

## Quantock Deer Management and Conservation Group

[www.quantockdeergroup.co.uk](http://www.quantockdeergroup.co.uk)



**To all deer count helpers, landholders and members of QDM&CG**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual end of winter Quantock deer count took place on **Sunday 6th March 2022**.

The 2022 count took place on a cold but dry Sunday morning, thank you to all the **67** counters that were up and out very early! The weather seems to influence the count numbers as conditions influence ability to see deer from too far, but it would appear that the conditions this year were good. The counters were as usual allocated singly or in pairs to survey and count the deer within and alongside a total of **52** count areas, which cover 'Quantock Deer' country, but there may be outlying quiet areas where some may not be seen.

The total number of Red Deer counted has risen this year to **676** (from 551 in 2021). However, I noted last year it was surprising there hadn't been much of an increase noted already in 2021 from 2020, given very low venison prices and significantly reduced culling. The 2021 count was cold too, with snow flurries in the northern end of the hills, and this may have led deer to move to any woodland earlier under the cover of darkness or not venturing out into the open, so not revealing any potential increase at the time. At 676, red deer numbers remain within the 500 to 700 band counted in the great majority of past years. The only period when counts exceeded 700 deer were from 1999 through to 2007, and in the inaugural count in spring 1991. The graph (overleaf) does however show fantastic 'waves' in population numbers, as with most wild mammal populations.

The Quantock Deer count is one of the longest running annual deer counts in the country. It's the ongoing interest and deep-seated culture of 'Quantock Deer' that keeps this going. Throughout this time there have been notable 'other' deer counted. Roe deer are native and live in small family groups and can often be seen in the same places daily, easily 'disappearing' into cover. Muntjac never seem to have taken hold, although they are occasionally seen – while there seem to be a few currently on the hills none were seen on the count morning, but muntjac are very small and difficult to spot unless disturbed. The Sika seen this year present the question "where from?", as it's a long way from the nearest main population in southeast Dorset; can they really travel unaided from south of Yeovil and cross the M5 to the Quantocks? The Sika can hybridise with reds, which we wouldn't want to see happen.

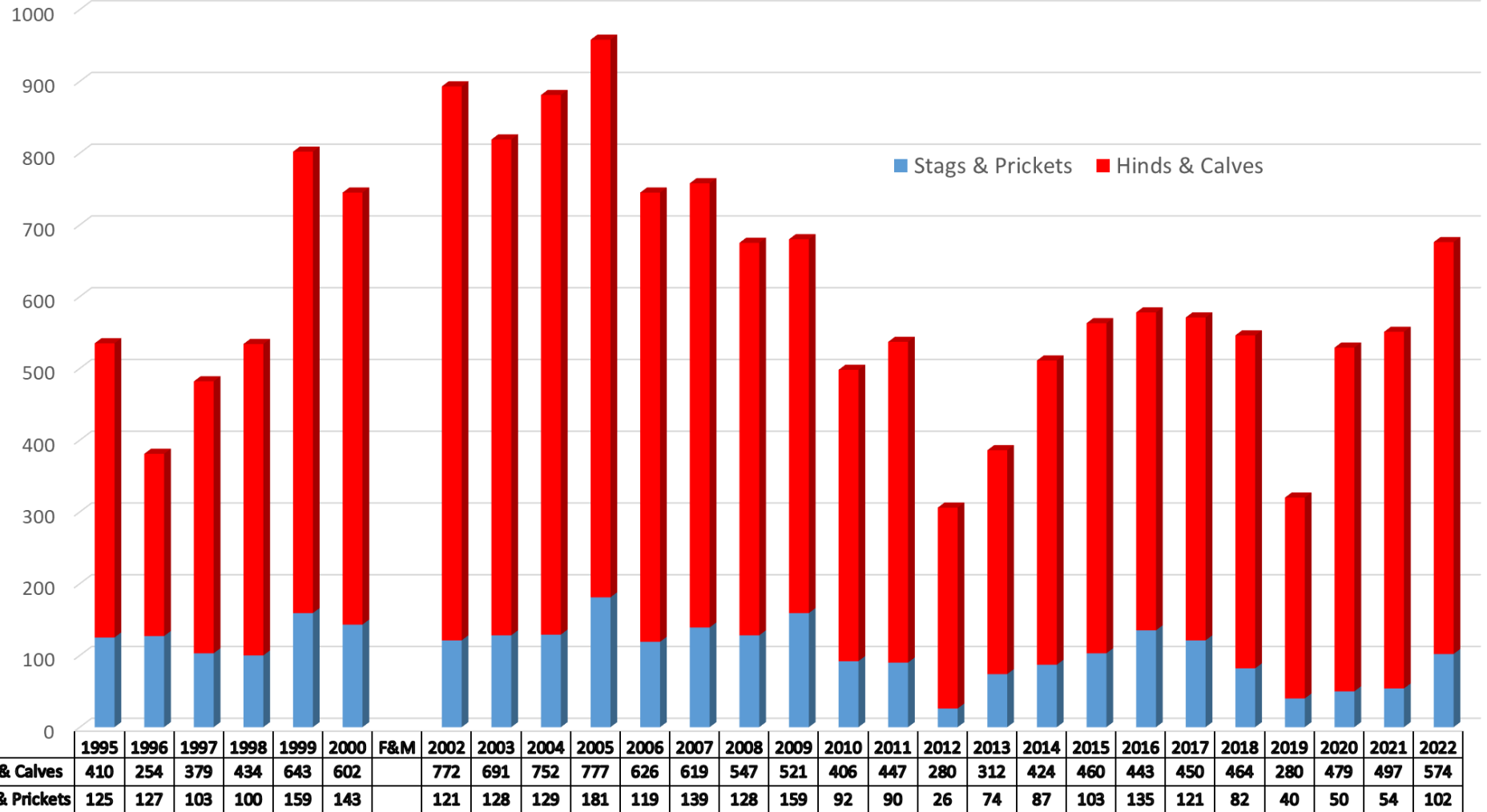
The deer calendar continues to run... the stags have recently cast their old antlers and are growing anew, it will soon be calving season, roe will be having their 'kids' now, .. and so the cycle goes on.

Thank you again to all the counters and helpers who plan and undertake the count!

### Quantock Deer Count - Summary total of deer counted 6th March 2022

Red Deer	Hinds & calves	Prickets	Young Stags	Older Stags >4yr old		Roe Deer	Fallow deer	Muntjac deer	Sika
676	574	29	59	14		175	0	0	1
Year 2022					4-yr Average 2018 - 2021				
Total	Hinds & Followers	Prickets & Stags		Total	Hinds & Followers		Prickets & Stags		
676	574	102		487	430		57		
<b>A: North</b> (all count blocks lying north of the Crowcombe to Overstowey road)									
480	417	63		340	304		36		
<b>B: Central:</b> (South of Crowcombe to Overstowey Road to Lydeard Hill, incl. Great Wood, Aisholt Common, West Bagborough &									
149	125	27		131	112		19		
<b>C: South-East</b> (all areas south-east of Lydeard Hill – incl. Cothelstone, Broomfield to Kings Cliff.									
47	35	12		16	14		2		

## Quantock Deer Management & Conservation Group Annual Spring Counts of Red deer 1995 - 2022



### RED DEER : Totals by Year

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	676	535	381	482	534	802	745	FMD	893	819	881	958	745	758	675	680	498	537	306	386	511	563	578	571	546	320	529	551	676