



DALL SHEEP
CANADA, Mackenzie Mtns.
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BRONZE AWARD
147

Ovis dalli dalli

Carnero de Dall (Sp), *Dallschaf*, *Alaska Schneeschaf* (G), *Mouflon du Dall* (F). Named in 1884 for American zoologist William H. Dall. Also called **white sheep**.

DESCRIPTION (*male*) Shoulder height about 38 inches (97 cm). Weight about 180 pounds (82 kg). Females are considerably smaller. Dall sheep are somewhat smaller and slimmer than Stone sheep.

The Dall sheep is pure white, with amber hoofs and horns. The horns are slimmer than in other North American sheep, more triangular in cross section and relatively longer. Horn conformation varies with the region, some ranges featuring sheep with tight curls, others with more flare; however, the typical mature Dall ram has horns that flare outward at the tips after making a full curl. Females have short, slender horns.

HABITAT Alpine country, including glacier edges, below permanent snow line. Essential elements are steep, rugged cliffs and rock outcroppings for escape from predators, and nearby meadows for feeding.

DISTRIBUTION Most of Alaska's mountain ranges; the extreme northwestern corner of British Columbia; the northern and western Yukon Territory; and the Mackenzie Mountains in the Northwest Territories.

REMARKS The elegant Dall ram is currently the least difficult and least expensive North American sheep to hunt, even though 27 percent of Alaska's sheep population is now totally protected in national parks and monuments. Dall sheep numbers are high and are stable throughout their range. Being white, they are easy to spot (except on snow), which is a distinct advantage when hunting them as compared with other sheep. Most hunts in Alaska are conducted on foot from fly-in camps, as there are only a few horse outfits in the state. All



hunts in the Yukon and northwestern British Columbia are horse hunts, often for several species. The Northwest Territories offers horse hunts, and also riverboat hunts and strenuous backpack hunts. On horse hunts, the horses are used only on the approach, with the actual stalk made on foot.

TAXONOMIC NOTES Includes *kenaiensis* (Kenai sheep) of Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, which Cowan regarded as a valid subspecies, while others disagree. It is smaller than other Dall sheep but otherwise identical.

The white Dall sheep and the larger gray-black Stone sheep intergrade in northwestern British Columbia and the central Yukon, with a great many color variations resulting. As it would be impossible to draw a line where Dall sheep end and Stone sheep begin, our rule for record-keeping purposes is that a Dall sheep may have no dark hairs whatever, except on the tail. Any sheep that is not pure white (other than the tail) will be treated as a Stone sheep. This follows long-established hunting tradition.