

Differences in close seasons between Scotland and the rest of the UK

Top Lines

[Redacted – Advice to Ministers & the Ministers responses to the Committee are a matter of public record and are therefore publicly available]

Background

Scotland

Species	Current Close Season Dates
Red Deer	21 st October – 30 th June
Sika Deer	21 st October – 30 th June
Fallow Deer	1 st May – 31 st July
Roe Deer	21 st October – 31 st March

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Species	Close Season Dates
Red Deer	1 st May – 31 st July
Sika Deer	1 st May – 31 st July
Fallow Deer	1 st May – 31 st July
Roe Deer	1 st November – 31 st March
Chinese Water Deer	1 st April – 31 st October
Muntjac Deer	No close season

- The red deer rut across the UK begins in September and lasts until around early November.
- The dates for the male deer close season in Scotland are aligned with that period.
- The dates for the male close season in the rest of the UK do not cover the rut.
- The difference in male close seasons is largely a result of historical differences in legislation.
- The dates for the male close season in the rest of the UK are broadly aligned with the time in which male deer grow their antlers.
- Male red deer typically begin to grow their antlers in the spring, they then drop off following the rut in winter.
- In Scotland, male deer can be culled throughout the period in which their antlers are growing.