

Name _____

The African Generuk

Giraffes aren't the only animals with long necks. The African generuk's name means "giraffe-necked" in the Somali language. They stand on their hind two legs and extend their necks to reach leaves on tall shrubs. They also use their front legs to pull down branches. This enables them to feed from bushes six to eight feet in height. The generuk's diet consists of leaves from thornbushes. They also eat buds, flowers, fruit, and climbing plants. They do not require water as they get all the moisture they need from their food.

The generuk has a small head with large eyes and ears. Males have stout, ringed horns. Related to gazelles, they have scent glands in front of their eyes and on their knees. They use the glands to mark territory.

Small groups of female generuks may live together with their young or with unattached males. Females range over a territory of one to two miles, traversing the

males' territory. Fawns are born in thickets apart from the group. The mother keeps the fawn hidden for a time. She leaves to feed but returns for nursing. The mother removes scents that would attract predators by cleaning or eating the fawn's waste.

One way that generuks warn others in the group of danger is by making a loud bleat. They communicate with their young with soft bleats. These antelopes make buzzing sounds when alarmed, and they may whistle when annoyed.

Predators of the generuk include lions, cheetahs, and leopards. Wild dogs and jackals also prey on generuks. Habitat loss and destruction threaten generuks. This makes it difficult for them to find food and shelter from predators. Conserving the thickets is one way to maintain the survival of this long-necked antelope.

Text Questions

- Which title would be a good alternative for this text?
 - "The Giraffe's Cousin"
 - "The Long-Necked Antelope"
 - "Leaf Eaters"
 - "Hidden Fawns"
- What are two unusual features of this animal?
 - It eats leaves and has a small head.
 - It has natural predators and can whistle when annoyed.
 - It has a long neck and does not need water.
 - The mother cares for the young, and the males have horns.
- What does the word *traversing* mean as it is used in the third paragraph?
 - opposing
 - surveying
 - turning
 - crossing
- How would you summarize the fourth paragraph?
 - Generuks are very vocal.
 - Generuks warn group members when there is danger.
 - Generuks are silent animals.
 - Generuks communicate with their young.
- What can we learn from studying animals with unusual characteristics?
