



# Arctic animals, their habitats and climate change.

# The three main Arctic habitats are:

- Polar deserts in the very north (the High Arctic)
- Tundra in the middle - treeless plains over frozen ground
- The taiga - boreal forests in the south (Low Arctic)



# Polar Desert

## Animals

- Polar bear
- Walrus
- Arctic fox
- Arctic hare
- Arctic wolf
- Seals
- Whales
- Snowy owl
- Greenland shark
- Narwhal

## Impacts of climate change

- Ice is melting on land and sea - loss of habitat for animals.
- Glaciers are receding.
- The sea is getting less salty – new species are coming further north.
- Melting ice means animals have to travel further to find food.



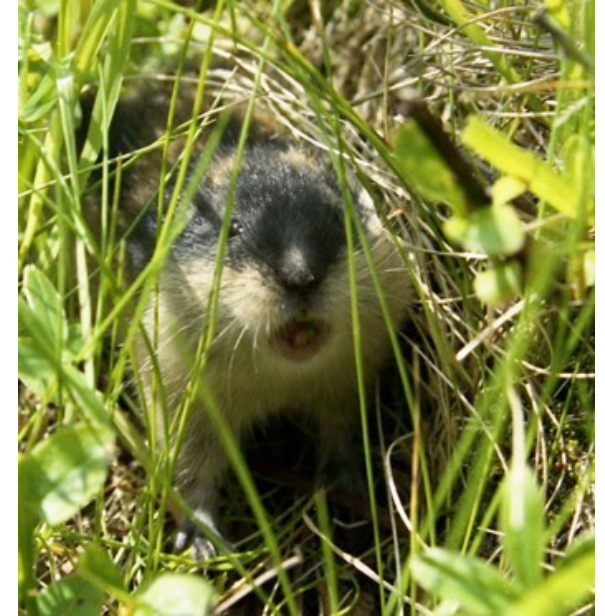
# Tundra

## Animals

- Arctic fox
- Arctic hare
- Polar bear
- Caribou
- Ermine (mink)
- Lemming
- Musk Ox
- Vole
- Weasel
- Wolf

## Impacts of climate change

- Area getting smaller – animals face increasing competition for space and food.
- Permafrost is melting.
- Mining / drilling is increasing habitat loss.
- Humans are moving further north, coming into competition with animals.
- Loss of mosses and lichens – key foods for some animals such as caribou.



# Taiga

## Animals

- Arctic fox
- Arctic hare
- Arctic wolf
- Badger
- Bald eagle
- Black and brown bear
- Beaver
- Caribou
- Ermine (mink)
- Wolverine
- Dall sheep
- Lynx
- Moose
- Musk ox
- Lemming
- Husky
- Gray wolf
- Great horned owl
- Muskrat
- Reindeer
- Geese

## Impacts of climate change

- Treeline and vegetation is moving north – more trees means some animals have more food.
- More forest fires. Temporary loss of habitat for animals and release of CO<sub>2</sub> into the air.





# Overall Arctic climate trends and impact on animals

## Climate trends

- Overall warming
- More rain, less snow
- Rivers getting fuller, faster
- Seasons changing – spring starting earlier

## Impact on animals

- Habitat loss
- Less food or having to go further to find food or increased competition for food
- Breeding seasons changing
- Species bumping into each other!



Above: A pizzly or grolar – occurs when a polar bear which has travelled south mates with a grizzly bear which has travelled north.