



Social Behaviour of Chital (*Axis Axis*) in Kota Zoo and In Mukandra Hills Tiger Reserve, India

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Abstract: Social behaviour of the chital (*Axis axis*) or spotted deer includes grooming, play, antagonistic, and reproductive behaviour. The comparative study was conducted in captivity and in the wild, using scan sampling technique to examine the effect of captivity on social behaviour. Captive animals interacted more with each other in the confined habitat. Hence, social behaviour frequency among all diurnal activities was found almost twice in captivity as compared to wild. Grooming was the principal social act in both research sites, but with an enhanced prevalence in captivity. Play activity of fawns was also more recurrent in captivity, as there was no risk of predation by predators. Chital showed increased antagonistic behaviour in captivity, because of close association and more struggle for feed, area, and partner. Reproductive behaviour was more common during summer in both research sites but Chital was a less seasonal breeder in wild as fawns were reported throughout the year in wild. Thus, social behaviour patterns differed between habitats depending upon their adaptation in behaviour strategies. Overall captive Chital was found more social than their wild counterparts.

Keywords: Antagonistic, Captivity, Grooming, Reproductive, Wild
