

MARKHOR

CAPRA FALCONERI

Markhors are medium-size wild goats that range from 36 to 44 inches-plus at the shoulder (females 26 to 34 inches) and weigh from 70 to 240 pounds. The males of the northern races display very long guard hairs in the colder months. Sexual dimorphism is notable with the females decidedly smaller and less spectacular in appearance. The largest male specimens carry great spiraling horns that in rare instances can reach over 60 inches around the spiral. The spiraling horns have three basic shapes, but there is a significant occurrence of overlapping horn types in most populations.

Scattered populations of markhors are distributed over the moist and semiarid mountainous tracts of the Hindu Kush and the western extensions of the Pamirs and Himalayas in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. They live in scrub forests made up primarily of oak, pine, and juniper in very steep terrain. The physically larger, flared-horn northern populations inhabit the colder areas and have longer hair, and the smaller, straight-horn and tighter twisted varieties occupy the southern, warmer parts of the markhor range.

Seven putative subspecies have been documented, with horn twists and flares as their principal distinguishing characteristics. However, considerable variation will be encountered within populations, and some individuals have been recorded with a horn of one type on the left and a horn of another type on the right. In 1903 Joseph Grew obtained two mature markhor heads in the Haramosh Range (which is well within the range of the Astor markhor distribution) from one location and the same population, yet the horns of one animal displayed the distinct V-shape formation of a Kashmir markhor while the other animal featured U-shape horns that are typical of the Astor variety. (See photo nearby) In the integration zones between subspecies it is very hard to make a classification; for instance, some Kabul varieties display the horn-flaring characteristics of the Kashmir type while others, from the more southern part of the Kabul range, look almost like a Suleiman markhor.

Initially Rowland Ward's *Records of Big Game* went to great lengths to identify many varieties, and the 1914, 1922, and 1928 editions of the record book make for very interesting reading. In them there are photos and notes on the many types of specimens listed. After World War II, a period of category lumping took place, and the tables were reduced to three varieties.

A decent case could be made to divide the markhors into three categories; (1) straight horned, (2) flare horned, and, finally, (3) Bukharan. This last variety is quite isolated in the northernmost range of the markhors. Traditionally, however, these animals have been split into more groups by hunters, and while flare-horned and straight-horned animals are very clearly identifiable in the southern- and easternmost populations, where these groups meet there would be too many combinations of horns types in the center. Currently the editors follow Damm & Franco and divide the markhor into five subspecies, admittedly with integrations where populations meet. They are from north to south: Bukharan or Tajik markhor (*Capra falconeri heptneri*), Astor or flare-horned markhor (*Capra falconeri falconeri*), Kashmir or Pin Panjal markhor (*Capra falconeri cashmiriensis*), Kabul markhor, (*Capra falconeri megaceros*), and the Suleiman markhor (*Capra falconeri jerdoni*). Because of conservation-based hunting programs in several countries, many populations have made a remarkable comeback from their nadir in the 1970s and 1980s. These populations now have the highest recorded numbers since World War II. Any mature wild markhor is considered a much sought-after hunting trophy because of the extremely steep terrain they inhabit that makes reaching their habitat challenging, their high state of alertness, and the difficulty in securing a permit.

Note that the so-called "Chiltan markhor" has been found to be a wild goat and is now scientifically designated as (*Capra aegagrus chiltanensis*), the Chilton wild goat.





Lt. Col. G. Roos-Keppel's Suleiman markhor is one of the largest ever recorded. It was obtained in Afghanistan in 1898.



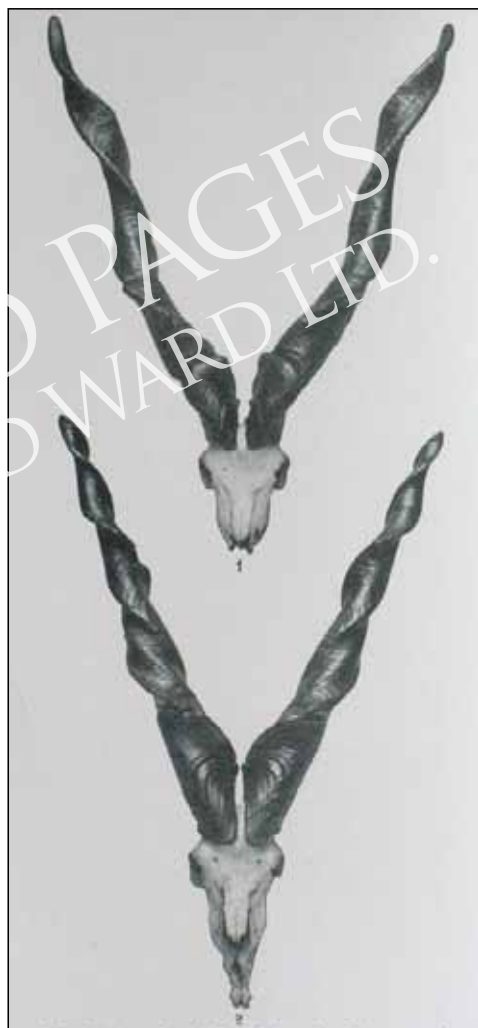
Col. A.B. Souter's Kashmir markhor from the Kafr Nullah, India. The longest horn is 65 inches, the shorter 64 2/8.



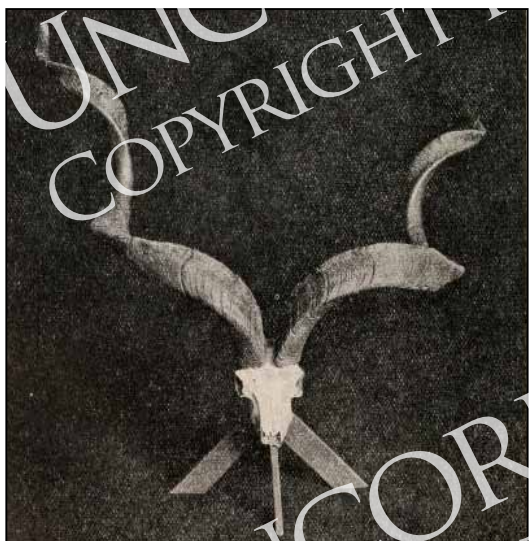
Eduardo Gerlero with his Astor markhor shot in the Kaghan region of Pakistan.



Joseph Grew and his shikaris with two markhors obtained from the same herd in the Haramosh Range, today Pakistan. The bottom head shows a great deal of flare and is a typical Astor with a U-shaped horn configuration while top specimen has a V-configuration like a Kashmir variety.



Top a Kabul markhor and bottom a Suleiman specimen, the differences are mainly in the rate of twist and the completely straight line of the horn axis of the Suleiman versus the slight weave in the Kabul



Top: H. Barstow's Astor markhor. Bottom: As it was presented to The Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society shortly after it was obtained in Gilit, Pakistan.



John LoMonaco with his Bukharan markhor from Tajikistan, both horns are over 50 inches, 2016.



Rudolf Sand's Kashmir markhor from Chiral, Pakistan, 1983.



Col. Grant's Suleiman markhor from 1898 in Afghanistan, it is today in the British Museum in London.

KASHMIR OR PIR PANJAL MARKHOR

Capra falconeri cashmiriensis

Distribution — India (Jammu and Kashmir), Pakistan (Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Kashmir), and in the Hindu Kush of northern Afghanistan. This is the only markhor that occurs in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

Description — Male Kashmir markhors weigh around 170 to 190 pounds and reach a shoulder height of about 40 inches. Both sexes are a reddish gray with more yellowish-buff tones in the smooth, short summer coat, which grows longer, thicker, and grayer in winter. Its winter pelage lacks

underwool, and the hair is long and coarse. Males have long hair on the chin, throat, chest, and shanks. The lower legs exhibit a black and white pattern. A dark lateral stripe is present in males. The spectacular horns, which form a V, generally are divergent with complete twists. The Kashmir type has a moderate flare and spirals with 1 to 1.5 twists; superlative specimens display 2 complete turns.

Note — The Astor and the Kashmir are the only markhors recorded to have horns that reach over 60 inches around the curl.

Method 15		Minimum Score 36"			Locality	Date	Owner	Method Taken
Length		Circumference						
L-Left	L-Right	C-Left	C-Right	T to T				
65	64 2/8	10 6/8	10 5/8	36	India, Kashmir, Kafr Nullah	1927	Col. A.B. Souter	PU
63	62	11 1/8	11 1/8	—	India, Kashmir, Pir Panjal	1898	Col. Cuppage	
59	58 3/8	12	11 7/8	36	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1895	Maj. J.C. Shirres	
59		10 6/8		—	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1906	Lt. Col. S.D. Turnbull	
57 6/8	57 5/8	10 6/8	10 7/8	41	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1909	Maj. A.R. Knox	
57 4/8	57	11 2/8	11 1/8	40	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1913	Maj. H.D. McLaughlin	
57 4/8	55 3/8	—		47 4/8	Pakistan, Drosh	1902	Capt. B.C. Graham	
57		11		38	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1921	Mrs. H.V. Bastow	
57	56 4/8	10 4/8	10 5/8	34	India, Kashmir, Mozi	1927	Maj. F.C.L. Grieve	
57	55 4/8	10 2/8	10 1/8	35	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc.	
56		11 4/8		32	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Maj. C. Rose	Mess of the Q.O. Corps of Guides
55 4/8	55	9 2/8	9 3/8	31 2/8	India, Kashmir, Chilas	—	Mess of the Q.O. Corps of Guides	
55	54 3/8	11	11 1/8	47	India	1898	East India Club	
54 2/8	54	10 4/8	10 5/8	26 4/8	India	1891	Alan O. Hume (1)	
54 2/8	53 3/8	9 4/8	9 6/8	36 6/8	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1927	Maj. L.P. Haviland	
53 6/8	52 2/8	10 5/8	10 3/8	36 4/8	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1921	St. G. de Carteret	
53 6/8	53	10	10	35	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1906	Lt. Col. C.A. Smith	
53 4/8	52 1/8	12 2/8	12 2/8	27 4/8	Pakistan, Chitral	—	E.A. Howard	
53 2/8		12		43 6/8	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1913	Maj. J.A. Pottinger	
53	51	11	11	34	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Col. A.C. O'Donnell	
53	50 3/8	11 6/8	11 7/8	34 4/8	India, Kashmir, Pir Panjal	1902	Col. F.W.H. Walshe	P.F. Hadow
52 6/8	52 1/8	11	10 7/8	35 4/8	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1913	Maj. A.G.W. Malet	
52 4/8	49 1/8	12 2/8	12 4/8	44 4/8	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1909	P.F. Hadow	
52		11		34	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1933	C.H. Lyall Grant	
52	49 5/8	10	10 1/8	33 6/8	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Capt. G.W. Burton	
52	41 5/8	11	10 7/8	40	India, Kashmir, Kaj-i-Nag	1969	M.K. Ranjitsinh of Wankaner	
51 6/8		10 7/8		—	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Maj. J.C. Bassett	
51 3/8	50 6/8	10	10 1/8	32 4/8	India, Kashmir, Pir Panjal	1891	Whitehead Collection	
51	51	11 4/8	11 3/8	41 6/8	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1921	Dr. T.G. Longstaffe	
51	50 2/8	11	10 7/8	34 4/8	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1906	Col. J.W.A. Morgan	
51	49 7/8	11 2/8	11 2/8	40 4/8	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1913	Capt. A.H. Cameron	Seaforth Highlanders
50 6/8		12		35 4/8	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1909	Seaforth Highlanders	
50 4/8	50 4/8	10	10	34 2/8	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Lt. Col. R.A. Lyall	
50 4/8	50 3/8	11	11 1/8	35	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1909	J. Arbuthnot	
50	49 1/8	12	11 7/8	36	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1895	Maj. W. Hayes-Sadler	
50	46 7/8	10	10 1/8	33	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Maj. R.H. Macdonald	
49 6/8		11 4/8		24 4/8	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Col. A.B. Souter	
49 4/8	48 7/8	10 6/8	10 6/8	32 4/8	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1921	Col. O.M. Harris	
49 4/8	44	11 2/8	11 4/8	32	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1898	Maj. L.W.S. Oldham	
48 4/8		10 4/8		29	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1927	Dr. F. Frowen	
48 2/8	46 1/8	11	11	29 4/8	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Lt. Col. Hon. A.C. Murray	Maj. A. Marshall
48		9 4/8		39	India	1906	Maj. A. Marshall	
48	48	11 4/8	11 3/8	32 4/8	India, Kashmir, Kajnag	1933	Lt. Col. G.K. Gregson	
48	47 1/8	11	11	30	India, Kashmir, Chilas	1913	Col. E. Le G. Whitting	
48	46 6/8	10 6/8	10 5/8	31 6/8	India	1913	Capt. H.W. Seton	
48	46	11	11 1/8	41	India	1909	Capt. E. Berry	
47 2/8	47	10 4/8	10 5/8	39	Pakistan, Chitral	—	Col. H. Gough	
47	46	11	11	29 4/8	Pakistan, Chitral	1983	Rudolf Sand	
39	35 7/8	11 4/8	11 4/8	28	India, Kashmir	--	D.N. Papalios	

