



WEAR IT WILD

POLAR BEAR



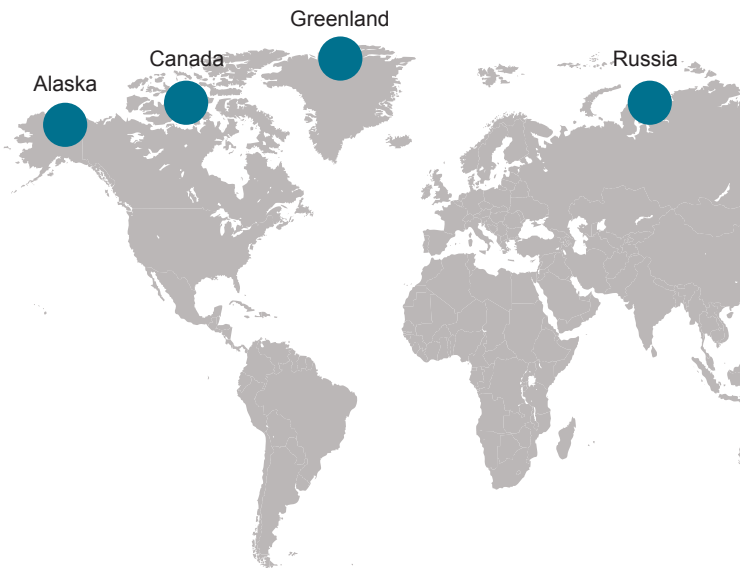
© naturepl.com / Andy Rouse / WWF

Hi, I am the polar bear, the largest living land carnivore. I am instantly recognisable from the distinctive white colour of my thick fur.

Read on to discover more interesting facts about me.

Where I live

I live in the Arctic on land and ice-covered waters. I can be found in five countries: the United States (Alaska), Canada, Russia, Greenland and Norway.
wwf.org.uk/wildlife/polar_bear/



CHARACTERISTICS

- My claws act like ice-picks, and the soles of my feet act like suction cups so I can easily walk on ice.
- I can grow up to 3 metres in length.
- I weigh between 350-680kg.
- I am a strong swimmer and spend most of my life around water.
- I may be big, but I'm also fast. I stalk my prey moving low and slow, camouflaged by the ice then I charge at speeds of up to 25mph!

DID YOU KNOW

Pregnant female polar bears don't eat for up to eight months - when they give birth and nurse their young.

MY FAMILY

Female polar bears give birth in snow dens to a litter of cubs (twins are common). My mother will nurse and care for me and my brother/sister(s) for two and half years until I am independent, during this time she will wait and not have any more cubs. Adult males live alone throughout the year.



VIDEO

Watch footage of me:

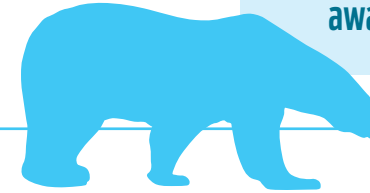
- arkive.org/polar-bear/ursus-maritimus/video-00.html
- arkive.org/polar-bear/ursus-maritimus/video-08d.html
- arkive.org/polar-bear/ursus-maritimus/video-12.html

FEEDING

- I am the top predator in my food chain.
- My main food source is seals, but I'll also feed on walruses, belugas and seabirds.
- I have the ability to devour large amounts of food rapidly, however, I can adapt very well if there isn't much food available.

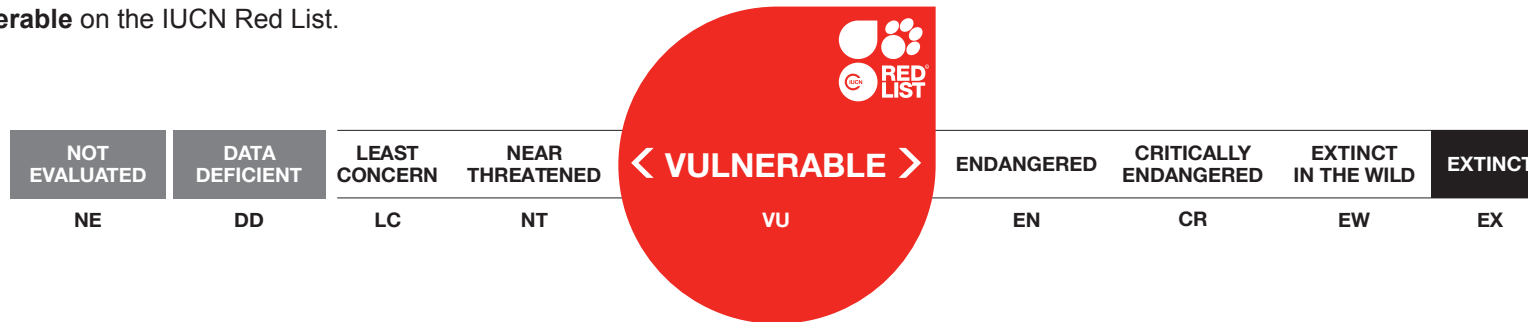
DID YOU KNOW

I have an incredible sense of smell; I'm able to detect prey nearly a kilometre away and up to a metre under snow.

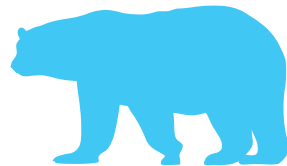


CLASSIFICATION

I am classified as **Vulnerable** on the IUCN Red List.



STATUS



- Climate change threatens my habitat.
- The Arctic is warming up, causing the sea ice I depend on to hunt and breed, to melt away.
- The number of my species remaining in the wild is estimated to be about 25,000.

- Loss of sea-ice also threatens my main prey, seals, which depend on sea-ice to raise their young and rest. Because I can't find enough prey I get hungry and sometimes enter towns and villages to find food – this upsets humans and I may be killed as a result. Other threats to my species include illegal hunting, pollution and disturbances from industrial activities.