



POLAR BEAR



Hi, I am the polar bear, the largest living land carnivore. I am instantly recognisable from the distinctive white colour of my thick fur.

Read on to discover more interesting facts about me

WHERE I LIVE

I live in the Arctic on land and ice-covered waters. I can be found in five countries: the United States (Alaska), Canada, Russia, Greenland and Norway.

wwf.org.uk/wildlife/polar_bear/



CHARACTERISTICS

- My claws act like ice-picks, and the soles of my feet act like suction cups so I can easily walk on ice.
- I can grow up to 3 metres in length.
- I weigh between 350-680kg.
- I am a strong swimmer and spend most of my life around water.
- I may be big, but I'm also fast. I stalk my prey moving low and slow, camouflaged by the ice then I charge at speeds of up to 25mph!

DID YOU KNOW

Pregnant female polar bears don't eat for up to eight months - when they give birth and nurse their young.

MY FAMILY

Female polar bears give birth in snow dens to a litter of cubs (twins are common). My mother will nurse and care for me and my brother/sister(s) for two and half years until I am independent, during this time she will wait and not have any more cubs. Adult males live alone throughout the year.



VIDEO

Watch footage of polar bears:



- arkive.org/polar-bear/ursus-maritimus/video-00.html
- arkive.org/polar-bear/ursus-maritimus/video-08d.html
- arkive.org/polar-bear/ursus-maritimus/video-12.html

FEEDING

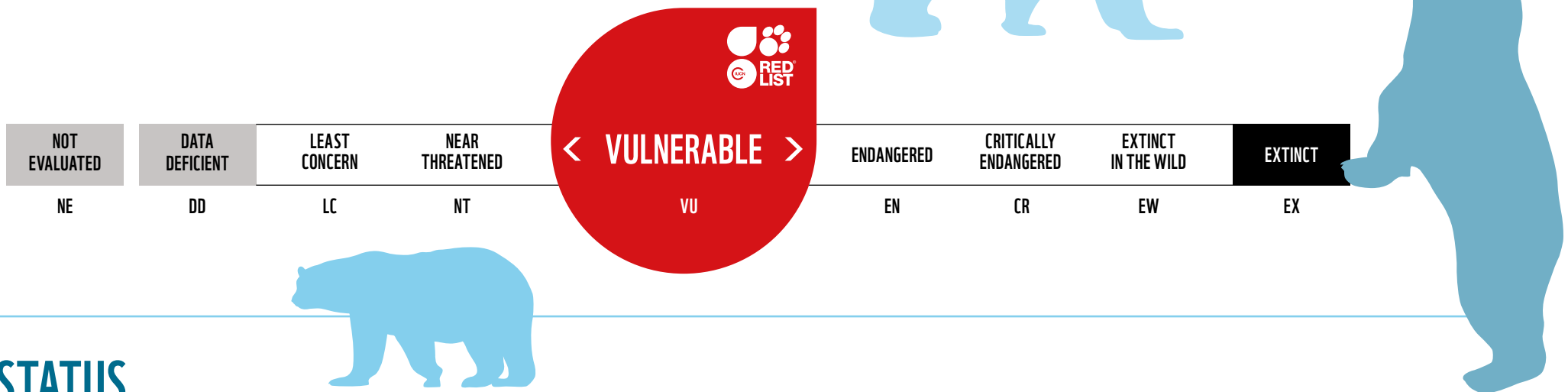
- I am the top predator in my food chain.
- My main food source is seals, but I'll also feed on walruses, belugas and seabirds.
- I have the ability to devour large amounts of food rapidly, however, I can adapt very well if there isn't much food available.

DID YOU KNOW

I have an incredible sense of smell; I'm able to detect prey nearly a kilometre away and up to a metre under snow.

CLASSIFICATION

I am classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.



STATUS

- Climate change threatens my habitat.
- The Arctic is warming up, causing the sea ice I depend on to hunt and breed, to melt away.
- The number of my species remaining in the wild is estimated to be about 25,000.
- Loss of sea-ice also threatens my main prey, seals, which depend on sea-ice to raise their young and rest. Because I can't find enough prey I get hungry and sometimes enter towns and villages to find food – this upsets humans and I may be killed as a result. Other threats to my species include illegal hunting, pollution and disturbances from industrial activities.



ADÉLIE PENGUIN



Hi, I am the Adélie penguin - one of the smallest and most widely found penguins in the Antarctic.
I am one of only two penguin species that spend the winter in Antarctica.

Read on to discover more interesting facts about me.

WHERE
I LIVE

I live in Antarctica, which is a polar desert surrounded by the ocean. It's extremely cold but I can survive very cold conditions.

wwf.org.uk/wildlife/adelie_penguin

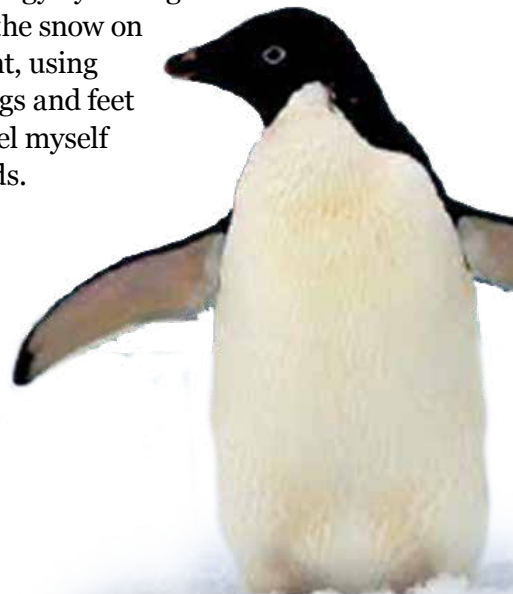
Antarctica

DID YOU KNOW

I may not be able to fly across the sky, but I can fly underwater, flapping my wings to propel myself at speeds as well as any fish can swim and I can dive up to depths of 180 metres!

CHARACTERISTICS

- My black and white markings and distinctive tail make me look like I'm wearing a tuxedo.
- I have white rings around my eyes.
- I am about 70cm tall and I weigh 5kg.
- I am able to walk long distances at speeds that average about 2.5 kilometres per hour.
- When travelling across snowy terrain, I can save energy by sliding across the snow on my front, using my wings and feet to propel myself forwards.



MY FAMILY

I live in a colony – a large group of hundreds or thousands of penguins. When I find my partner, we will stay together for life and both of us will help to raise our young, starting with both of us taking turns to incubate the eggs when they are laid and help look after the chicks until they are three weeks old. The female lays one or two eggs. Young penguins begin to swim on their own at about nine weeks old.



VIDEO

Watch footage of Adélie penguins:

- arkive.org/adelie-penguin/pygoscelis-adeliae/video-00.html
- arkive.org/adelie-penguin/pygoscelis-adeliae/video-12a.html
- arkive.org/adelie-penguin/pygoscelis-adeliae/video-12b.html

FEEDING

I hunt by swimming in the sea and tend to catch my food close to the surface.

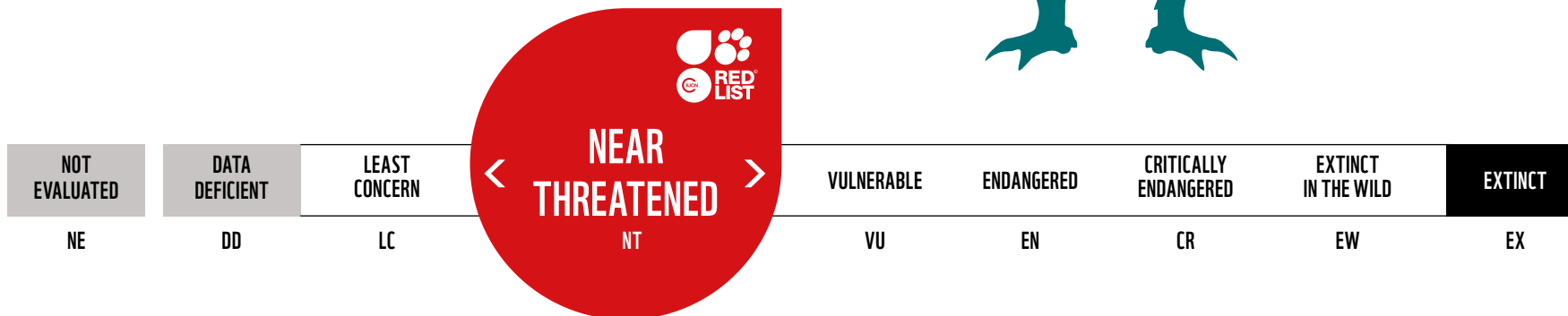
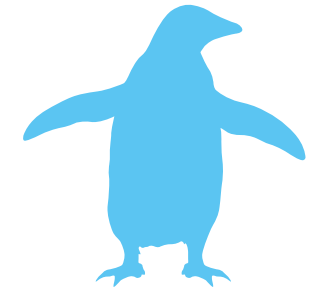
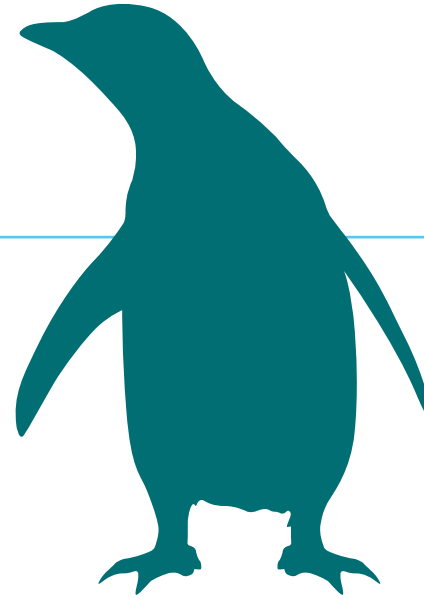
My main food source is krill which breed under the sea ice but a few small fish are often on the menu too.

DID YOU KNOW

I spend 6 months of the year at sea and only return to land to nest or rest between October and April, which is the summer here in Antarctica!

CLASSIFICATION

I am classified as **Near Threatened** by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.



STATUS

Climate change and warming oceans reduce some of my feeding grounds and ultimately my habitat, which impacts on my food sources. Adélie penguins may also lose ground to gentoo penguins, which are better adapted to warming Antarctic environments. Overfishing and oil pollution from shipping accidents are also threats to my population and my environment.



My species could decline by up to 30% over the next three generations. Thankfully humans are undertaking conservation efforts to improve the way Antarctica, including Marine Protected Areas, is managed and also working to reduce the impacts of climate change which will hopefully reduce the threats to my natural habitat.