



SITKA BLACK-TAILED DEER  
USA, Alaska  
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PHOTO ENTRY

Sitka Schwartzwedelhirsch (G), Cerf à queue noire de Sitka (F).

**DESCRIPTION** Slightly smaller than the Columbia black-tailed deer and with shorter legs. Fully mature bucks weigh about 150 pounds (68 kg). The coat is darker than in the Columbia race, and has less red in it. There are two white spots on the throat and neck. The dark forehead patch is smaller, and some populations have a prominent dark line down the nose. The antlers are quite a bit smaller and are usually blonde or a dull red color from the local vegetation. The brow tine is often lacking, and it is not unusual to have the T-3 tine missing—that is, to have a single point instead of the rear fork.

**HABITAT** Densely vegetated coastal regions.

**DISTRIBUTION** Native to the coastal region of southeastern Alaska and northwestern British Columbia, from the Haines-Skagway area south to Bella Bella and Bella Coola; also on the offshore islands, including the Queen Charlotte Islands where it was introduced. In Alaska, has been introduced in the Yakutat area, on islands in Prince William Sound, and on Afognak and Kodiak islands in the Gulf of Alaska, all of which are similar to its native habitat. The introduced populations of the Queen Charlotte Islands and Alaska are considered indigenous for record-keeping purposes.

**REMARKS** Generally easier to hunt than the Columbia blacktail, because in many areas they are numerous and hunters are few. In some units, a hunter may purchase several permits each year.

**TAXONOMIC NOTES** Sitka black-tailed deer do not interbreed with mule deer in the wild because their ranges do not overlap. (G), *Puma* (F). Called **puma** in Latin America and in most of the world outside the United States and Canada. Called *león* locally in Mexico. Sometimes called **panther**, **American lion** or **catamount** in parts of the U.S. Concolor means "of one color," in reference to its plain coloration.

**DESCRIPTION** (*male*) Adult North American cougars are 6-8 feet (1.8-2.4m) in length, including 28-36 inches (71-91 cm) of tail. Shoulder height 26-30 inches (66-76 cm). Weight 100-150 pounds (45-68 kg), occasionally much more. Females are about 40 percent smaller than males. Chromosome count is 38. (North American cougars are somewhat larger and darker than those in South America.)

The cougar is the second-largest cat in the Western Hemisphere. It is roughly the same length and height as the North American jaguar, but slimmer and more lightly built, with long legs, a comparatively long neck and a head that is remarkably small for such a large cat. The coat is thick and soft. The tail is long and cylindrical, and covered with thick fur that becomes thicker at the dark tip. There are two color phases, which may vary seasonally. One ranges from buff to reddish-brown, the other is a dull shade of gray. The flanks are paler than the back, merging into white underparts. An occasional melanistic, or black, cougar is seen, mainly in Florida.

**BEHAVIOR** Solitary, seeking company only during the brief courtship period. Males are territorial, actively maintaining and marking their home ranges, which are typically 25-35 square miles (40-56 square km). There is no fixed breeding season, but most births take place in late winter or early spring. Females usually give birth to 3-4 kittens (range is 1-6) every other year. The kittens are spotted until about six months of age. They remain with the mother for 1-1/2 to 2 years, and are sexually mature at 2-1/2 to 3 years. Life expectancy 12 years, although captives have lived more than 19 years.