



A warm invisibility cloak - Beneath their distinctive white coat, the skin of polar bears is actually jet black, helping it retain sunlight it absorbs through its hair. Their fur doesn't even contain any white pigment but is instead made up of hollow hairs that scatter visible light, keeping them camouflaged against the sea ice. A dense layer of underfur and a further layer of blubber insulates the body, keeping the polar bear warm.



Regenerative antlers - What sets caribou apart from others in the deer family is that both males and females grow antlers. In the early stages of development, they're covered in a layer of soft fuzz, called velvet, which provides nutrients to the antlers and promotes growth. Once they have finished growing, the caribou sheds the velvet, exposing sharp, red stained antlers. Shortly after this, the antlers themselves fall off, and regrow over the next year.



Toothy tools - The scientific name for a walrus is *Odobenus rosmarus*, which is Latin for "tooth-walking seahorse". This is appropriate as their iconic tusks are actually canine teeth, and have been known to grow up to 37 inches! Males have bigger tusks than females, and the tusks never stop growing throughout their lives. They can be used as tools to help a walrus haul itself onto ice floes, or as weapons to help males defend their territory.



Animals of the High Arctic

The Northwest Passage is an unspoiled oasis across the High Arctic. Its animal life of musk oxen, caribou, seals and polar bears migrate to more comfortable climes or adapt to the icy landscape.

Mammals on ice

The waters of the Northwest Passage are home to six species of seal: harp, hooded, ringed, bearded, spotted, and ribbon. Closely related to the seal, the mighty walrus also lives there, and you can identify them from afar by their big hairless bodies and long ivory tusks.

The natural predators of ringed and bearded seals, polar bears are endemic to the North Pole. With its pale fur and a standing height of up

to ten feet, these solitary bears are a sight to behold.

Herbivore herds

Deep in the tundra live herds of musk oxen and caribou. A caribou is noticeable for its majestic antlers, which stretch out above its head on both sides like tree branches. You may notice a musk ox's shaggy coat, but it's the strong odour that the males emit during mating season which has inspired the ox's name.