUTION California: The extreme south, in Riverside, Imperial, Orange and San Diego counties.

Arizona: South of Highway 68 from Davis Dam on Lake Mohave eastward to Kingman on Interstate 40, then south of Interstate 40 between Kingman and the intersection with Hwy 93, then southwest of Hwy 93 southward between Kingman and Wickenburg, then south of latitude 34°N eastward between Wickenburg and Carrizo on Hwy 60, then west of Hwy 60 southward between Carrizo and Globe on Hwy 70, then south of Hwy 70 between Globe and Safford, then south of Hwys 191 and 78 from Safford to the New Mexico border.

New Mexico: South of Highway 78 from the Arizona border eastward to Hwy 180, then southwest of Hwy 180 through Silver City to the intersection with Hwy 152, then south of Hwy 152 to Caballo on Interstate 25, then east of Interstate 25 northward to Bernardo on Hwy 60, then south of Hwy 60 eastward to Fort Sumner on Hwy 84, then south of Hwy 60/84 to the Texas border.

Texas: Most desert mule deer are found in the trans-Pecos region west of the Pecos River, but they also occur in a number of places in the Panhandle region. The game department considers all mule deer in Texas to be desert mule deer, either native populations or from 1949-1968 transplants from the trans-Pecos desert mule deer herd. We accept this in the absence of conflicting opinion.



Mexico: Northern Sonora, northern Chihuahua, and northwestern Coahuila.

TAXONOMIC NOTES Five subspecies listed by Wallmo comprise the SCl desert mule deer category: *crooki* (typical desert mule deer), from southeastern California, southern Arizona and New Mexico, western Texas, northern Sonora and Chihuahua, and northwestern Coahuila; *fuliginatus* (southern mule deer), southwestern California; *sheldoni* (Tiburon Island mule deer); and *cerrosensis* (Cedros Island mule deer). The name *crooki* Mearns, 1897 has priority. The formerly recognized buro deer (*eremicus*) (*buro* is colloquial Mexican for mule deer) is now included within *crooki*.

STATUS The Cedros Island mule deer (*O. h. cerrosensis*) is listed as endangered by the