

Rare Deer Mauled to Death by Stray Moscow Dogs

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Approximately 150 spotted deer live at the Losiny Ostrov (Elk Island) forest preserve, according to environmentalists. **Manfred Richter / Pixabay**

Several spotted deer at Moscow's Losiny Ostrov (Elk Island) forest preserve have been mauled to death by a pack of stray dogs, park management [told](#) Russian media Thursday.

Environmental activists reported 10 killings over the long holiday weekend, [blaming](#) the park's new administration for making cuts to the ranger service that left approximately 150 spotted deer vulnerable to poachers and stray dogs.

Losiny Ostrov's administration said a pack of stray dogs had killed three spotted deer this week, the Moskva news agency reported.

"The severe cold weather has caused the animals' aggressiveness to increase," the park administration was quoted as saying. "These attacks are recorded annually, especially in cold winters."

The park said it has regularly raised the issue with municipal leaders in nearby Moscow region districts where the dogs are believed to be invading from.

It added that security has been stepped up in areas where the spotted deer, which had been brought in from the Russian Far East in the 1970s and whose population has since grown tenfold, are known to roam.

The Zelenyi Zmiy environmental Telegram channel, which first reported the mauling deaths with footage of one carcass on the doorsteps of the Losiny Ostrov ranger station, said 15 spotted deer have been killed at the park since the start of 2021.

The spotted deer is listed in Russia's Red Book of rare and endangered species.

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