

updated March 2017



! Status: critically endangered

Range	Central Congo
Habitat	Open woodlands and adjacent meadows, thickets and gardens; often near shallow ponds, swamps or streams
Diet (wild)	Browser, eating tips, shoots, trailers, and tender bushes
Diet (captive)	
Description	Length: 7½–8 feet; weight: 500–900 pounds (males), 450–550 pounds (females). Smooth, glossy bright chestnut red coat with a dark muzzle, white chevron between the eyes, two white cheek spots, a whitish collar at base of neck, black and white spinal crest and many narrow but clear white vertical stripes on the body with contrasting black and white markings on the legs. Horns are present in both sexes, heavy and smooth with an open spiral of 1–1½ turns. Male horns are massive; females are thinner. Tail is tufted at the tip, and a stiff mane runs from shoulders to rump.
Lifespan	18–20 years
Reproduction	One offspring is born after a gestation period of 9½ months. Newborns weighing about 43 pounds and are up and nursing just hours after birth (precocial). Young have same color pattern of their parents, but are lighter in color. Sexual maturity in females is reached in their second year. Births occur in the wild usually in December or January.
Behavior	Bongos are the largest known forest-dwelling antelope and the only forest antelope to form herds. These herds range anywhere from five or six bongos, all the way up to 50, foraging for food together. More than one male is usually in a herd, indicating that bongos are fairly non-territorial. These animals are both diurnal and nocturnal. Bongos stay within the bushes and shrubs of the forest during the day and only come out to the salt licks during the night. They also have a long prehensile tongue used to grasp bundles of leaves. Horns can be used to pull down high branches. They are very shy and swift. Bongos depend on hearing more than sight or smell, and when fleeing through dense underbrush, they will lay their horns on their back so the horns don't impede their escape. Bongos prefer to go under or around obstacles rather than over them.
Our animals	1 female, 1 male. Born: 03/2003 (male, Bock); 10/2008 (Bella). Birth place: Busch Gardens (Bock); Virginia Zoological Park (Bella)
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many reputed magical powers and strange abilities reported about bongos by village natives, including: 1) Bongos can hang by their horns from branches and drop down on unsuspecting hunters; 2) Bongos eat poisonous plants so their meat won't be edible to humans; 3) When pursued, bongos dive underwater and stay there until the following dry season, losing their fur and feeding on fish; and 4) Touching bongos cause leprosy. These beliefs have helped to protect bongos, but habitat destruction and poaching are now a threat to their survival.

Phylum
ChordataClass
MammaliaOrder
ArtiodactylaFamily
BovidaeGenus
Tragelaphusspecies
T. euryceros isaaci