

VALKENBURG

CALVING DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE RADIO-COLLARED CARIBOU FROM THE DELTA
AND YANERT CARIBOU HERDS

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Abstract: From 1980 through 1987 we annually monitored the calving distribution of 11-55 radio-collared female caribou from the Delta and Yanert Herds. Three Delta cows were adults when radio-collared, all others were 8-12 months old. All Yanert cows were adults when collared. In 5 of 9 years, $\geq 50\%$ of the pregnant Delta cows calved within the boundaries of a historically delineated "core calving area." In 1982 and 1985 the "core calving area" was 100% snow-covered and most calving occurred in adjacent areas with less snow. Snow cover was not an obvious factor in the other 2 years when most calving was outside the "core area." Radio-collared Yanert cows consistently used the same high-elevation (above 1,200 m) calving areas. Calving areas used by radio-collared Delta cows varied in size between years (range = 150-1,550 km²). Size of the calving area used by the Yanert cows was less variable. In some years up to 50% of nonparous radio-collared Delta females were distributed outside the area used for calving. Calving on the periphery of the main calving distribution was more frequent for primiparous than multiparous cows. In 1984 and 1987, 20% and 50%, respectively, of the radio-collared Delta cows calved about 50 km west of the "core calving area."

Key Words: calving, Delta Herd, radio-collar, Rangifer, Yanert Herd.

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