

BHARAL, HIMALAYAN BLUE SHEEP,
Pseudois nayaur, Hodgson 1833

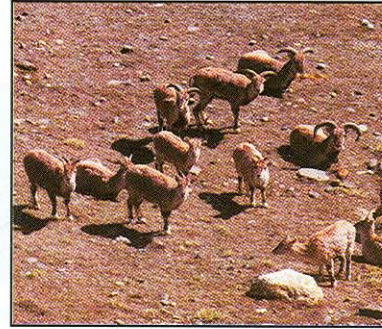
Vernacular Names: *Knabo* (Ladakhi, Tibetan),
nabo (Spiti), *bharal* (Hindi, Pahari)

Taxonomy

Family: Bovidae
Sub family: Caprinae
Tribe: Caprini

Conservation Status

IUCN: Low risk
CAMP: Low risk, least concern
IWPA: Schedule I
CITES: Not listed
US ESA: Not listed



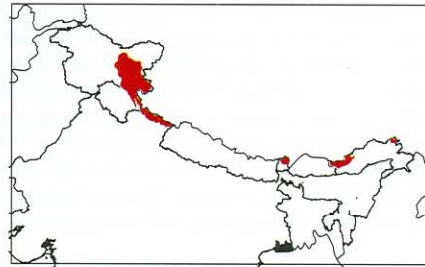
S. Sathyakumar

Distribution & Habitat : Central Asian mountains - from Kunjereb in Pakistan in the west, to the Sichuan and Gansu provinces of China in the east, through bulk of the Tibetan plateau. Southern limit of distribution is along the Greater Himalayan chain in India, Nepal and Bhutan. Northern flank covers the Altai Shan, and parts of the Tien Shan. In India, found in Ladakh, Lahul-Spiti, and in some high alpine meadows of Kullu, Kinnaur, Uttaranchal, Sikkim, and the western Tawang region of Arunachal Pradesh covering ca. 30,000km². Most of these, apart from Ladakh and Lahul-Spiti, are narrow regions on the southern slopes of the Greater Himalaya itself.

Description : The adult male's coat is slate grey, sometimes with a bluish sheen. The underparts and back of the legs are white, while the chest and fronts of the legs are black. Separating the grey back and white belly is a black coloured stripe. The ears are small, and the bridge of the nose is dark. The horns are found in both sexes, and have small ridges on the upper surface. In males, they grow upwards, then turn sideways and curve backwards, looking somewhat like a moustache. Females are light brown coloured with small horns, usually diverging at the top (important feature to distinguish with ibex females in areas where they are sympatric).

Size
Body Length: 115-165 cm
Shoulder Height: 75-90 cm
Tail Length: 10-20 cm
Weight: 35-75 kg
Horn length: Male: 60-86cm
 Female: 10-20cm

Behaviour : Bharal live at mid to high elevations, and may climb up to the vegetation line at 5,500m. In India, they usually occur between 2,500 and 5,500m, but usually below this upper limit. Uses primarily moderate to steep slopes, interspersed with 'escape terrain' in the form of rocky overhangs and cliffs, where they flee to escape predators such as snow leopard and the Tibetan wolf. Habitat similar to ibex but can occur in more open slopes and in much moister areas on the southern slopes of the Himalaya. In winter, may descend if possible or remain partial to south facing slopes and areas where snow deposition is relatively lower such as windblown ridgelines, crests and avalanche paths.



Occurs in small groups of less than 20 animals. Sexual segregation is most common in summer, when males may use more open meadows at higher elevations. Bharal are active during the day, with a bimodal peak during morning and late afternoon.

Intermediate forager, diet consists primarily of grasses, hardy herbaceous plants, also some shrubs.



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Reproduction & Life Cycle

Gestation Period: 160-180days.
Rutting: Mating occurs between October and January, peaking for about 15-20 days.
Young per Birth: 1
Weaning: After 6 months.
Sexual Maturity: At 1.5 years, although males do not reach their full potential before age 7.
Life span: 12-15 years. Males rarely survive beyond their 7-8th year

