

Wildlife on Mount Baldo

Roe Deer

Superorder *Ungulata*
 Order *Artiodactyla*
 Family *Cervidae*
 Genus *Capreolus*
 Species *C. capreolus* L.



The roe deer is an *Ungulate* of the family *Cervidae*. Males have small antlers consisting of 3-4 branches that are shed every autumn and grow back at the end of winter. Females have none. The coat is reddish-brown during summer and brownish-gray in winter. Both sexes share a large cream-white spot on the rump. The tail is very short and does not emerge from the fur.

Roe deer have a tendency of being solitary, but during winter females and their young may gather in groups led by a dominant female. In such groups hierarchies and social relationships are well defined and structured. Males are solitary and territorial. They release a glandular secretion on bushes to signal their presence. In late spring females usually give birth to two fawns that display the distinctive brown coat scattered with white spots. Females often leave their young hidden in tall grass as they wander about close by in search of food. This is why if you happen to come upon a seemingly abandoned fawn you must not get close to it. Fawns reach sexual maturity around 14 months of age.

Natural predators for roe deer are wolves, but fawns can also fall prey to eagles and wild boar. Roe deer are widespread in hill ranges up to 2000 meters. They graze in the morning and in the evening in transitional areas between forests and glades and feed on grass, leaves, mushrooms, buds, bark and pine needles. Roe deer were subject to intensive hunting in the past, but have become quite common nowadays on Mount Baldo.

