Welcome the world’s largest land-living carnivore: the Polar Bear. This powerful mammal makes a living on the sea ice of the Arctic. Here they feed on seals, belugas, fish, sea birds and more. At a maximum body length of 2.5m, height at the shoulder of 1.6m, and weight of 800kg, these are not creatures to be crossed! The Polar Bear’s large size helps it survive in the cold of the Arctic. This is because as you get bigger, the proportion of your body in contact with the outside world becomes less. Add to this thick layers of fur and blubber to keep the heat their body produces in, and fur on the soles of their feet to insulate them from the ice beneath, and you have an animal well adapted to the cold.

Polar Bears are good at getting around in their frozen habitats. They can outrun reindeer for short distances, and are strong swimmers. Bears have been known to swim as far as 65km across open water. The scientific name for Polar Bears, Ursus maritimus, reflects their life by and in the sea. Polar Bear claws do not retract, acting like little ice picks to give them grip on this slippery surface. Their main food is seals. Bears will often capture these sea creatures when they come up to breathe at holes in the sea ice. Polar Bears have an amazing sense of smell, and can pick up the scent of a seal from almost a kilometre away. And hiding in lairs beneath the snow doesn’t always protect them – a Polar Bear can still sniff them out...