

The Black Beauty of Velavadar



Blackbuck (કાળિયાર) is the fastest of all the **antelope** (dear). It is found mainly in India, but also in parts of Pakistan, Nepal, and some other countries. In India it is found mainly in Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In Gujarat, black bucks are seen in Saurashtra. Its original **habitat** (living place) is open plain and not dense jungles. There is the famous Black Buck National Park at Velavadar in Bhal region of Saurashtra.

Let's know something about the Blackbuck National Park at Velavadar. **Blackbuck National Park** at **Velavadar** is situated in the Bhavnagar District of Gujarat state, India. Established in 1976 in the Bhal region of Saurashtra, the park is located around 72 km from the district headquarter city of Bhavnagar.



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winter normally, mid-June to March-end is a good period to see the blackbucks. The best time to visit Velavadar National Park is from December to March because many species of migratory birds which include three species of Harriers, Lesser Florican, Eagles, Waders and many other water birds arrive to spend winter.

Bhavnagar airport is connected with the international airports of Mumbai and Ahmedabad with daily flight frequency. The closest railway station is at the town of Dhasa, which is about 50 km from the park. The historical town of Vallabhipur is about 30 km away.

The blackbuck is also known as *Krishna Jinka* in Telugu language. It has been declared the state animal of Andhra Pradesh. Other local names for the species include Kala hiran, Sasin, Iralai Maan, Krishna Mriga in Kannada and Kalveet in Marathi.

According to the Indian **mythology** (ପୌରାଣିକ କଥା) Blackbuck or *Krishna Jinka* is considered as the vehicle of the goddess-Moon. According to the Garuda Purana Krishna Jinka brings prosperity in the areas where they live.

The blackbuck is famous for its **spiral** (ସ୍ପାଇରାଲ) horns. The **distinctive** (different type) horns of the blackbuck are ringed with 1 to 4 spiral turns. They can be as long as 28 inches. In the male, the upper body is black and the belly and eye rings are white. The light-brown female is usually hornless. Blackbucks usually roam on the plains in herds of 15 to 20 animals with one male leader.

On the open plain, the Blackbuck is one of the fastest animals and can outrun most **predators** (killers) over long distances. It can run 80 mph when necessary. Cheetah is



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said to be a threat for the black buck. Other wild animals such as wolves and wild dogs also **prey upon** (kill and eat for living) the blackbuck.

The blackbuck is a **herbivore** (ઘસણકારી). It lives on grass, plants, flowers and fruits. The maximum life span recorded is about 16 years.

The blackbuck is hunted for its flesh and its skin. Although Indian law strictly prohibits the hunting of these **endangered** (under threat, about to extinct) animals, there are still occasional incidents of **poaching** (illegally catching or killing). The natural habitat of the blackbuck is taken away by human beings for **domesticated** (tamed) cattle or building houses. Like most wild animals, the blackbuck is in principle protected in India by the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972.

Why should we not kill wild animals ?

Friends, you must have seen the blackbuck on the postal stamp of India but now visit some day Velavadar Blackbuck National Park and enjoy watching black bucks and other animals and birds in natural surroundings



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Do it Yourself

Q.1 (A) Put a ✓ against the correct answer.

1. Which is the famous habitat of lions ?
☐ Den ☐ Forest ☐ Gir ☐ Killing animals
2. A kite wants to fly out a valley. How will it fly ?
☐ Spiral ☐ Up like an arrow
☐ In a circle ☐ Clockwise
3. Which is not a domesticated animal ?
☐ Horse ☐ Blackbuck
☐ Cat ☐ Camel
4. Which is an endangered animal ?
☐ Antelope ☐ Blackbuck
☐ Eagle ☐ All of these
5. Who are not predators ?
☐ Non-vegetarians ☐ Herbivores
☐ Poachers ☐ Wolves

(B) Write a paragraph on "Save animals, They will save us." Use these words. You may change the order and form of these words.

- treasure of nature - variety - hunting and poaching - flesh and skin - endangered species - sanctuaries - live and let live - balance of life on earth.

Q.2 (A) Write "Yes" or "No" in the box.

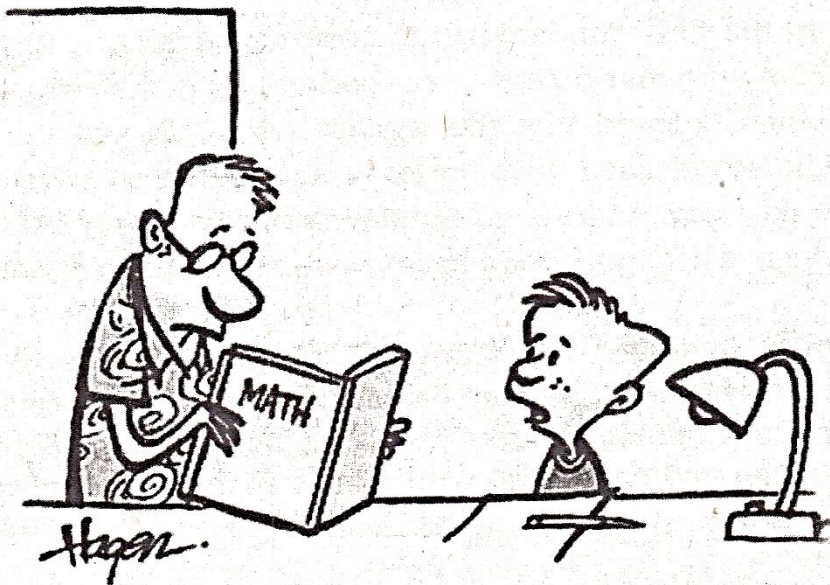
1. 'Blackbucks bring richness' is not a fact but it is a mythological belief. ☐
2. If you want to go to Velavadar by train you should get down at Dhasa station. ☐
3. Blackbucks also eat small insects. ☐
4. Even a Cheetah is not so fast as a blackbuck. ☐
5. Krishna Mriga is also a species of antelope. ☐
6. Blackbucks like to live in pairs only. ☐

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(B) Answer the questions :

1. What are the other names for the blackbuck ?
2. What is the myth about the blackbuck ?
3. Describe the beauty of blackbuck.
4. Why can the blackbuck run fast ?
5. Why should we protect blackbuck ?
6. What has the Government done to save the blackbuck ?
7. What are the other endangered animals in India ? What should we do to save them ?
8. Would you like to have a blackbuck as a your pet ? How would you enjoy its company ?



DON'T BE EMBARRASSED TO ASK
FOR HELP DAD.

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