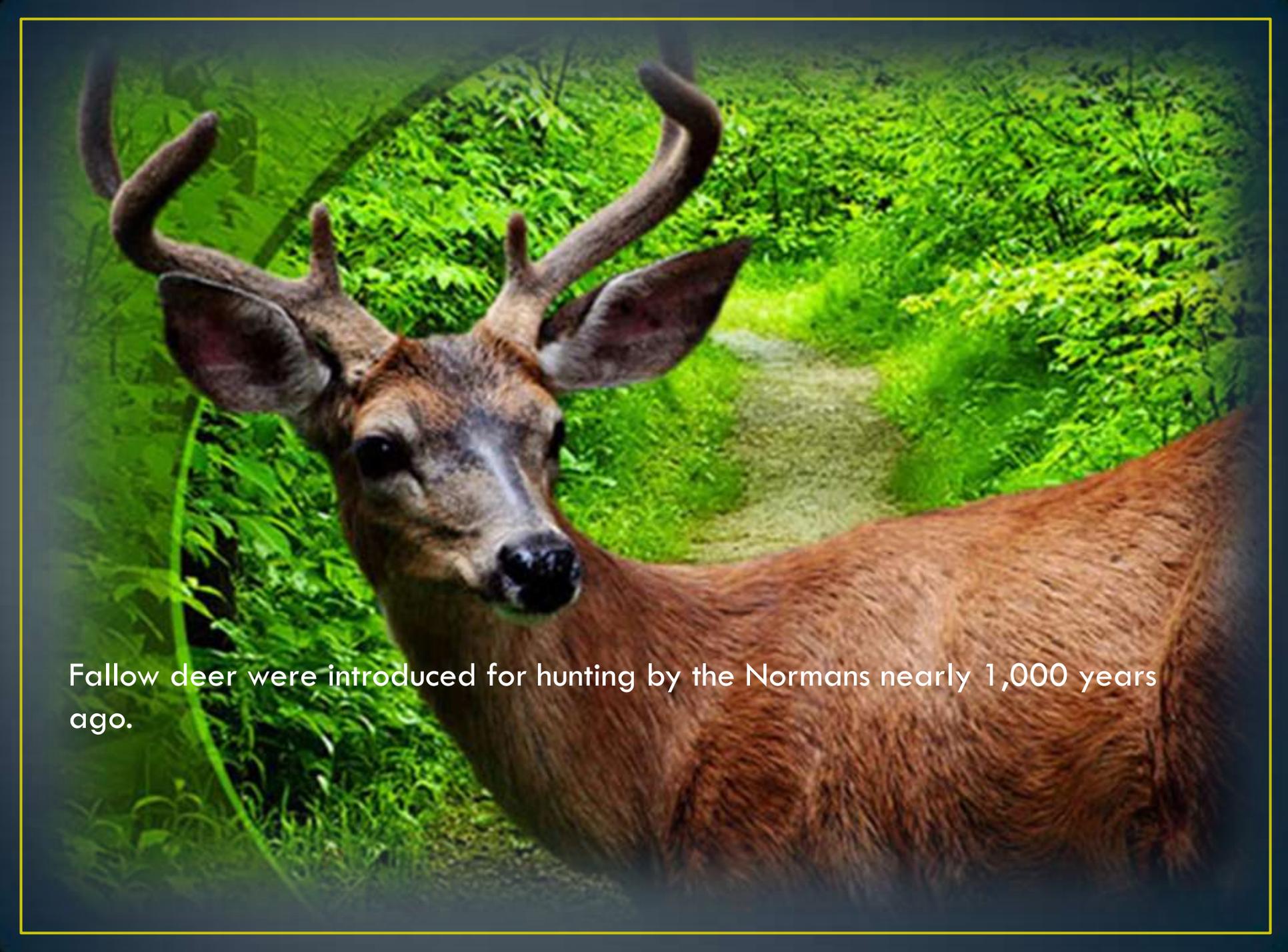


A Leap in the Park





A Leap in the Park

A photograph of a fallow deer with large, velvet-covered antlers, standing in a lush green field. The deer is the central focus, looking towards the camera. The background is a dense, vibrant green forest or field. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture of the deer's fur and the softness of its antlers.

Fallow deer were introduced for hunting by the Normans nearly 1,000 years ago.

The males have characteristic large, flat antlers, called palmate antlers, which they shed every year between April and June.





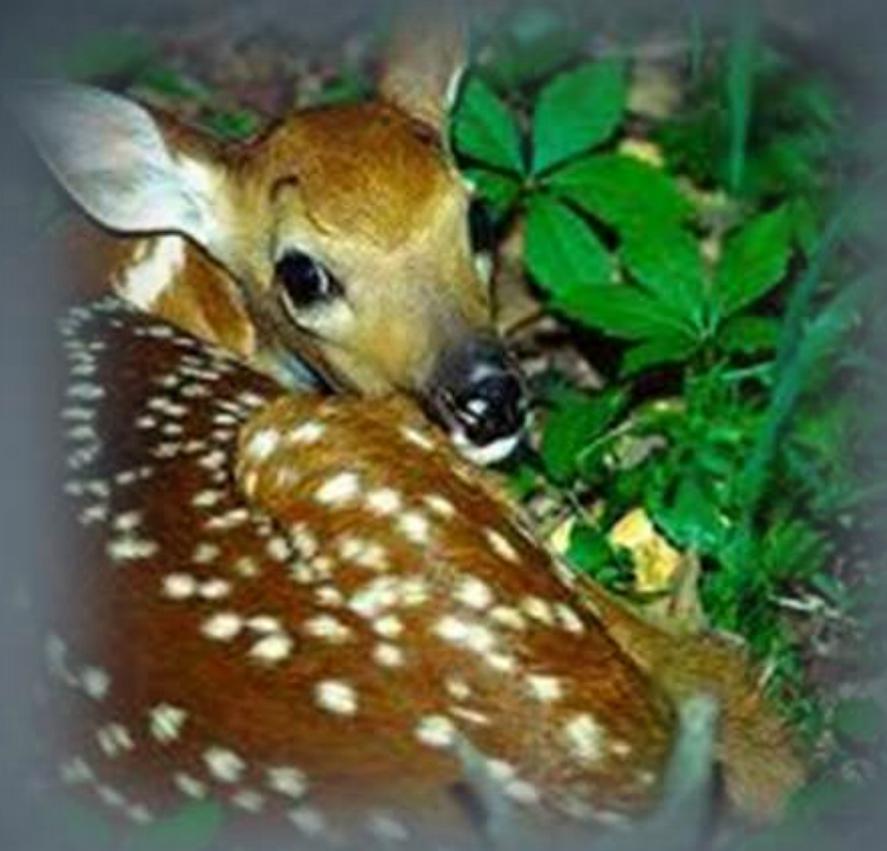
Their fur is usually reddish-brown and spotted in summer and thicker and greyer, with less distinct spots, in winter. They have a relatively long tail with a dark stripe running along

Fallow deer are sociable animals and usually live in herds of up to 50 or more. There are usually separate herds of males (bucks) and females (does). The male and female herds come together in autumn to mate.



During the rut, males scrape the ground with their antlers to mark their territory and establish their status and clash antlers with persistent rivals.





Breeding

Fallow deer mate in October & November and females give birth seven months later to a single young, called a fawn, which weighs only about 4.5kg.

It grows quickly and is remarkably agile even at a young age.

Within a week, the fawn joins the social group and follows the herd wherever it goes.



Diet

Mainly grasses, rushes and leaves from trees. Also acorns, berries and beechmast in the autumn and heather, holly and bark of felled conifers in winter.



Deer tracks Adult tracks are 6.5cm long. Other signs in the wild include regularly walked rutting paths, damaged bushes and frayed bark on saplings.



Habitat Deciduous woodlands, also marshes and meadows. This is the deer most frequently kept in parks.

Predators & threats They have no natural predators, but their numbers need to be controlled in some parks and a certain number are shot each year.







