



Mountain Reedbuck

Mountain Reedbuck (*Redunca fulvorufula*)

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Redunca fulvorufula (Afzelius, 1815)



Photo: Sam Bash

Afrikaans
German

Rooiribbok
Bergriedbock

French

Redunca de montagne

The name of this antelope has caused huge confusion in the past! The English and Afrikaans names became muddled resulting in two different species being given the same common name namely the grey rhebok *Pelea capreolus* (Afr. vaalribbok) and the southern reedbuck, *Redunca arundinum* (Afr. rietbok). In addition, the southern mountain reedbuck has also been called “rooibok”, “rooi-rhebok”, “roy-reabuck” and “reebock”. It is the antelope that best survived both the colonist hunting onslaught of the 18-19th century and the more recent impact of livestock farming. Its survival is due to its ability to thrive in broken, marginal habitats.

Description

The upper parts of the body of mountain reedbuck are mainly yellow-grey, the underside white and the shoulders and neck a reddish tan. The hair is slightly fluffy around the neck, especially on the throat area. The ears are long and narrow with round tips, differing from those of the grey rhebok that are spiked. The tail is short, wide and fluffy with a white underside.

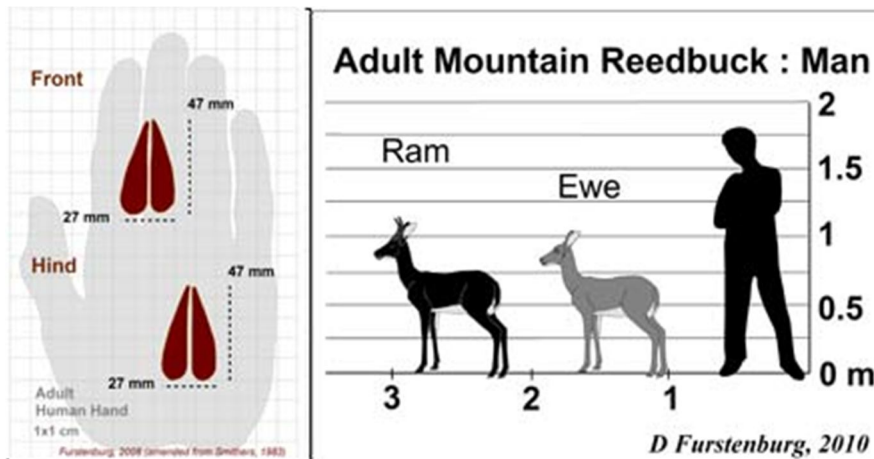
Both the mountain reedbuck and the southern or common reedbuck have a 20 mm dark brown spot below the ear which covers a scent gland. Both are absent in the grey rhebok. The bohor and southern reedbuck have a prominent white patch on the throat which is inconspicuous in the mountain reedbuck and absent in the grey rhebok. In contrast to the mountain reedbuck, the common reedbuck has a dark brown blaze directly above the nostril and a dark brown tint down the front of the forelegs.

Adult rams are slightly larger having an average shoulder height of 76 cm against the ewes of 70 cm. On average, adult rams are 2 kg heavier than ewes, the body mass of rams being 24-36 kg and ewes, 18-34 kg.

Trophy

Only the ram has well developed horns. These measure 13-18 cm and are heavily grooved for two thirds of their length. They have sharp tips and the anterior halves bend forward by 60-80°. When viewed from the front the horns are slightly V-shaped. The horns of the common reedbuck are more than double in length and bend less, while those of the grey rhebok are straight and parallel.

Comparison to Man



Habitat requirement

The basic parameters of a suitable habitat are an uneven topography of hills, ridges and mountains with plentiful stones and rocks and a lush cover of medium to tall grass. A short grass terrain, other than the new flush on recently burned veld, is usually avoided. New growth on burnt veld is highly favoured and can temporarily attract mountain reedbuck from neighbouring home ranges. They enjoy grazing in the ecotones between the foot slopes of mountains and their adjacent plains to a maximum distance of 1 km from the slope. Mountain plateaus are frequently grazed by mountain reedbuck but they return to slopes for cover and refuge.

Favoured vegetation varies from open savannah with a lush mixed-grass herbaceous layer to the pure grassland of sourveld. Sweetveld is seldom inhabited as it is usually associated with a dry or semi-arid climate. Closed woodland, thickets, and forests are not suitable. The annual rainfall must be within a range of 400-900 mm and surface water for daily drinking should be available. Mountain reedbuck rarely move further than 2 km from a drinking source. They occur at altitudes ranging from 100-1 600 m.