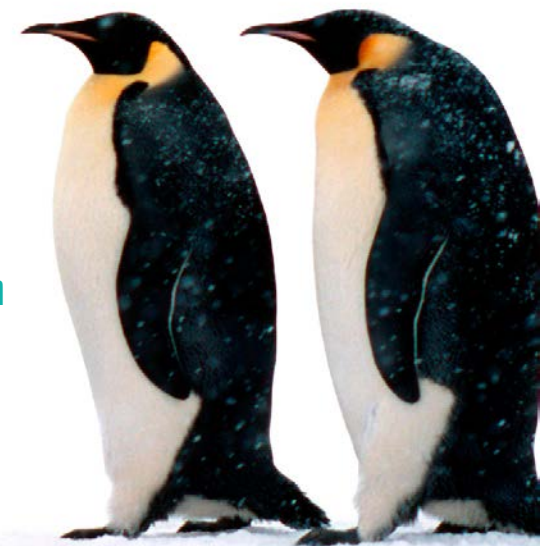




EMPEROR PENGUIN

The emperor penguin is the largest of all the penguins. They are one of only two penguin species that spend the winter in Antarctica.

Read on to discover more interesting facts about them.



© Fritz Polking / WWF

WHERE
THEY
LIVE

Emperor penguins live in Antarctica, which is a polar desert surrounded by the ocean. It's extremely cold but they can survive the harshest of winters. www.bas.ac.uk/about/antarctica/wildlife/penguins/emperor-penguin/



CHARACTERISTICS

- To preserve heat, emperor penguins have a dense double layer of feathers and large fat reserves.
- Smaller beaks and flippers compared to other penguins, help Emperor penguins to keep warm and retain more heat.
- More than 1m tall and weigh up to 40 kg.
- Like all penguins they can't fly, so waddle clumsily on land or slide along the ice; in water however, they glide and dive effortlessly.

FAMILY

When a female lays an egg she passes it to the male who keeps it warm by balancing it on top of his feet and covering it with a flap of skin. While the female penguin returns to the sea for two months to feed, the male incubates the egg.

Huge colonies of males huddle together to stay warm, with individuals taking turns to stand at the outer edge of the huddle where it is coldest. Males do not eat while they incubate the egg and can lose up to 45% of their body weight.

After two months the chicks hatch and the male brings up food from his stomach to feed it. Then the female penguin returns from the sea and takes

DID YOU KNOW

Emperor penguins are the world's largest living penguin. To prevent heat loss, they have a proportionally smaller beak and flippers compared to other penguins.

FEEDING

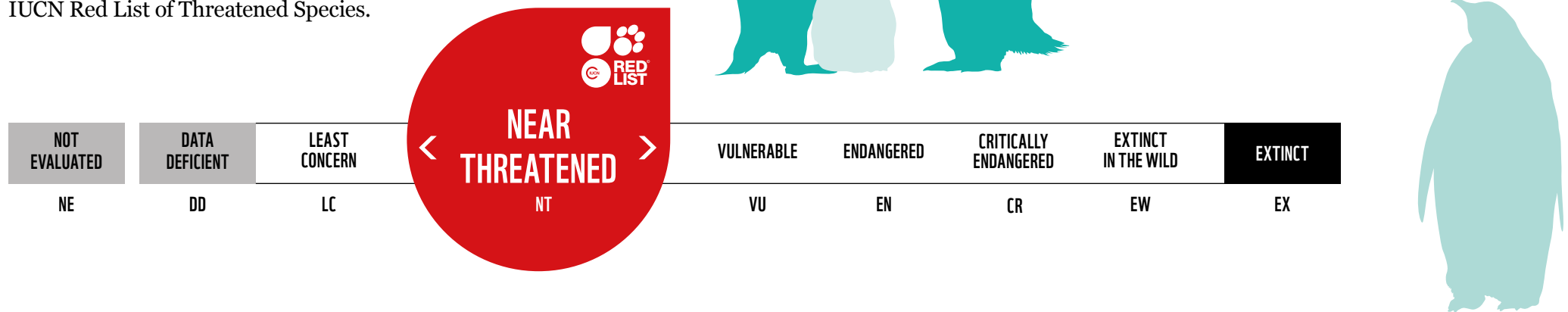
- They hunt in the open sea or underneath the sea-ice.
- They feed mainly on fish, squid and krill.

DID YOU KNOW

Emperors have by far the deepest and longest dives of any bird. They often reach depths of over 200 metres, and can stay submerged for up to 22 minutes.

CLASSIFICATION

Classified as **Near Threatened** by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.



STATUS

Climate change and warming oceans are predicted in the longer term to reduce the extent of Antarctic sea-ice, which would result in the loss of large areas of their breeding habitat.

Overfishing and oil pollution from shipping accidents are also threats to their population and environment.

Their population is projected to undergo quite a rapid decline over the next three generations due to the effects of climate change. Conservation efforts are being undertaken to improve the way Antarctica is managed and also working to reduce the impacts of climate change.



POLAR BEAR

The polar bear is the largest living land carnivore. They're instantly recognisable from the distinctive white colour of their thick fur.

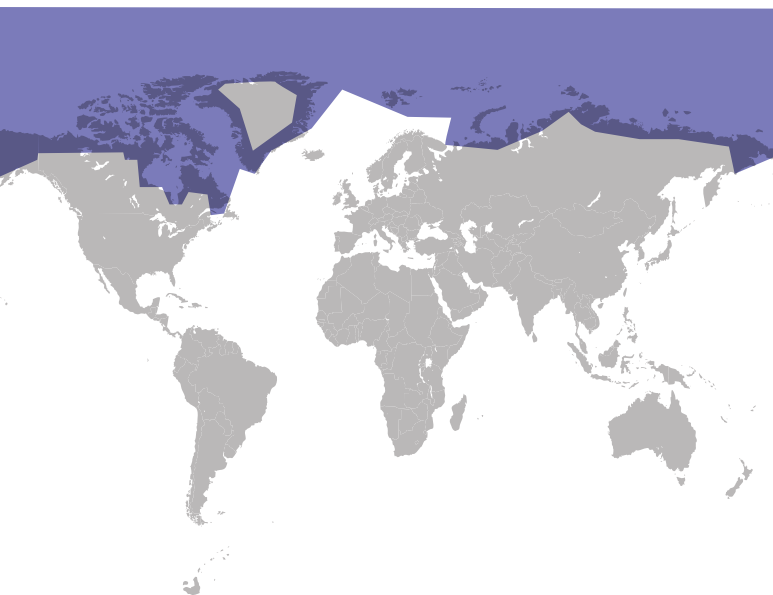
Read on to discover more interesting facts about them.



WHERE
THEY
LIVE

Polar bears live in the Arctic on land and ice-covered waters. They can be found in five countries: the United States (Alaska), Canada, Russia, Greenland and Norway.

wwf.org.uk/wildlife/polar_bear/



CHARACTERISTICS

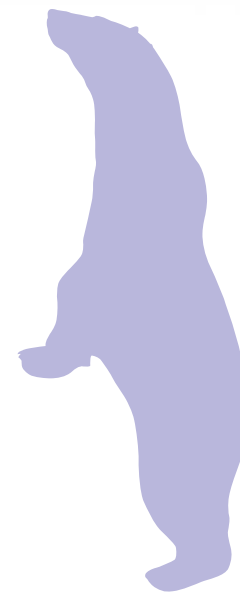
- Polar bears have more hair on the bottom of their paws than any other bear. These furry foot pads may increase their grip on slippery sea ice and also help keep their feet warm.
- They can grow up to 3 metres in length.
- Males are much bigger than females – weighing 300-650kg, but can weigh up to 800kg.
- Strong swimmers, they spend most of their life around water.
- They may be big, but they're also fast. They stalk their prey moving low and slow, camouflaged by the ice then they charge at speeds of up to 30mph!

DID YOU KNOW

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

FAMILY

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



FEEDING

- They are the top predator in their food chain.
- Polar bears' main prey are ringed seals and bearded seals. They also scavenge on whale carcasses. When this is not available, they will eat small mammals, birds, eggs and vegetation.
- They make use of the direction of the wind to conceal their scent from prey.

DID YOU KNOW

Polar bears have an incredible sense of smell; they're able to detect prey nearly a kilometre away and up to a metre under snow.

CLASSIFICATION

Classified as **Vulnerable** on the IUCN Red List.



STATUS

- Climate change is the single greatest threat to polar bears.
- The Arctic is warming up, causing the sea ice they depend on to hunt and breed, to melt away.
- The number of their species remaining in the wild is estimated to be between 22,000-31,000.
- Loss of sea-ice also threatens their main prey, seals, which depend on sea-ice to raise their young and rest. Hungry polar bears sometimes enter towns and villages to find food. Encounters between bears and people can be dangerous and even deadly - to people or to the bears. Other threats to the species include illegal hunting, pollution and disturbances from industrial activities.