**Asset Information Page**

**Polar Bear**

**Sticky Note 1:**

**The polar bear evolved one to three million years ago from the brown bear, which still ekes out a marginal life along the northern shore of the Arctic oceans!**

**Appearance:** Polar Bears are about seven to eight feet long, measured from the nose to the tip of their very short tail. Male polar bears are much larger than the females.

A large male can weigh more than 1,700 pounds, while a large female is about half that size.

**Habitat:** Most polar bears occur north of the Arctic Circle to the North Pole. There are some populations south of the Arctic Circle in the Hudson Bay of Manitoba, Canada. Polar bears live in Alaska, Canada, Russia, Greenland, and some northern islands owned by Norway, such as Svalbard.

**Movement:** Polar bears roam the Arctic ice sheets and swim in that region's coastal waters. They are very strong swimmers, and their large front paws, which they use to paddle, are slightly webbed.

**Diet:**  Unlike other bear species, polar bears are almost exclusively meat eaters (carnivorous). They mainly eat ringed seals, but may also eat bearded seals.

Polar bears hunt seals by waiting for them to come to the surface of sea ice to breathe!

-------------------------------------------------------End of Sticky Note 1---------------------------------------------------------

**Sticky Note 2:**

**Because they spend so much time in the ocean, polar bears are classified as marine mammals. The polar bear’s scientific name, Ursus maritimus, means “sea bear”!**

**Reproduction:**  In fall pregnant polar bears make dens in earth and snowbanks, where they will stay through the winter and give birth to one to three cubs. In spring the mother emerges from her den followed by her cubs.

**Social Structures:** Polar bears tend to live solitary lives except when mating, when a female raising her cubs forms a family group, or when many bears are attracted to a food source like a beached whale.

Unlike black bears and brown bears, polar bears do not hibernate during the winter months because that’s when sea ice forms, which the polar bears need to hunt seals.

**Communication:**  When necessary or playing, polar bears communicate with each other with grunts, growls, roars, or squeals.

**Survival Skills:** The chief threat to the polar bear is the loss of its sea ice habitat due to climate change.  Polar bears need our help and protection to ensure a long, healthy future for the species.

-------------------------------------------------------End of Sticky Note 2---------------------------------------------------------