

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

The annual late winter deer count took place on **Sunday 2nd March 2014**. A total of 52 people participated, covering the usual main compartments on the Quantock Hills as well as selected blocks of surrounding lower lying land. Counting conditions were generally good from first light at dawn, except for some early hill fog in the north which did not significantly affect the count.

After accounting for potential duplicate sightings, a total of **511** different **red deer** were recorded on the day. Overall this is 125 higher than during March 2013, when the lowest count for almost 20 years had been obtained, with a rise in hinds, calves as well as stags seen. However - all of the increases noted this year are restricted to the northern and central section, whereas merely two red deer were seen in those count blocks lying south of Lydeard Hill. As always - it is important to note that this one-off annual count is never likely to record the entire Quantock red deer population, as some deer within the count area are always likely to be missed in concealing cover, and some others tend to move further off the hills from late winter onwards. The main value of this count undertaken in the same manner year on year lies in recording minimum numbers remaining and to serve as an index of long term population trends. The increase this year indicates some slowing of the downward trend apparent since 2006 (see graph overleaf), and is further illustrated below by comparison with average figures for the past five years in the northern, central and southern sections.

While the count is primarily designed to focus on Red deer, other deer seen on the day included 91 roe (of which at least 21 were bucks); no fallow or muntjac were seen this year. With many thanks to everyone who turned out again at dawn to assist and to all landholders across the region for their continued co-operation with this annual count,

Jochen Langbein & Owen Jones (Deer count organisers; for further info see group web-site)

Quantock Deer Count - Summary of deer seen 2 March 2014

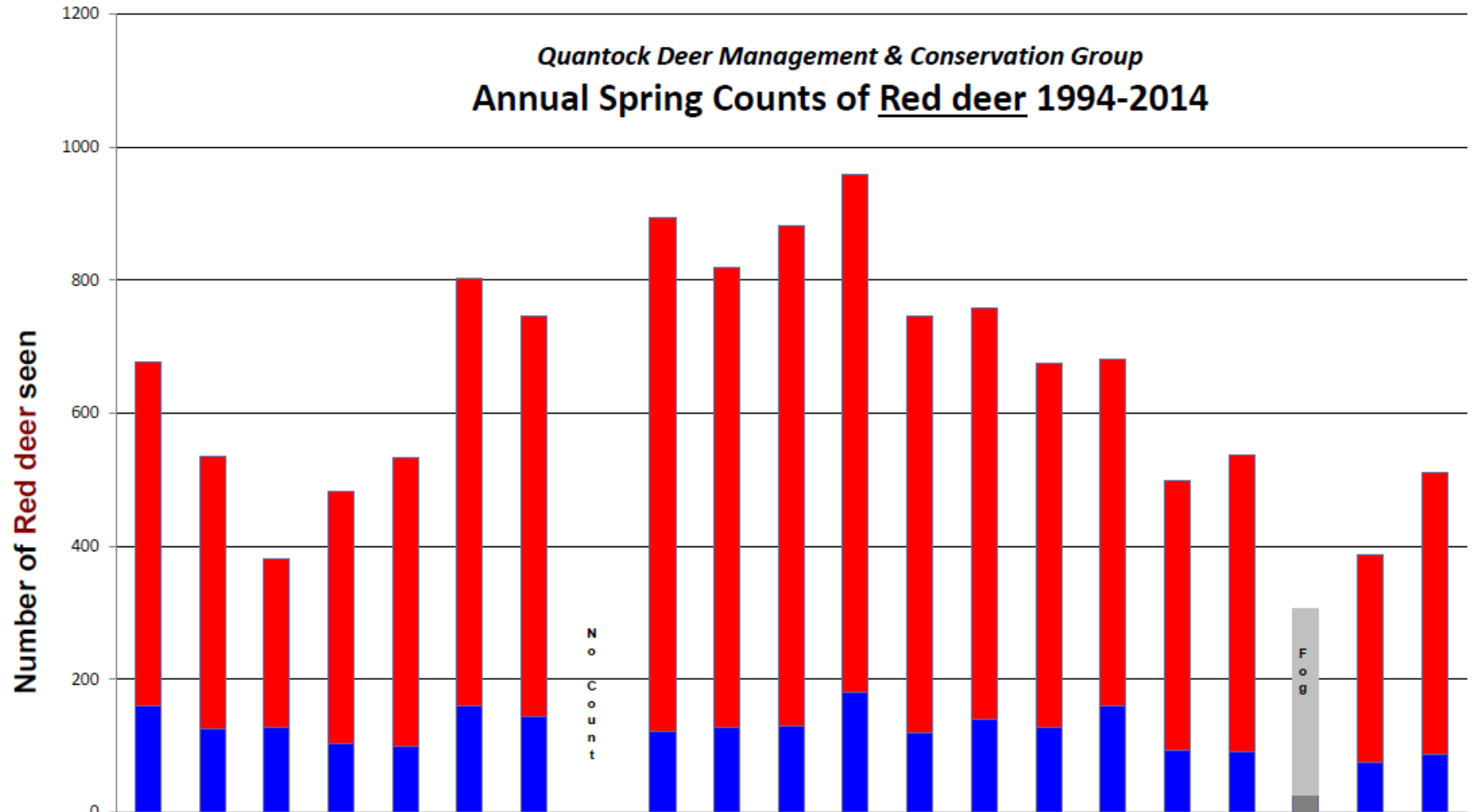
Red Deer	Hinds & Calves (of both sexes)	Prickets	Young Stags	Older Stags (> 4 yr old)	Roe Deer	Fallow Deer	Muntjac Deer
511:	424	28	38	21	91	0	0

Comparison of Red deer March 2014 with 4-year average by section:

Year 2014			Average 2010 – 2013		
Total	Hinds & Followers	Prickets & Stags	Total	Hinds & Followers	Prickets & Stags
511	424	87	477	392	85
A: North (all count blocks lying north of the Crowcombe to Overstowey road)					
321	258	63	301	246	55
B: Central: (South of Overstowey Road to Great Wood / West Bagborough & including Aisholt Common , and Crowcombe Heathfield)					
188	164	24	156	130	26
C: South-East (all areas south-east of Lydeard Hill - includes Cothelstone Hill, Broomfield Hill, Wind Down & King's Cliff)					
2	2	0	20	16	4

(Figures for 2012 excluded from average, as count affected by dense fog)

Quantock Deer Management & Conservation Group
Annual Spring Counts of Red deer 1994-2014



	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
■ Hinds&Calves	516	410	254	379	434	643	602		772	691	752	777	626	619	547	521	406	447	280	312	424
■ Stags&Prickets	160	125	127	103	100	159	143		121	128	129	181	119	139	128	159	92	90	26	74	87
Total	676	535	381	482	534	802	745	xx	893	819	881	958	745	758	675	680	498	537	306	386	511

Note – Red bars represent Hinds and calves of both sexes; blue bars show only (antlered) males of 18 months or older.