

Arctic Wildlife in Danger Due to Climate Change

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Category : Science/Environment

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **devoid** / **dɪˈvɔɪd** / (adj) – not having something, completely without something
Example: The patch of land outside the city was **devoid** of plants and trees.
- 2. **shed** / **ʃed** / (v) – to naturally lose one’s skin or fur
Example: Some dogs **shed** their fur in spring.
- 3. **forage** / **ˈfɔr ɪdʒ**, **ˈfɔr-** / (v) – to search or hunt for something
Example: The animals **forage** for food in the wild.
- 4. **dwindle** / **ˈdwɪn dl** / (v) – to become smaller, fewer in number
Example: The population of these creatures is expected to **dwindle** in the next twenty years.
- 5. **confinement** / **kənˈfaɪn mənt** / (n) – the state of being limited in terms of movement
Example: Dangerous criminals are punished with **confinement**.

Article

Read the text below.

A conservation group recorded a video of a starving polar bear failing to find food.

The footage was recorded during a summer trek in Baffin Island, a land area in the Canadian Arctic region that is already **devoid** of ice.

The polar bear was not in the best of health. Its fur was **shedding** and it was having difficulty walking. It was also visibly hungry while trying to look for food in a trash can abandoned by local fishermen. Unfortunately, it found nothing. Finally, it collapsed to the ground, having used up most of its strength.

The filmmakers suggested that what happened to the bear might be an effect of climate change, which is responsible for the decrease of Arctic ice in regions like Alaska and Canada.

Their video explains that as Arctic ice melts, polar bears are cut off from seals, which are among their natural prey. With their main food source gone, the bears **forage** for food elsewhere. Some wander to human communities, while many starve to death. Consequently, their population is **dwindling**. In fact, a government report warned that almost one-third of the global polar bear population could face extinction by 2025.

The decreasing ice in the Arctic region also threatens other species in the area. The Peary caribous, which uses sea ice for migration, suffer **confinement** because of the lack of ice. This prevents them from traveling to other areas, making breeding more difficult.

Another affected animal is the musk ox. Due to climate change, winters become warmer, thus exposing their population to new diseases that threaten their survival.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- How can polar bears that are suffering because of climate change be helped?

