

ANTLERS

- Only bulls have antlers.
- Bull's shed their antlers in early spring.
- When antlers start to grow again, they are covered in velvet. Velvet is very sensitive in the growth stage and can be easily damaged.
- The places where the antlers begin to grow are called pedicles which are bone-follicles that are covered in skin.
- Testosterone is the hormone that helps the antlers continues to grow.
- As the bull ages, its rack can become larger and thicker.
- A rack of antlers can weigh as much as 40 lbs.
- Antlers are used in defense (sparring with other bulls), and posing during mating season to attract cows (wikipedia.com).

Bull Sparring During Mating Season



Photo by Forest Wander

Antlers With Velvet



Photo by Mongo

Bull Elk



Photo By Daniel Maer

- There is a difference between horns and antlers. Horns do not branch out like antlers, they are permanent, can be grown by both males and females, and grow in rings which can help indentifying the animals age. A Big Horn Sheep (shown below) can be found in similar terrain as an elk, but are identified by their horns, not their antlers



Photo by Allan D. Wilson, 2007

Shed Hunting

Antlers are also used for home furniture, art, dog treats, and other trade options. When a pair is found (or during hunting season) they are sometimes entered into competitions in various states. Most states have game books of largest game shot or the largest sheds found. Competition measures the width of the shed from one tip to the other and the diameter of the base.

Jackson Hole Wyoming's town square is famous for its elk antler shed arches. Since 1953 four arches have been built; each containing nearly 2000 lbs of elk antler sheds which were gathered from the local elk refuge. The local Boy Scouts and Rotary Club help maintain the arches so that tourists can continue to enjoy them (Jessica Zelenko, 2013)

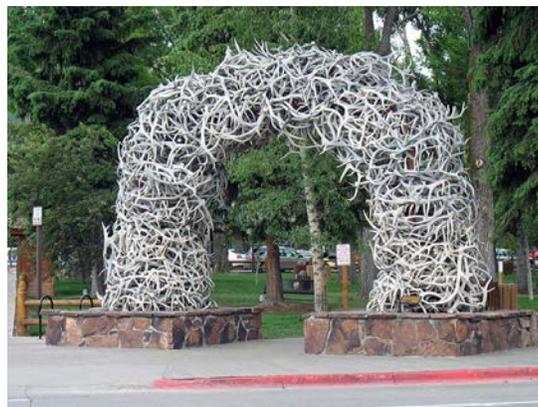


Photo by Monster, 2007