

Small Categories Series

Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About *Walrus*!

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Walrus are cinnamon brown in color. They are able to turn their hind flippers forward to aid in movement on land. Their front flippers are large and each has five digits. Males have special air sacs that are used to make a bell-like sound.

Both males and females have large tusks that are used for defense, cutting through ice and getting out of the water. The tusks can be more than three feet long in males and about two and a half feet long in females. The walrus diet includes clams, mussels and other bottom dwelling organisms that they locate through their whiskers. They are also known to eat carcasses of young seals when food is scarce.

The worldwide walrus population is about 250,000 animals. Pacific walrus number more than 200,000. The Pacific walrus population was severely reduced by hunting in the past, but their numbers have rebounded after these severe reductions.

The walrus is circumpolar in its range but they are found in geographically separate areas. The Pacific walrus is found in the Bering, Chukchi, and Laptev Sea, while the Atlantic walrus inhabits the coastal regions of northeastern Canada and Greenland.

Walrus are very social animals and congregate in large numbers. They haul out in herds, and males and females form separate herds during the non-breeding season. They establish dominance through threat displays involving tusks, bodies and aggression. The largest walrus are the most aggressive. Walrus spend two thirds of their lives in and out of the water, feeding and resting on sea ice. Most walrus groups migrate north in the summer and south in the winter, and females haul out on the ice to give birth.

Calves are ashen gray to brown in color and weigh in from about 99-165 pounds at birth. They turn reddish brown within a few weeks and grow rapidly on their mothers' milk.
[wikipedia]

