



DUIKER

Phylum: *Chordata*, Class: *Mammalia*, Order: *Artiodactyla*, Family: *Bovidae*
Cephalophus

Weight: 40 to 45 pounds.

Height at shoulder: 24 inches.

Body length: 3.5 - 5 feet

Tail length:

Lifespan: 12 years

Habitat: forest, bush, and some open range

Range/distribution: Represented in East Africa by 13 of their 17 species

Status: Depends on sub-species. Some threatened due to the bushmeat crisis.

Specials features:

- Unlike the forest species, the bush duiker with its long legs is able to run fast for some distance.
- All duikers freeze and crouch to escape detection.
- The tail is constantly in motion each movement, and because of its light color looks like a tiny torch being switched off and on in the forest gloom.

Diet in the wild:

- Duikers have interesting and varied feeding habits. The large mouth permits them to feed on sizable fruits, mushrooms and other bulky items. They eat berries and other fruit that have fallen naturally, as well as those dropped by monkeys, but most of their diet consists of foliage, bushes and trees. On occasion duikers may eat insects, lizards, birds and rodents.

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Behavior:

- Males do fight, especially when territory is invaded. Duikers inhabit fairly small territories marking with the secretions from the preorbital gland below each eye. Even though a pair will live together in a territory, they will spend most of their time apart. ..
- They run in a zigzag fashion interspersed by plunging leaps and dives. This trait is a source of the name "duiker," which in Dutch means "diver".

Breeding & Caring for Young :

- Courtship involves prolonged and noisy chases about the territory before mating, after which a single young is born. A Calf can run within hours of birth, but usually lies hidden for long periods of time between sucklings. It grows rapidly and is adult size at 6 to 7 months. The young make a loud bleat when in danger, quickly signaling adults in the area.

