

## Species traditionally utilized by the first peoples of BC:

Species chosen: Elk



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### Name of species:

The common name is elk but is different around the world. It could be also called the American elk, or the European elk. Another common name would be moose but, the name elk would be known in Europe.

- In Europe and Asia, the name deer is known as genus group (or Latin name) Alces. In north America these same deer appear in the area and are known as moose.
- The First Nations call the American elk the "wapiti", when the Americans showed the first nations this animal.
- In north America it is also known or called, as the wapiti. Wapiti is a Shawnee Indian word which means "pale" or "white".
- The word Genus Alces is Latin for elk.
- The scientific name for the elk is Cervus Canadensis.

The world elk came from the ancient Germanic root word that defines as, "stagg" or "hart".

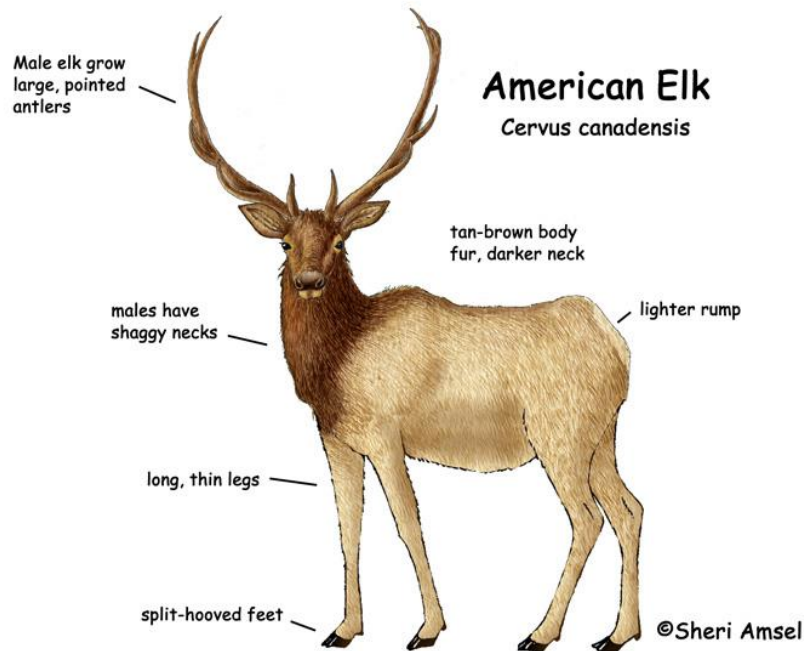


Biological information:

Habitat:

In Europe, the elk lives in the forest of Siberia, Sweden, Norway, and the Baltic region. Within North America, it is found in the wooded areas of Canada, also the northern U.S.

- The largest moose lives in Alaska (*Alces acles gigias*)
- Elk may live in forests but are more Highly adapted to living in the open plains, to grazing, and to cold, long winters.

**Diagram****Asian elk:**

- *The elk that live in Asia are living the area of cold grassland found on high plateaus of the outer Shan mountains.*
- *Other primitive red deer subspecies live in the valley bottoms and upland forest*

**North America:**

*The elk that live in North America lives in many different habitats from the Yukon territories and to northern Mexico and from, Vancouver Island to Pennsylvania.*

*The mainly live in coniferous rain forests along the*

- *Pacific coast,*
- *Prairies*
- *Aspen parklands*
- *Sagebrush Flats*

- *Eastern Deciduous Forests*
- *The Rocky Mountains*
- *(The use to be) swampy valleys of California.*

### **Places they shun:**

*The elk don't go towards deserts, boreal forests, and the tundra. The wide distribution causes many elk from different regions to be different from each other in, size and growth.*

### **Other points:**

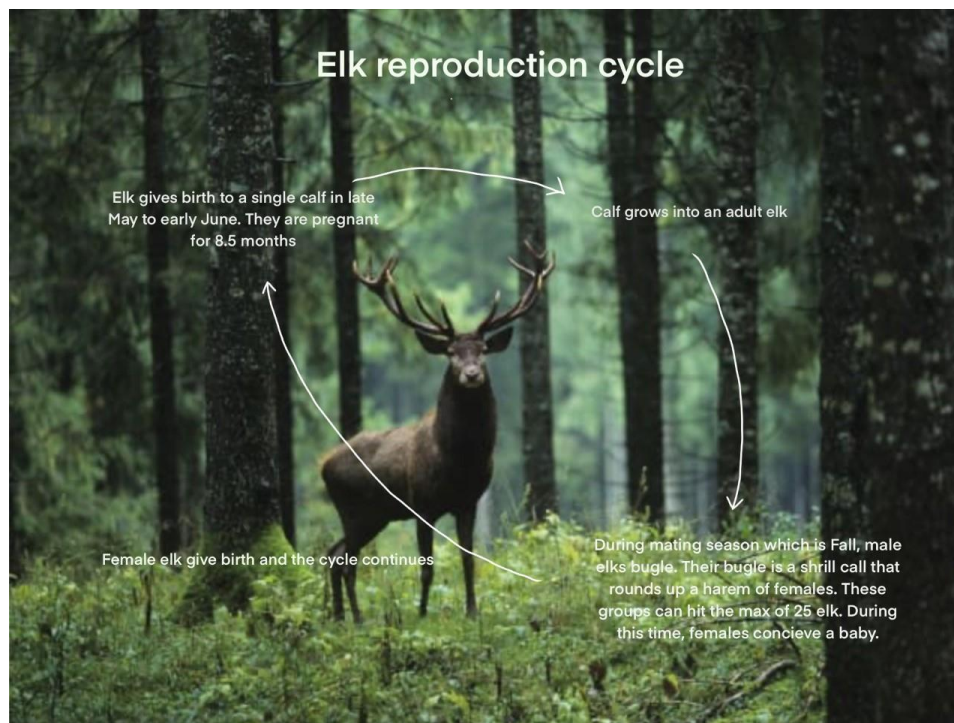
*Elk are amazingly homogenous genetically throughout their range, that include asian elk populations*

### **Reproductive method of the elk:**

*The elk or moose is a type of mammal which reproduces sexually, and not asexually.*

*The method is two different gender of moose's have contact with sexual organs and, the male fertilizes the female's eggs. The female moose or elk gets has gestation until birth. Eventually the female moose gives birth to a young calf and stay with their mother for about a year/ up to a year.*

### **Reproductive labeled diagram of the elk:**



**Interdependence:****What species that it depends on:**

*The moose depends on other plants for a food source to survive.*

- *They eat many different species of plants that grow around it. They mainly eat young shoots, the leaves off woody shrubs, and young trees.*
- *The moose's diet changes during to the season to adjust to the different plant species, growing in the area. Like during the summer these moose prefer to consume different herb vegetation, and also, aquatic plants growing in the water near the shore. Which they eat while standing in the water.*
- *The American elk eats mainly grasses and others such as twigs and needles of fir, juniper, and many other hardwood trees and shrubs. Especially during the winter.*

**What species depend on it:**

*Depending on where it lives there is several different predators that eat the elk.*

- *In North America, wolves and cougars are the main natural predators hunting the elk. Bears and coyotes do kill some calves and ill/sick adult elk.*
- *We do use the elk in different purposes as well since a very long time ago. Like during the middle ages in the 400's to the 1400's, Scandinavians sometimes used the elk as a beast of burden.*

*Abiotic features of BC that interacts with the elk population:*

*Abiotic features can include the temperature of which the elk and handle, the soil for land for plant growth for a food source, and others.*

*The temperature effects them in how if it's not too cold or hot. Every organism is designed for a certain temperature like the elk. The elk has to find a place (depending on where it lives due to the change within regions) that is suitable for the elk. So, it isn't too cold for it to freeze that could cause sickness, and not too hot so they don't burn /overheat.*

Another factor is the soil. Elk are herbivores so they depend on plants to eat which grow from the ground. The soil must be good enough for plants to grow on, and not muddy and not calispising all the time. These areas must also have rain fall and sunlight for these plants to grow and have the nutrients in it.

Other abiotic factors could include the wind, air, shelter, water, etc.

### **First people's utilization of the species:**

*Traditional uses in BC:*

*Traditional uses were elk being used for their hide and ceremonial value, then the meat to consume or other purposes.*

*The elk was used by the Coeur d'Alene, Chinookan of Lower Columbia River, Kalapuya, Siuslaw, Coosan, Coast Salish, Kitsumkalum, Kutenai, Okanagan, Spokane, Fort Nelson Slave (Dene), Sioux, Potawatomi, Anishinabek, Algonquian, Mohawk, Plains Ojibwa / Bungi (Chippewa). The Nootka (Nuu-chah-nulth) also had access to North American elk, which is referred as Kloh-nym or wapiti.*

*The meat from the elk was mainly boiled across north America.*

*The coast Salish meat was often roasted, steamed, or boiled before being eaten. Others is which is stored for the winter and preserved.*

### **Traditional harvesting/ or cultivation methods:**

*There were many methods for catch the deer by the first nations. They hunted the elk the use of using use of arrows, snares, spears, calls, guns, nooses, blinds, decoys, traps on trails, spring-traps, dogs, and pitfalls.*

*Different nations use different methods due to the environment around them. As well as, the number of hunters available, distance from the camp, time of day and year, and heard size/ the amount of elk in the group.*

- *The interior Salish lure North American elk to them with devices made of bone or grass.*
- *Flathead, coast Salish and Shuswap created whistles*
- *Kalispell attracted the elk by imitating/intercepting calf calls.*
- *During the winter there were chased into deep snow where they had troubles, moving around/maneuvering to escape.*

*Another method was stalking the elks until they were tired, then went for the kill.*

*Stalking these animals was usually a regular practice for men to follow the elk. They followed the north American elk to the point they we're tired which they moved in for the kill.*

*The spoken first nation tribe were not allowed to stalk an animal or killing them unless, they were drinking water at a spring.*

*A factor of the hunt was the odor. The hunters had to wash themselves of bath at a sweat house, remove their clothing, then could continue to follow the elk so, they won't pick up their sent*

*Nutritional properties:*

*Elk is a meat that can be considered healthy. Elk is naturally low in fat, sodium*

### ***Traditional practices and sustainability:***

*What we need to keep the elk species going:*

*In order to keep the elk, you need to have an environment that many different plant species and have places with shelter.*

*For a food source they would need to eat different plant species. Also, the plants would need a good soil, water, sunlight, source in order to grow. Plants they would eat would be tree shoots, woods shrubs, and young trees.*

*Their diet changes seasonally for the different plants that could grow in the area. So, their environment must have plants growing year around, for them to survive. Like with different available grasses and plants growing in the area for them to eat daily.*

*As well as a water source for drinking water. Like a river or lake or some sort of water reserve for the elk to drink from.*

*Another thing is the habitat that they live in. They need an environment that has the area for them to live. Like the amount of land, they can move around in or take cover from the weather or storms that occur in the area.*

*It could also be used for hiding from other predators. Like any other animal they don't want to get eaten so, they would want a place they could also get away from predators. So, they can survive can carry on their genes.*

*They must also have a safe environment to raise their young to grow up and live. So, the species can live on. But also, be controlled.*

*If elk population grow too much, it could decrease the amount of food available for other species which can affect the food web/cycles. It could also decrease the amount of food for other elks in the area, which could make them extinct. So, if the eat too much, they'll make many other animals extinct and themselves.*

*That's why we must keep it under control to contain the amount of plants is consumed to sustain, the elk and other animals. To keep the ecosystem as it is, and not unstable.*

### ***Sustainable traditional methods of harvesting elk:***

*Traditional methods of harvesting elk can be sustainable but, cannot be at time. First people's methods only involve a few elk being killed occasionally. But it would be for only one of group/camp of the many camps around the land.*

*For one camp in a vast area it would be ok because, there might not be a kill for every hunt and there should be enough elk to reproduce that, the population could go back to normal.*

*The methods could have more than a few elk being killed per day, so it varies on if its sustainable. But they won't overkill many elk for harvesting unless for, preserving it for the winter, or other reasons. They do hunt for young elks which can make it unsustainable for the elk population, as well as some methods which hunters could go kill multiple elk.*

*Some methods like secretly following them could only harvest one or a few but, other methods like leading heard into traps would tip the scale of, sustainable harvests for elks.*

### **Current uses and sustainability:**

*Currently, the First Nations do still use Elk but mostly for consumption. Before, they used elk for certain rituals which have been removed since then.*

*Elk meat is occasionally used in BC for food but isn't used for much else beyond consumption.*

*The cultivation and harvesting of elk are sustainable because we know that elk are not endangered. There are a lot of elk in the wilderness and farms that are used to locally source elk into the market. This makes elk sustainable and relevant for our current use.*

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