

Mule Deer

(Odocoileus hemionus)



Flora
Fauna



How to Identify:

- Mule Deer have white rump and a skinny white tail with a black tip.
- They have large ears, like a mule.
- Bucks average about 250 pounds and develop antlers that grow in a branching pattern. The better the quality of food a buck eats the healthier he will be and the larger his antlers will grow. You cannot tell how old a buck is by the size of his antlers. Does are smaller, averaging about 155 pounds.

Mule deer can jump over a four-foot fence!

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with Scout the Fox!

Scout





Portals to Parks



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HABITAT

- Mule Deer are found in many different habitats. They like rocky brushy areas, open meadows, pine forests, aspen tree groves and areas next to waterways.
- Where you may find Mule Deer depends a lot on the time of year. During the spring and summer, mule deer may be found on mountain slopes where shrubs, flowering plants and grasses grow. Does with fawns may be found around aspen tree groves. Aspen groves have many flowering plants, called forbs. These plants are important for mule deer, especially nursing does, and the trees offer shelter for the fawns.
- During the winter, deep snow makes it difficult for mule deer to access food. So they move down from higher mountain elevations into lower elevation valleys and south-facing hillsides. Here snow is not as deep and sagebrush and bitterbrush are easier to find.
- Mule deer may migrate 50 to 75 miles between their summer and winter habitats.

Thanks to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game for wildlife information.

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

parksandrecreation.idaho.gov

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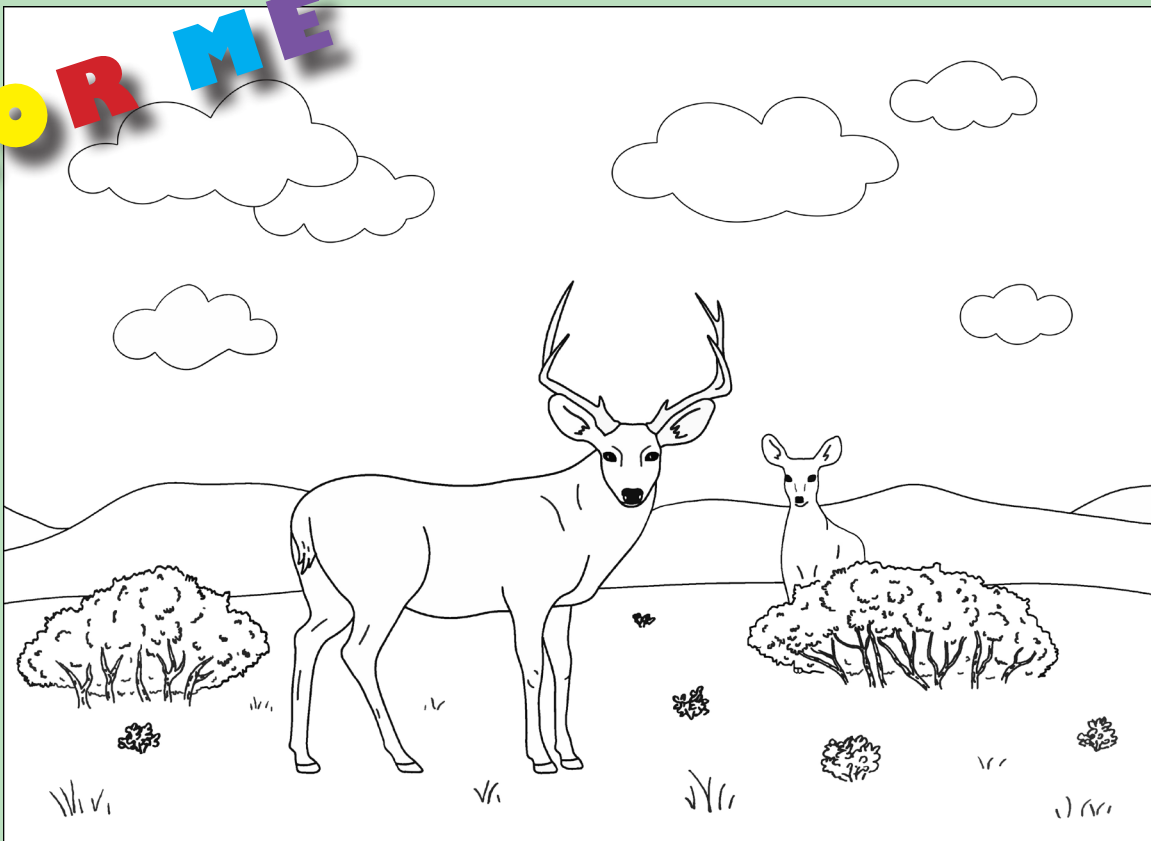


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More Fun Facts!

- The spots on a fawn help to make them camouflaged from predators like a cougar.
- When startled, Mule Deer jump away on all four legs. This is called a “pronk” or “stout”.
- Members of the deer family grow antlers. They are bones that grow out of the animal’s skull. An antler grows faster than any other kind of bone. It can grow up to one inch a day during the summer!
- Deer shed their antlers in early winter and then immediately begin to grow another set.
- Idaho has all five species of deer found in North America living in our state! This includes elk, moose, caribou, mule deer and white-tailed deer.

COLOR ME





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Help Protect the Mule Deer

- Idaho, like other Western states, is experiencing overall declines in Mule Deer populations, although in some areas, Mule Deer numbers are stable or increasing.
- Many things affect Mule Deer. Habitat, predators, hunting, weather, climate, and humans all play a role.
- Support conservation of natural areas for all wildlife.

ACTIVITY TIME

Why do you think Mule Deer need large ears?

Why do Mule Deer migrate in the winter?
