

Large number of wild Milu deer sighted in Hunan

A large group of milu Deer have been spotted in central China's Hunan Province, authorities said.

Staff with Hunan Provincial Forestry Department found 62 wild milu deer during a drone inspection in a state nature reserve near Dongting Lake, the second-largest freshwater lake in China. It is the biggest group of wild milu deer ever seen in the area.

Staff with the department found the deer foraging during a survey on Thursday.

Last year, authorities found 41 of the deer in the reserve.

"The extra deer spotted this year must be the calves," said Zhang Hong, an official with the administration of the nature reserve.

Milu, also known as Pere David's deer, is a species endemic to China, but overhunting and loss of habitat led to its near extinction in the early 20th Century.

In 1986, the British government gifted 39 milu deer to Dafeng Milu National Nature Reserve in east China's Jiangsu Province, starting a revival of the population in its homeland.