



# WALRUS

Phylum: *Chordata* Class: *Mammalia* Order: *Pinnipedia* Family: *Odobenidae*  
*Odobenus rosmarus*

**Description:** The long tusks, deeply wrinkled skin and bristly mustache make the walrus a very distinctive animal.

**Height:** 5 feet

**Length:** 10-12 feet

**Weight:** 2,000-3,500 pounds

**Range:** Seasonal pack ice and the coasts

**Distribution:** Arctic Seas from Alaska to the Soviet Union

**Life Span:** 40 years

**Status:** Endangered

**Diet:** Marine animals, fish, seals, mollusks

## Special Features:

- The thick skin and blubber of a walrus protects him from the cold. The blubber can be up to 6 inches thick.
- His long tusks are modified canine teeth and act as weapons for defense and attack, and ice picks to help him climb.
- The walrus spends his days in open water near the coast or ice floes.
- They have flat flippers instead of feet to help them swim. The forelimbs serve as rudders. Out of the water the walrus walks upright by turning its back flippers forward.
- The bumpy bottoms of the flippers help him grasp the ice.
- It can dive up to 250 feet for 10 minutes.
- Since the water is usually murky, the walrus uses his whiskers to locate food.
- The walrus turns red when it sunbathes because its arteries enlarge and the blood rushes to the skin.

## Reproduction:

- Sexual maturity in females 6-7 years, in males 15 years
- Gestation is 15 months including 3 months delayed implantation.
- Single birth
- The calf travels by hanging on to the cow's neck. After 2 weeks, it is able to swim.
- Weaned at 18-24 months
- The calf begins to grow tusks at 1 year old.

