

Polar Bears

Sally Cowan



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What Are Polar Bears?

Polar bears are the largest bears on Earth.

They live in the **Arctic**, near the North Pole.

It is one of the coldest environments on Earth.

Polar bears spend most of their lives **roaming** the sea ice.

This is where they hunt for food.





A polar bear mother and cub roam the sea ice.

Living in the Cold

Polar bears have large, solid bodies with a thick layer of fat. The fat helps them to stay warm.

Their fur is also important for warmth. Two layers of thick fur cover their skin.

Polar bears are strong swimmers.

They have powerful front legs with large, webbed paws like paddles. Their narrow heads and long necks allow them to move smoothly through the water.



Polar bears use their large paws to swim.

Their thick, sharp claws are for digging into the ice and for grabbing prey. Large teeth and powerful jaws allow polar bears to tear their prey apart.

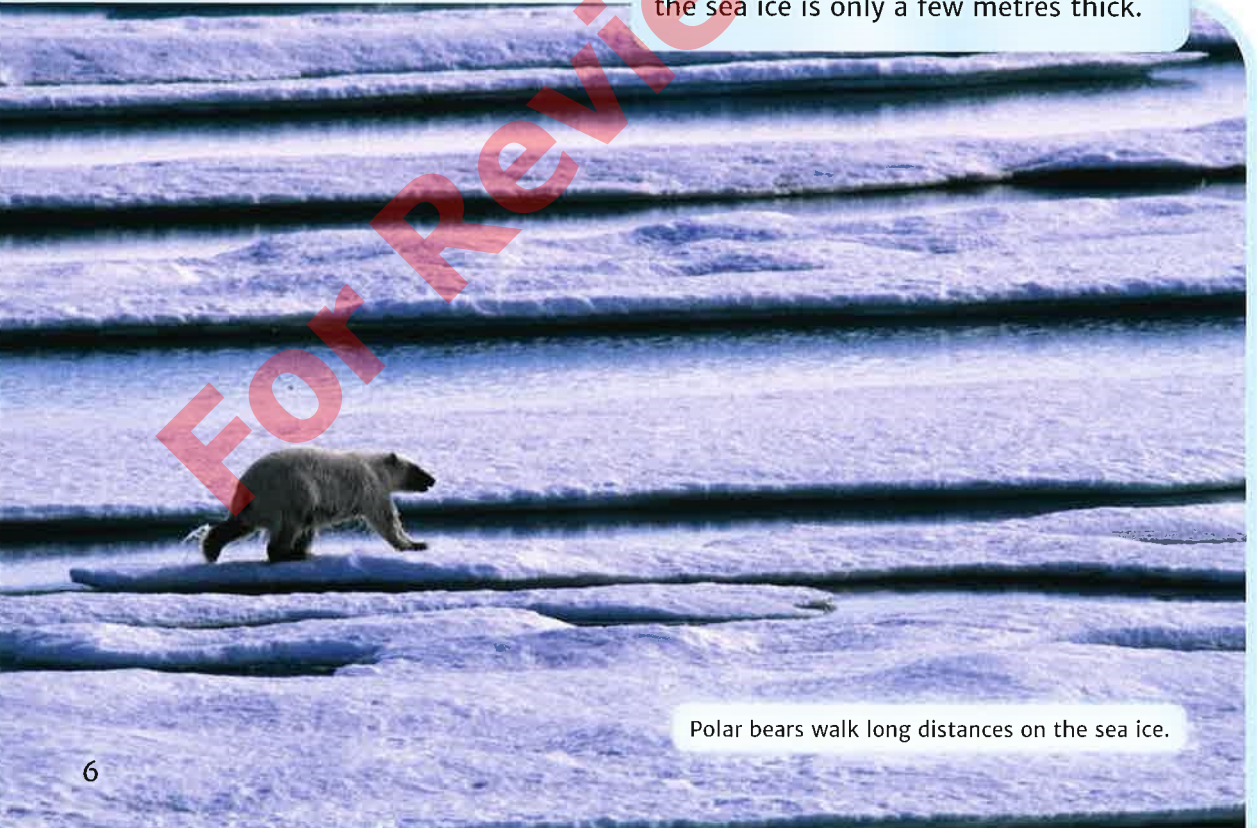


Sea Ice

The sea ice of the Arctic Ocean is the main **habitat** of polar bears. It is where they hunt seals to eat.

The amount of sea ice changes during the year. In autumn and winter, the ocean freezes for thousands of kilometres. The sky is dark for much of the time as polar bears roam the large areas of ice. The bears walk slowly and steadily over long distances for many hours.

Even in the coldest areas of the Arctic, the sea ice is only a few metres thick.



Polar bears walk long distances on the sea ice.

If there are storms, polar bears dig a hole in the ice or snow for shelter. They curl up inside the hole, out of the wind.



A polar bear comes out of a hole in the snow after a storm.