

# **Russia: Neural network counts almost 180 polar bears on Yakutia's Bear Islands**

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**Body**

Almost 180 ***polar bears*** live on the ***Bear*** Islands in Yakutia. Under the White ***Bear*** Census project, a neural network processed drone images, Vladimir Chernook, leader of the Arctic Ecosystem Research Laboratory at the Ecology Research Institute said at the ***Polar Bear*** Universe conference, held at the Skolkovo Innovation Center in Moscow and Chukotka.

"At the conference last year, we discussed results of the White ***Bear*** Census large-scale project's first stage. An expedition to the Wrangel Island found 864 ***polar bears*** lived there. In the autumn of 2023, the project continued at the ***Bear*** Islands Nature Reserve in Yakutia. From unique Orlan-10 unmanned aerial vehicles, capable of operating in harsh Arctic conditions without creating noise and without disturbing animals, scientists have obtained more than 25,000 high-resolution images and used a neural network to process them. Supported by the artificial intelligence opportunities, the scientists have found 176 ***polar bears*** lived on the ***Bear*** Islands," the expert said.

Further plans of the White ***Bear*** Census include studies at the Gydan National Park on the Yamal Peninsula, at the Bolshoy Arctic Nature Reserve (the Krasnoyarsk Region), at the Ust-Lena Nature Reserve (Yakutia). Scientists will clarify how many ***polar bears*** live in the Russian Arctic and will offer measures for their effective protection.

Some 25-29 thousand ***polar bears*** live across in the world, and every third ***polar bear*** lives in the Russian Arctic. ***Polar bear*** is the largest terrestrial predator. It is listed in the Red Data Book. Since 2019, Russia's environment watchdog, Rosprirodnadzor, has recorded 20 conflict situations between a ***bear*** and a human.

About conference

The ***Polar Bear*** Universe 7th international conference runs on March 19-21 at the Skolkovo Innovation Center in Moscow and in Chukotka's Anadyr. Following the conference, the country plans to create a permanent international expert platform on Arctic biological diversity. TASS is the conference's general news agency.

Source: Russian News Agency

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