

Oral Report Transcript:

Polar Bears

Polar bears are the largest species of bear. They are also known in different countries as 'sea bear', 'ice bear' or 'white bear'. Like pigs, female polar bears are called **sows**; males are called **boars**.

Polar bears live in the polar regions of the Arctic: the northernmost regions of Russia, Greenland, Alaska, Canada and Norway. In the winter, polar bears dig out temporary dens for themselves or find natural shelters to sleep in. In the summer, they lie outside on the ice, and travel on **ice floes**. They are very strong swimmers and have a great sense of smell.

A polar bear can easily be recognised by its white coat made from two types of fur. Under the fur, the skin is black, and under the skin is a layer of blubber, which keeps the bear warm. Its large, fur-covered paws act as snowshoes to help it walk on the ice, paddles to help it swim through the water and weapons to catch its prey.

Polar bears are the world's largest land predators and hunt at night. Their main food is seals, but they also eat walruses, birds, stranded whales and reindeer. They do not need to drink water, as they get all the liquid they need from the food they eat.

Female polar bears usually give birth to two cubs, in the middle of winter. A newborn cub is about the same size as a rat. The cubs depend on their mother for survival for up to 20 months. Some young bears die of starvation if the mother is not able to find enough food to feed them, but bears who reach adulthood live for around 20 years.

An adult polar bear has few natural enemies, although they are sometimes fatally injured when fighting with walruses for food. The biggest threat to polar bears is pollution which can poison their food supply.