White-lipped deer ... majestic mountain monarchs!

Why exhibit white-lipped deer?

- Provide year-round viewing opportunities, especially in northern climates, with this cold-weather species endemic to the Tibetan plateau.
- Wow visitors with one of the largest and most impressive deer species.
- Enhance educational programming by using white-lipped deer to interpret seasonal changes in coat development and antler cycles, or surprise visitors with the mountain adaptations of this species, such as their broad hooves.
- Appeal to visitors’ desire to get hands-on by using biofacts. The huge antlers of males (4 feet long and 15 lbs each!) are shed annually—a perfect interpretive tool for inspiring awe.
- Reinforce conservation messaging surrounding issues of over-hunting, the impacts of traditional Asian medicine, and habitat loss.

Stewardship Opportunities

Support the Chang Tang Nature Reserve

Care and Husbandry

**RED SSP:** 7.14 (21) in 2 AZA institutions (2019)

**Species coordinator:** Steve Castillo, Disney’s Animal Kingdom  
steve.castillo@disney.com; (407) 938-2335

**Social nature:** Herd-dwelling. Females and young typically kept with one breeding male, or segregated except for breeding. Antlered males can be housed in bachelor groups without issue.

**Mixed species:** Successfully housed with Bactrian camels, red deer, and fallow deer in a typical zoo setting. Urail, markhor, other medium and large deer, and wild cattle have proven compatible in large paddocks.

**Housing:** Does well in warm to cool/temperate weather. Acclimated animals typically do not need supplemental heat if given shelter—they regularly endure below-freezing nighttime temperatures for ¾ of the year in the wild. Steep slopes and rocky terrain pose no concern.

**Medical notes:** Generally robust.

**Special requirements:** Water features deep enough for wading are recommended in warm temperatures.

**Keeper resources:** Typical cleaning of exhibit and holding areas. Deadfall is a preferred form of enrichment for browse and sparring.

Please contact the TAG for full husbandry guidelines.  
http://www.azaungulates.org/

Photos by B. Huffman. Published May 2019.