

# REINDEER

*Rangifer tarandus*



## **STATUS :**

Due to over-hunting, introduction of the domesticated reindeer, and climatic change, the areas in which wild reindeer live, have become much smaller than in former times. The numbers have also decreased seriously.

## **DESCRIPTION :**

Reindeer belong to the only genus of the deer family in which both sexes are antlered. Although there is great diversity in the shape of the antlers, they are usually long swooping beams with forward-projecting brow tines. The antlers of the female are simpler and generally smaller than those of the male.

The genus *Rangifer* contains only this single species *tarandus* which embraces the reindeer of Eurasia and the caribou of North America; most recent authorities recognise nine sub-species in all. It is a medium-sized member of the deer family, showing a relatively long body, long neck and short legs as compared with other species.

Although reindeer present a great amount of racial and individual variation, their colouration is predominantly brownish or greyish with white or light under parts, inner legs and buttocks, the winter coat being somewhat lighter. The muzzle is entirely hairy, the ears and tail are short, and the throat is maned. The coat is remarkable for its density and compactness, and is unspotted at all ages; there is a whitish area in the region of the tail, which includes its sides, but not its upper surface. The main hoofs are short and rounded, the lateral ones very large. The broad, flat and deeply cleft hoofs help the reindeer to walk on soft ground and snow; as they walk, a clicking noise is produced by a tendon slipping over a bone in the foot.

Wild or domesticated, the reindeer has had a long association with man, and is almost certainly the first hoofed animal to have been domesticated. It was, in fact, the “Reindeer Age” that marked the dawn of human history; for in that period, about 25,000-30,000 years ago, the artists of the day, the “Reindeer Men” of the late Stone Age, painted their animal pictures, which included the reindeer, on the walls of their caves. Whether those men of the late Stone Age ever domesticated any of the animals they drew, and in particular the reindeer, is not known, but there is a reference to domesticated reindeer in a Chinese source dated about A.D. 499. In domesticated stock, the colour varies more considerably; the colour ranging from a dark, greyish brown to a completely white animal. Old bulls have a whitish neck, and by winter should have developed a long white mane. The moult of the adult animal starts in March and continues throughout the summer.

The size of the reindeer varies widely, depending on geographic location. The largest reindeer are found in the eastern part of Siberia. The reindeer of Spitsbergen are much smaller. However, generally speaking, the reindeer of Eurasia are slightly smaller than the caribou of North America.

## **HABITAT :**

Reindeer are the northernmost species of deer, being found throughout the tundra (frozen arctic plain, with lichens, mosses and dwarfed vegetation) and taiga (marshy pine forest) zones of the Northern Hemisphere.

In the summer, the tundra reindeer remain near the coast of the Arctic ocean; in winter, they migrate, sometimes over long distances, to the edge of the tundra and forest country. Reindeer are also found living in fjells in Norway where they only migrate over small distances, descending to lower altitudes, especially in the spring. The taiga reindeer inhabit sparsely wooded areas with many streams and lakes; here they live in small herds and do not migrate over long distances.

## **BEHAVIOUR :**

Reindeer and caribou are highly gregarious, although during certain periods they are sexually segregated. In summer, the mature males are solitary, whereas the females and young form herds commonly of 20 or 30 but occasionally more; the mature males join the herds during the period of rut which occurs in September and October. The males shed their antlers soon after the rut and do not start to grow them again until the following April. The females, on the other hand, retain theirs throughout the winter and only shed them after the young have been born.

Formerly, they assembled in herds of hundreds or thousands of individuals for their full migration from treeless tracts to timber areas.

Reindeer are spirited animals, exhibiting both shyness and curiosity; when alarmed, the adults snort and the fawns grunt. Whereas the Lapps are said to “herd” their reindeer, herding in this context does not mean driving the animals in a direction in which the deer do not want to go, for normally the reindeer prefer to travel into the wind. The Lapps follow their herds from their summer feeding grounds to their winter grounds and vice versa; their aim is, as far as possible, to maintain the animals in a “semi-wild” state, the herdsman ensuring that the deer are on the right pasture at the right times of

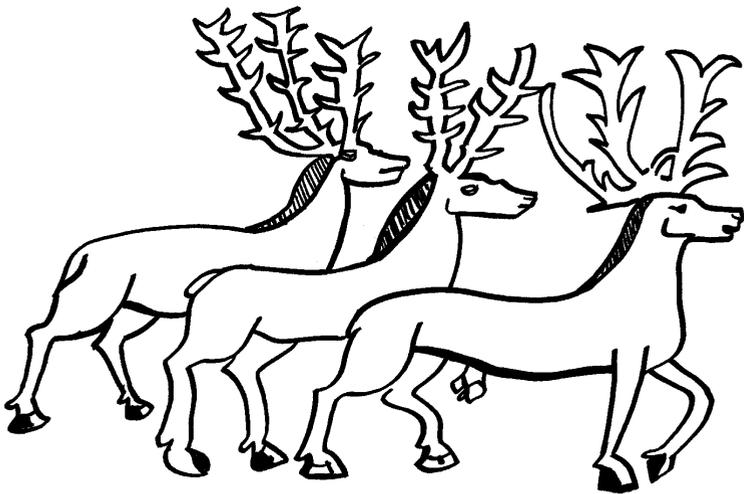
the year, as well as seeing that the females are undisturbed during calving. Although, as previously stated, the reindeer of northern Europe is the same species as the caribou of North America, experiments in herding caribou in bulk have not been successful. Caribou are said to be difficult to catch but easily handled once caught. Domesticated reindeer are normally very gentle except during rutting when bulls can become dangerous.

Reindeer do not necessarily migrate between two distinct areas, but rather wander from place to place. On these migrations, they swim rivers, lakes and streams, and have been recorded to travel at up to 37 miles per hour over a daily distance of about 96 miles.

The routes followed by the caribou seem to be much the same from year to year; the herds use trails that are quite visible on the ground and from the air. One field worker observed that when certain streams were crossed, mass drownings could occur which might result in the death of as many as 500 animals.

## DIET:

Reindeer moss *Cladonia rangiferina*, a lichen, forms the main diet of the



*12TH CENTURY REINDEER IMPRESSIONS*

reindeer during the winter months. In its original form before digestion by the deer, it would be indigestible to man; however, after digestion, if the animal is slaughtered, the contents of the stomach are eaten with relish by some of the northern tribes !

In the summer, the food of the reindeer is composed of herbs, grasses, cotton, grass, leaves and twigs of bushes, bulbs and shoots of shrubs and lichens. When they are near to the coast, they are known to consume a considerable quantity of mushrooms during July and August. In the winter, especially before the snow is deep, the lichen *Cetraria* is consumed along with *Cladonia*. In a captive environment, where neither grazing nor browsing are possible, reindeer have thrived well on alfalfa hay, with a herbivorous pellet supplement, some browse items and occasional vegetables.

It is well known that many herbivorous mammals, especially hoofed animals, have a special taste for salt and other mineral substances. Caribou and Red Deer often eat their own horns after shedding, although it has recently been shown that if calcium and other minerals are present in the soil then no cast antlers will be eaten. When a herd is feeding, there is a continuous low “grunting” going on among the cows, calves and possibly young bulls.

## **BREEDING:**

As in the red deer, the strongest bulls will hold a herd against intruders, initially, before eventually giving way to other males. During the rutting period, the males form a harem, and at this time of the year, they utter grunting sounds. In the autumn, caribou bulls are known to fight savagely for a harem of 5-40 cows.

Some elaborate types of prenuptial play have been described in various groups of mammals. The male Baren ground caribou in rut is said to adopt a characteristic stiff-legged gait, lay back his antlers, raise his muzzle, curl up his nose and sniff at the female.

After a gestation period of 190-240 days, the calves, normally one but occasionally twins, are born from about the last days of April until the middle of June. Like the moose or European elk calf, the reindeer calf has no spots, being a uniform brown colour, tending to darken along the back. At birth, the calf weighs 4-8 kg; it is able to walk in about 2 hours, nurses for about



*A TYPICAL DOMESTICATED REINDEER CALF*

5 months and then often joins the rest of the herd in the fall migration. Sometimes, it will remain with its mother for longer than the first year, for 2 or even 3 years. The young attain sexual maturity in the autumn of their second year.

In northern Europe, reindeer are often kept in a domesticated state. Males older than 4 years are usually castrated, because older and therefore stronger animals might cause too much disturbance in the herd when rutting. Domesticated reindeer are appreciably smaller than wild reindeer.

An attempt to cross reindeer with red deer using artificial insemination of two female reindeer with red deer semen was unsuccessful. However, the European reindeer has hybridised in zoological parks with the woodland caribou sub-species on a number of occasions; the result generally is a larger, heavier and more self-reliant animal. Due to the difficulty of herding wild caribou, a great deal of work has been done in trying out reindeer/caribou and caribou/ reindeer cross-breeding, so that reindeer farming can be extended and the commercial and economical potential of the deer fully realised.

It has been established that, in its native country, the reindeer has a high reproduction rate and under the best conditions a domestic herd in which there is no slaughtering could treble itself in 3 years. A reindeer breeder can expect about 90% of the females in the herd from 2 to 10 years of age to calve every year, whilst older females will calve less frequently.

The similarity of reindeer milk to that of seals and whales is linked with the

growth of the young in cold climates. The composition of the milk is 65% water, 11% protein, 20% fat, 2.5% sugar and 1.5% ash. In late summer and autumn, reindeer milk is produced in small amounts of 0.2-0.3 Litres per day.

The butter fat content of reindeer milk varies according to the month of lactation, and analysis has shown that during the fifth month the fat content averages about 20.8% with a range of 18.75-22.95%. Small as the quantity is, it has been observed that reindeer milk is about four times as rich in butter fat as ordinary cows' milk. It is used for making into cheese, butter and yoghurt.

The life-span of the reindeer is about 15 years, although the maximum age reached by domesticated reindeer has been recorded as 25 to 28 years.

## **POPULATION:**

Although in Finland the wild reindeer was exterminated in the nineteenth century, there has always been movement across the former U.S.S.R. border. Small populations are thought to exist in Eastern Finland. In the North, herds of domestic reindeer occur.

The population of reindeer in Sweden and Spitsbergen have not been estimated. Norway has reindeer in all mountainous areas; a recent estimate puts the wild reindeer (restricted to south Norway) at around 42,000 animals, while the domesticated reindeer of the north numbered some 200,000. In the former USSR, on the Kola peninsula, reindeer were nearly exterminated in 1930, with only about 100 individuals surviving. Due to conservation measures taken in 1968, their number had increased by 1970 to 20,000. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were about 20,000 reindeer on Novaya Zemlya, but as a result of over-hunting there are only small populations at present. The largest number of reindeer in the world live in the former USSR, where the numbers in 1980 were estimated to be over 800,000 wild and in excess of 2.5 million domestic reindeer.

In Iceland, between 1771 and 1787, domesticated reindeer from Norway were introduced. The animals went wild, and initially the number increased rapidly. In time, however, the population stabilised at a level of about 3000 individuals, probably due to competition for food from sheep and horses.

Between 1952 and 1954, 29 Swedish mountain reindeer were imported to Scotland; more reindeer followed, some of the forest type, and more recently a few were imported from southern Norway. Eighteen years after the first introduction, the herd had increased to about 100 with surplus sold to zoos and private collections. In January 1990, an experimental herd was intro-

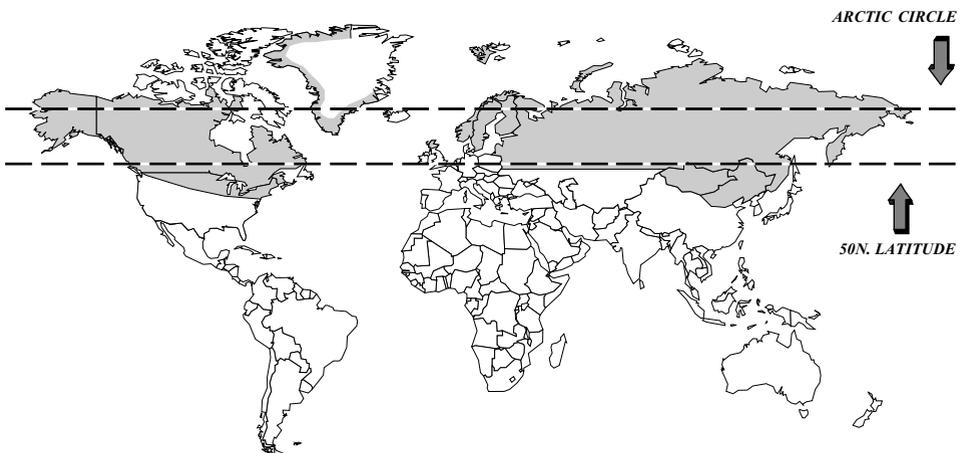
duced to a new site in the Scottish Highlands with the view to establishing a second herd outside the Cairngorms where there is an abnormal mortality rate as a result of dog-worrying and eating litter, particularly tins which people carelessly discard onto the hill.

There have been attempts to introduce reindeer into Germany, Austria and the Orkneys but they were unable to establish themselves and died out soon afterwards.

Outside Europe, the total number of reindeer on Greenland was estimated in 1983 at 15,000; these have originated from some domesticated reindeer which were introduced in 1952. In 1974, the northern half of Banks Island, Canada, was estimated to have a population of 5300 to 8000. In the same year, on the western Queen Elizabeth Islands, there were some 4000 individuals. In the southern hemisphere, reindeer occur in South Georgia in the sub-antarctic, where they were introduced in 1908; in 1928 there were 400-500 individuals.

## **DISTRIBUTION :**

The former world distribution of the reindeer covered Spitsbergen, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Scotland, the entire European and Asia area of the former USSR north of 50N latitude, Mongolia, north-eastern China, North America as far south as Idaho, north Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan and Maine, along the entire southern, western and northern coasts of Greenland. In Spitsbergen, the Svalbard reindeer was nearly exterminated early in the twentieth century by heavy hunting. In Finland, it was exterminated in the nineteenth century (but see present numbers under Population) .



***FORMER WORLD DISTRIBUTION OF REINDEER***

## CONSERVATION :

Reindeer (or caribou) meat represents the staple diet of many northern peoples of Europe and North. It is eaten fresh, smoked or dried, and will keep well for long periods. Although there is comparatively little demand for this or any type of venison in Great Britain, it is much appreciated in many countries in Europe and elsewhere; consequently the meat represents a major commercial proposition.

There has always been a demand for reindeer hides in many parts of the world; they are used to stuff upholstery and also as a component in fine woollen material. Reindeer sinew thread is especially good for sewing canoes or repairing boots because it swells, thus making watertight seams, and it will neither rot nor tear the leather. Skin from the head cape is said to produce a non-skid leather which is useful for the soles of shoes intended for walking on ice. Even the tails have been used in the making of shaving brushes. The antlers have been put to many uses, ranging from household utensils to aphrodisiacs.

The practical value and economic importance of the reindeer have caused it to suffer greatly; its numbers have decreased seriously from over-hunting, and the area in which wild reindeer occur has become much smaller than it was in former times. Other reasons for decline are the introduction of the domesticated reindeer, the general development of the North, and various climatic changes.

Apart from man, the chief predator of the reindeer is the wolf, which in the northern part of its range preys extensively on the species. Reindeer calves are sometimes also attacked by lynx, gluttons (wolverines), eagles or ravens.

In Spitsbergen, reindeer have been protected since 1925 and in Norway since 1902 (a quota system is now practised). In the former USSR, they have been protected since 1957, although local residents are allowed to hunt them. In Canada, the laws differ in the various provinces. In Alaska, the species is only protected in the Mount McKinley National Park. There have been hunting laws in Greenland since 1927.

The following protective measures were outlined in 1976 : “Since the number of pure-strain wild reindeer in Europe is very low (they probably occur only in the eastern part of Finland, in the USSR and on Spitsbergen), a reserve with undisturbed virgin forests should be created on both sides of the USSR/Finland border. Protection for the species in the USSR should be continued, perhaps not only by hunting laws but also by the establishment of reserves. Wherever wild reindeer still occur, interbreeding with domesticated animals should be avoided.”

# THE REINDEER YEAR

## MAY

A good place to start the year since this is the calving season. Reindeer calves are very precocious, running with their mothers as soon as they are born. Calving takes place during long migration north in Scandinavia so it is important that the calves can keep up with the herd. Many of the cows have lost their antlers by now and in some cases they have even started to grow their new antlers. The bulls and oxen (castrated bulls) will have been growing their antlers for a couple of months by now.

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## JUNE

During June, the reindeer lose their winter coats. The thick winter coat comes away quickly to leave behind a short, dark, sleek summer coat. The reindeer look particularly elegant in full summer coat and velvet antlers. The reindeers' movements at this time of year and right through the summer will depend on the heat and flies. Both will drive reindeer higher onto the hill and often on to the semi-permanent snow fields found high in the Cairngorms. When lichens are moist due to recent rainfall, the reindeer will always tend to feed on them. However, their diet will also consist of grasses, sedges, heather and bilberry. By the end of June, most of the calves will have started to grow their first set of antlers.

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## JULY

July and August tend to bring the highest temperatures. With many animals the summer is regarded as a time to gain weight in preparation for the winter months. However, for the reindeer, the very hot summer days can often lead to loss of condition due to harassment from biting insects and escaping from the heat by lying on snow fields.

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## AUGUST

By the middle of August, the bulls' antlers are fully grown. The blood supply to the antlers becomes cut off at the base and the velvet dries, splits and is shed from the bone beneath. The cows' and calves' antlers undergo the same process of shedding velvet about one month later.

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## SEPTEMBER

During September, the bulls fight to gain dominance, dominant bulls holding harems of cows in the rutting season. Boletus mushrooms growing out of the dry ridges are greatly sought after by the reindeer. The feeding habits of the reindeer become very "scatty" as they dash around looking for these mushrooms. This behaviour makes life even more difficult for the breeding bull who, as well as chasing other bulls away, has to constantly gather together the wandering cows.

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## **OCTOBER**

Early October sees the rut in full swing. The reindeer are looking magnificent. The lighter winter coat coming through on their necks and flanks provide sharp contrast to the darker summer coat.

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## **NOVEMBER**

The hardier reindeer are well-equipped to withstand the rigours of winter out on the open hill. Their thick coats provide them with all the insulation they require and with large hoofs they are able to dig down through the snow to find their food.

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## **DECEMBER**

Around the beginning of December, the oldest bulls cast their antlers. The younger the bull, the later in the winter they cast their antlers. The cows and calves, however, keep their antlers and use them when competing for food and are dominant over the bulls. Christmas, as you can imagine, is a busy time for the Cairngorm reindeer. The oxen who keep their antlers through the majority of the winter are trained and harnessed up to Santa's sleigh. The art of flying, however, is strictly confined to Christmas Eve and Santa is the only one who has the magic to make reindeer fly.

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## **JANUARY & FEBRUARY**

When the snow is lying, the reindeer dig down to reach the lichens below. Their large hoofs enable them to dig through up to 3 feet of snow. Their large feet also act as good snow shoes, preventing them from sinking too deep into the snow while walking.

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## **MARCH**

From the beginning of March, the bulls begin to grow their new antlers. The newly-growing antlers are very soft and sensitive with a profuse blood supply and they can be easily damaged. Many of the cows and calves still have their old antlers and remain extremely dominant.

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## **APRIL**

Throughout April, the bulls' antlers lengthen by the day and often split off from the main group to avoid conflict with the aggressive cows. The two-year-old bulls tend to split off from the cow-calf (now nearly a year old) group, joining the all-male or "bachelor" group.

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# Reindeer in Scotland

**by MIKEL UTSI, F.R.A.I.**

*Mikel Utsi and his wife Dr. Lundgren were the co-founders of the Reindeer Company and introduced the reindeer into the Cairngorms back in 1952. Mr. Utsi devoted his latter years to the practical day to day management of the project, and it was his own zeal and devotion to reindeer that really made the project a success. Dr. Lundgren supported him throughout and continued his efforts after 1979 when he died until her death in 1988.*

Looking across Rothiemurchus Forest to the Cairngorms from the railway bridge at Aviemore on a cold morning in April 1947, I was instantly reminded of reindeer pastures in Lapland. Travel in the Highlands showed that many species of ground, rock and tree lichens, which are elsewhere the chief food of reindeer, were plentiful and of little use to other animals. Red deer and domestic livestock were grazing on grass and plants less important to reindeer. Later, I heard that, according to the Orkneyinga saga, red deer and reindeer were hunted together in Caithness by the Earls of Orkney about eight centuries ago. I also learned that small groups of reindeer had been introduced by landowners into northern parts of Britain in the last two centuries, but had soon died.

In 1952, I brought some of my Swedish mountain reindeer to Scotland as an experiment, to show that they could live and breed in these surroundings. Official difficulties which had caused delay were overcome mainly through the interest shown by the Press and the influence of the Reindeer Council of the United Kingdom, an advisory and research body which my wife Ethel Lindgren and I founded in 1949. The Reindeer Company Limited was formed to finance the project and was registered in Edinburgh. The main office of both bodies is in Cambridge. <sup>[note 2]</sup>

The first consignment was released in June, after quarantine, on 300 acres near Aviemore, kindly let by the late Lt-Col. J. P. Grant, M.B.E., of Rothiemurchus. The Company had erected two miles of additional six-foot fencing to ensure the isolation which the authorities required.

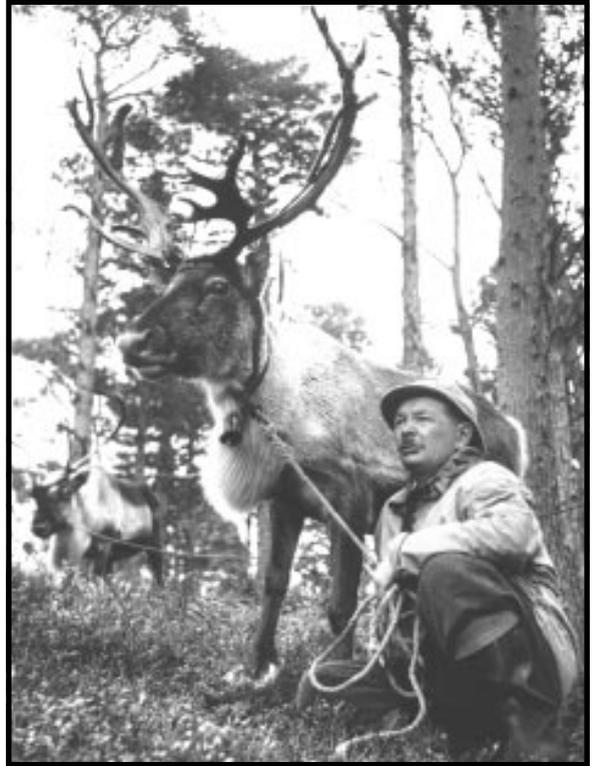
More reindeer followed, some of the forest type, and in 1961 I brought eight from southern Norway. "Kivi", a fine young bull from Whipsnade Park, introduced in 1972, was the off-spring of a Russian reindeer. The present herd consists entirely of animals born in Scotland. <sup>[note 3]</sup>

From 1953, the Forestry Commission allowed the herd to graze on a 70 acre plantation, enabling the Company to demonstrate that there is no noticeable damage to conifers by reindeer. Further pasture was granted in 1954 by the Commission's North Conservancy throughout 5900 acres of higher ground in the Glenmore Forest Park, south of Loch Morlich, stretching up to the summits of Cairn Gorm and Cairn Lochain. By then, the animals were permitted to graze freely like hill sheep, although there are some fenced enclosures. The Department of Agriculture for Scotland recognised, at the end of 1956, that the project had grown beyond the experimental stage: reindeer breeding could take its place among local forms of livestock rearing.

In 1971, the northern Cairngorm slopes were acquired by Highlands & Islands Development Board, which confirmed the Reindeer Company's lease, extending it to 1985. <sup>[note 4]</sup>

The growing herd soon settled down in its Highland home. "Sarek", the wise, mysterious reindeer ox born on Mount Sarek's slopes in arctic Sweden, was three years old when he came with me on that first journey by road and rail from Murjek to Norrbotten to Narvik. We came across the North Sea on the SS "Sarek" to the Clyde and he led the Scottish herd for twelve years. When reindeer are allowed to graze unfenced on a new ground where there is suitable pasture and nothing frightens them, they centre there, moving slowly further out. If some Cairngorm reindeer stray and are not retrieved by herders, they often turn back of their own accord, guided by their homing instinct and the attraction of mineral licks.

Most calves are born in May and June. Some reindeer are very friendly and a few may follow people about, even searching their rucksacks! In the October rutting season, however, bulls may behave in a threatening manner and are normally de-horned or fenced during that period.



*MIKEL UTSI AND "SAREK" PICTURED IN 1955*

One man can look after a large herd alone for much of the year if there is no outside interference. In Lapland, dogs always help with the herding, but at Glenmore, the reindeer are controlled by a voice they recognise or by tit-bits of special food they have learned to like. <sup>[note 5]</sup> The more tractable reindeer may wear a bell and around them others tend to collect. In the Arctic and Sub-Arctic, many herds come down for shelter in the winter, whereas at Glenmore the reindeer often move upwards to drier ground.

In 1953, the herd, while still fenced on relatively low land, suffered from insects on a series of hot, damp summer days and there were losses through ensuing infections. An insect repellent suited to reindeer was finally selected, in consultation with a chemical firm, and a system of spraying worked out which has been successful since 1955. Groups

of animals are brought down to a corral for treatment in the few periods of warm weather, from mid-June to the end of August. There are no “reindeer warbles” to lower the value of the skins because I removed, this parasite from all the imports.

Dogs, which their owners claim to have “under control”, are sometimes a serious menace to reindeer, as to other livestock. A strict rule to keep dogs on a lead throughout this area would go far towards safeguarding the herd. The Reindeer Company Limited insures the animals for a substantial sum and the owner of a dog which chases or in any way injures a reindeer is liable to reimburse the insurers.

Why have reindeer in Scotland? They are useful in many ways. The meat is delicious; the animal is bred for meat and can be slaughtered in the right way and at the right time. In 1951-1952, about 400 tons of reindeer meat from Sweden sold quickly in London. When available at Glenmore today, by order, it fetches a good price. The live weight of a mature reindeer bull may be 160 kg and a bull’s clean carcass weighs up to 80 kg. Clothing made of the skin or well-tanned hide is worn even in temperate climates. Reindeer hair has been imported into Britain for weaving into expensive dress materials and for upholstery.

Antlers are carved for crafts. Trained reindeer oxen can pull goods or people on sleds or carry packs. Children may ride them too. Research into the composition of the cream-like reindeer milk, the digestion, skin, antlers, physiology of breeding and other research topics have been aided by the Reindeer Company’s directors and staff and the Council’s archives. Artificial insemination with both fresh and frozen semen has been achieved by the experiments I have carried out in collaboration with the Cambridge scientist Dr. Hector M. Dott.

Herds descended from reindeer imports into new areas have done well. The Alaskan introduction is the best known example. South Georgia, in the Antarctic, has benefited by a herd several thousand strong, bred from about eleven Norwegian reindeer. In Canada, thousands have pastured near the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and tame herds are increasing, for instance, in Greenland. Nor need reindeer live far north. In Norway, there are fine herds at the same altitude as the Orkney Islands.

This well-adapted, accessible herd should be maintained in the Cairngorms, with its traits from Swedish mountain and woodland reindeer, the south Norwegian type and the larger Russian. By the summer of 1975, the Glenmore herd consisted of 100 animals, although culling and live sales had proceeded for years. Over 500 reindeer have been born in Scotland, 1953-1979. Fine specimens have been sold to parks in England and Scotland, breeding successfully in some of their new homes. <sup>[note 6]</sup>

In the early years, the growth of the Cairngorm herd was slow, as four weeks’ quarantine in cramped quarters in urban air is hard on far-ranging animals. Scandinavian reindeer are well-known as healthy stock and all those I brought in were covered by Swedish or Norwegian veterinary certificates before embarking. The great advantage in keeping reindeer is that they find their own basic food, even under snow, and require no shelter.

## **NOTES**

- 1.) Mikel Utsi died in 1979. Dr. E. J. Lindgren, his wife, continued to manage the herd until 1988. Since August 1989, Alan J Smith, the reindeer keeper for the previous 11 years, took over the Reindeer Company with his wife, Elizabeth.
- 2.) Since August 1989, the office of the Reindeer Company has been based at the Cairngorm Reindeer Centre in Glenmore. The Reindeer Council has been disbanded.
- 3.) In 1982, two bulls were brought in from London Zoo and Whipsnade Park to introduce new stock and in October 1989, a young Cairngorm bull was exchanged with a young Whipsnade Zoo bull. In 1991, four bulls were bought from Whipsnade Zoo.
- 4.) The lease was renewed with the Highlands and Islands Development Board in 1985.
- 5.) Since 1984 a collie dog, “Nell”, has been used very successfully in the management of the herd.
- 6.) Christmas time is particularly busy for the trained oxen who pull sleighs to promote shopping centres and department stores all over Britain. They also visit schools, give sleigh rides and deliver presents to the children in the local hotels over the festive period.

## **VISITS TO THE REINDEER**

Guided tours to the Cairngorm Reindeer Herd leave daily at 11.00 am from the Cairngorm Reindeer Centre. There is an additional afternoon visit during peak times at 2.30 pm. At the Centre, there is a free exhibition and a small shop.

## **INFORMATION**

More information about the herd, reindeer breeding, conservation, and membership of the Reindeer Support Scheme (Adoption) may be obtained from:



The Cairngorm Reindeer Centre  
Glenmore  
Aviemore  
Inverness-shire  
PH22 1QU  
Scotland

Telephone No: Cairngorm (01479) 861228

THE CAIRNGORM REINDEER HERD



BY  
AVIEMORE

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