

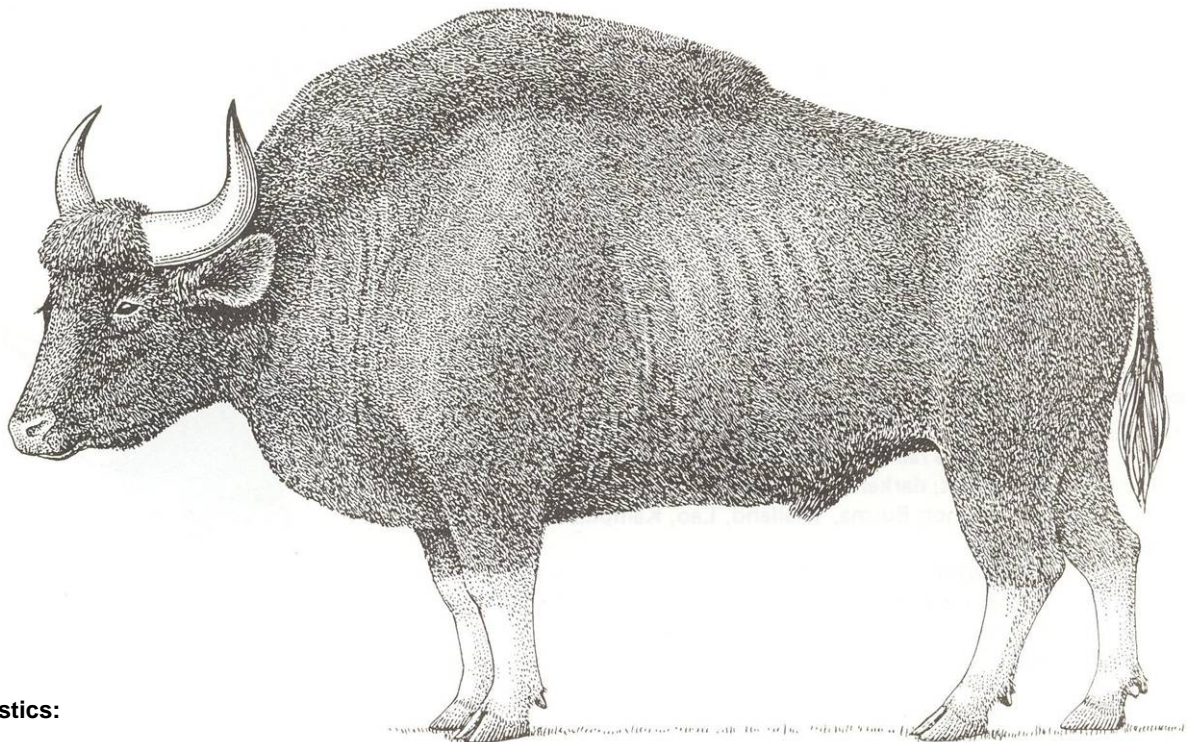


Bos gaurus

H. Smith, 1827

Common names:	engl.:	Gaur, Indian Bison	hindi:	gaur, gaur gai
	esp.:	Gaur	tamil:	kadu yethu, karthee, kattu erumai
	fr.:	Gaur	burm.:	katu poth, peoung
	de.:	Gaur, Dschungelrind	malay:	seladang
	ital.:	Gaur	thai:	krating

Scientific synonyms:	<i>Bos frontalis</i> Lambert, 1804
	<i>Bos gour</i> Hardwicke, 1827
	<i>Bibos subhemachalus</i> Hodgson, 1837
	<i>Bos cavifrons</i> Hodgson, 1837
	<i>Bos gaur</i> Sunclevall, 1846
	<i>Bos asseel</i> Horsefield, 1851



Characteristics:

Adult:

General appearance:	Huge head, massive body, sturdy limbs. On their shoulders gaur have a striking muscular ridge that slopes down to the middle of the back, where it ends in an abrupt dip. Among the largest of bovines.
Measurements:	HB 260-330 cm, H (shoulder) 160-210 cm, T 85-100 cm, horns 60-115 cm.
Weight:	600-1000 kg.
Hair:	Short and glossy; adults, especially bulls are almost hairless except on the head, chest, underparts and the lower parts of the legs.
Colour:	Deep brown, old bulls tending to jet black, cows to reddish; underparts brownish black to yellow earth; upper part of the forehead and the nape buffy grey or whitish; white stockings from the wrists and heels down.
Ears:	Large and broad.
Horns:	Crescent shaped, curving upward and backward and tapering to a sharp point; creamy yellow with black tips; distinct hairy ridge between the horns.
Tail:	Tufted.
Sexual dimorphism:	Cows are about 10 cm shorter in height, 150 kg lighter; horns are less strong, tending to different colouration.
Juvenile:	Coat reddish brown with black dorsal stripe and light legs.

Distribution: India (three widely separated areas), Nepal, Burma, Thailand, PR China (extreme south of Yunnan only), Lao, Kampuchea Dem., Viet Nam, Malaysia (Malay Peninsula only).

Population:

Wild population: Numbers in the thousands; declining throughout due to habitat destruction and disturbance (agricultural development, human settlement, extensive logging etc.), indiscriminate hunting and exposure to diseases of domestic cattle; IUCN Red Data Book: vulnerable.

Captive population: The international Zoo Yearbook reports 50.72.3 *B. gaurus* in 20 collections in 1982.

Trade: 8 live specimens recorded by CITES Parties in 1982/83 (zoo exchanges).

Intraspecific variation:

Four subspecies:

B.g. gaurus: Characteristics see above; India, Nepal.

B.g. reardi possesses a dewlap and a fringe of hair at the throat; darker than *B.g. gaurus*; ridge between horns is less distinct; Burma, Thailand, Lao, Kampuchea Dem., Viet Nam.

B.g. hubbaki (seladang) has no ridge between the horns; a whitish band may appear over the muzzle; Malay Peninsula.

B.g. frontalis (gayal, mithan) is the domesticated form; smaller than the wild forms; shorter legs; less distinct ridge along the back; head shorter, forehead broader and more flat; horns shorter and sturdier, with little upward curvature; interbreeding with wild gaur produces intermediate forms; India (Assam), Bhutan, Bangladesh, Burma.

Similar species:

Bos sauveli (kouprey) (sheet A-119.009.002.005): Ridge on back is smaller; well-developed dewlap from throat to mid. chest; white stockings on legs have a streak of dark hair down the front; horns more curved, especially on cows, tips surrounded by rough, frayed tissue on adult bulls.

Bosiavanicus (banteng) is smaller and lighter in build; dorsal ridge much less prominent; bases of the horns are connected by a horny mass on old bulls; characteristic white rump patch; the most cowlike of all the wild bovines; domesticated forms abundant.

Bibliography:

Ellermann, J.R. & Morrison-Scott, T.C.S. (1951). Checklist of Palaearctic and Indian Mammals 1758-1946. London, Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.), 810 pp.

Holdenorth, T. (1963). Die Klassifikation der Säugetiere: Artiodactyla Owen, 1848. Handbuch der Zoologie, 8: Mammalia, 167 pp., Berlin, De Gruyter.

National Research Council (1983). Little-known Asian animals with a promising economic future. Washington, D.C., National Academy Press, 131 pp.

Tate, G.H.H. (1947). Mammals of eastern Asia. New York, The MacMillan Company, 366 pp.

Thornback, J. (1983). Wild cattle, bison and buffaloes, their status and potential value. IUCN.

Walther, F. (1973). Die Horntrdger. In: Grzimek, B. (ed.): Grzimeks Tierleben, Säugetiere 4, 280-315. Zürich, Kindler Verlag.

