



# Tomorrow's Planet

A NEWSLETTER FOR KIDS WHO WANT TO  
HELP MAKE OUR WORLD A BETTER PLACE

Issue #6

## Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Imagine a place 100 times wilder than anyplace you have ever known--a place where the brightest lights are from the sun, the moon, and the stars. Do you believe there are such places left in the world?

Thankfully places like this do exist. Some of these places are called National Wildlife Refuges. There are more than 500 refuges in our country whose purpose is **wildlife conservation**. The **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge** is located in the northeast corner of Alaska and is part of the National Wildlife Refuge System. It is an adventuring ground--a place of nameless valleys and unexplored horizons--where a sense of the unknown remains alive.

The Arctic National Wildlife Range was established in 1960 as a commitment to the American people to preserve the area's "unique wildlife, wilderness and recreational values." Twenty years later, Congress passed the Alaska Lands Act. The Act renamed the area and more than doubled its size. Today the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge includes nearly 20 million acres! That is roughly the size of South Carolina.

The Refuge is home to some of the most diverse and spectacular wildlife in the Arctic. It is home to a rich variety of wildlife that includes 36 fish species, 36 species of land mammals, 9 species of marine mammals and more than 180 resident and migratory bird species. **Migratory species** move their homes when the seasons change. For example, many birds, such as loons, geese and sandhill cranes, migrate south during the winter to find warmer temperatures.

Some of the larger land animals that live within the Refuge are caribou, polar bears, brown bears, moose and gray wolves. One particular group of caribou, the **Porcupine River caribou**, has a special connection with a specific area of the Refuge called **the coastal plain**. This herd of caribou travels to the coastal plain every year, as it has for the past 20,000 years, to give birth to its young. As winter ends, the herd of 129,000 caribou travels more than 400 miles from its winter home to the Arctic coast where the females give birth to their calves. They return to this northern coastal portion of the Refuge to give birth because fewer predators live there and nutritious



food for mothers and their young is abundant. Once the mothers have rested and their young have become strong enough for travel, the herd returns south for the fall and winter.

Throughout its journey the herd is hunted by local residents, chased by predators, harassed by insects, challenged by river crossings and faced with difficult terrain and weather. Even with all of these challenges, the herd thrives and returns every summer to perform an awesome wildlife spectacle on the coastal plain. The caribou are an important part of the natural system that operates in the Refuge. The herd both depends on and enhances the amazing wilderness of the Arctic Refuge.

Many people have worked very hard to ensure that the Refuge would be protected for future generations. The founders of the Refuge, George Collins, Lowell Sumner and Olaus and Mardy Murie, launched a campaign to permanently protect the area. As a result of their vision and hard work we are blessed with the still pristine Refuge today.

### Who else depends on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is both remote and isolated, but there are groups of people who live there and depend upon the resources in the Refuge for survival. One native Alaskan group is the Gwich'in people, who depend on the caribou herd for most of their food and clothing. Even for those of us who never travel to the Refuge, it is valued as a symbol of America's vast and remote wilderness, a place of inspiration and beauty.

## WEBSITES

www.earthday.wilderness.org/arctic  
**Wilderness Society**

www.nationalgeographic.com/kids  
**National Geographic**

www.sierraclub.org/wildlands/arctic  
**Sierra Club**



## ARCTIC QUIZ

- What US State does the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge compare to in size?  
a. Wisconsin      b. South Carolina      c. California
- What native Alaskan group is dependent upon the caribou?  
a. Inupiat      b. Ekwok      c. Gwich'in
- How far do the caribou travel from their winter home to get to the coastal plain?  
a. 30 miles      b. 400 miles      c. 20,000 miles
- Can you think of both an insect and a bird species that are migratory?
- What makes a species migratory?
- What is the name of the area in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that is very important for caribou calving?

## BOOKS

**The Seal Oil Lamp**  
By Dale De Armond

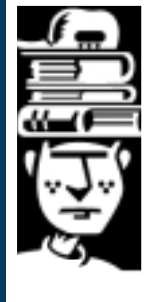
ages 5-9

**Arctic Memories**  
By Normee Ekoomiak

ages 9-11

**Julie of the Wolves**  
By Jean Craighead George

ages 9-12



## WORD SEARCH

<b>Marmot</b>	<b>Dall Sheep</b>
<b>Snowshoe Hare</b>	<b>Lynx</b>
<b>Mink</b>	<b>Seal</b>
<b>Polar Bear</b>	<b>Walrus</b>
<b>Shrew</b>	<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>
<b>Muskox</b>	<b>Swan</b>
<b>Wolverine</b>	<b>Loon</b>
<b>Narwhal</b>	<b>Bald Eagle</b>
<b>Owl</b>	<b>Vole</b>
<b>Kingfisher</b>	<b>Wolf</b>



**Fox**  
**Caribou**

W B P U A M E R Q A B Y L P I T E C V  
 N H Y O S Z T A M L J U T E W X Z Y P  
 B C W B A L D E A G L E C D W T E S Z  
 J G C I Z Q L B S L P W Q N W S T R I  
 V O U R F G L R H X S J W A Z M L P O  
 Y T L A V C M A R M O T Z R J U T I W  
 S T I C B H I L E U V W O W D V D T P  
 M L D H G S N O W S H O E H A R E B H  
 P I E T Y W K P E K Q L W A L L J U F  
 P T Y R O A X A I O P V S L L B R S W  
 P I J L S N L Y N X S E O A S P I U D  
 Y W F N Q A F T H X B R O L H V F D S  
 B G F O L K D E W O N I G F E Q I L D  
 P U Y O R E H S I F G N I K E O P L U  
 N O C L A F E N I R G E R E P B G A J



- About how many different species of wildlife exist in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?
- How long have the caribou been making their yearly migration to the coastal plain?

Answers: 1. b. 2. c. 3. b. 4. monarch butterflies, sandhill cranes, loons, geese 5. they move their home when the seasons change 6. the coastal plain 7. 261 species 8. 20,000 years

## Tomorrow's Planet

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### Sierra Club Statement of Purpose

To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

Are you curious about how you can help save the planet?

## Career Path

Have you ever wondered how a creature as tiny as the **vole** can survive in the same Arctic environment as a **polar bear**? Have you ever thought about why the **narwhal** has a tusk, or what has driven the **Porcupine River caribou** to travel the same migration route for over 20,000 years? If so, a career as a **wildlife biologist** may be for you.

Wildlife biologists explore different areas of the world, studying animals and their interactions. The **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge** is home to many rare and **endangered species**, and thanks to the work of wildlife biologists, we are able to better understand and help protect them.

## Did You Know?

Many species are born with the ability to **migrate**, or travel to another location for the winter or cold months, even when they have never been to this new location before. Something in their genetic code tells them where to go and how to get there, as it did their ancestors. **Salmon, Whooping Cranes, Monarch Butterflies, Buffalo** and **Caribou** all perform some sort of migration. Many populations migrate because of changes in temperature and daylight, searching for places where food is more abundant and the climate more hospitable. **Migration** is yet another example of the wonder and mystery of nature.

## 5 things you can do to help

1

Respect all living things

All living things contribute to the earth's diversity and beauty.

2

Conserve energy

If we all do our part to conserve we can reduce the threat of oil exploration in the Arctic.

3

Spread the word

Tell your friends and family what you have learned about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

4

Read

Learn how global warming is affecting the climate, people and animals in the Arctic region.

5

Don't pollute

What you do at home can affect species migrating to the Arctic.

## Tell us what you think

Use this space to write a letter or draw a picture showing your concern for the environment and send it to us! We will print pictures and letters from kids like you in future issues of Tomorrow's Planet. If we print your drawing or letter you could get a free Sierra Club backpack, hat or children's book. So go ahead, tell us what you can do to help protect the earth!

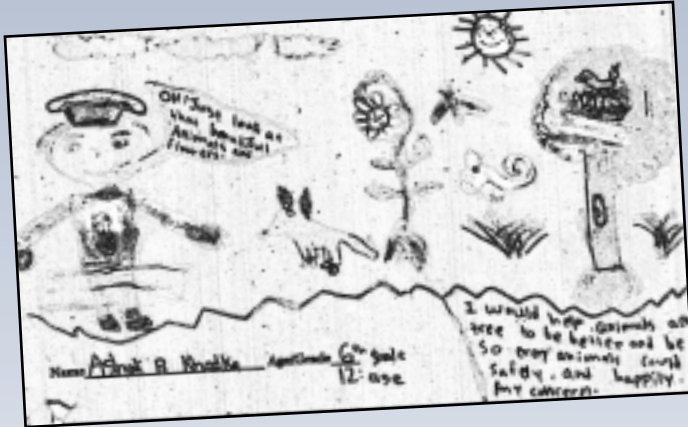
*Submissions become property of the Sierra Club and may be used without limitation or restriction.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age/Grade \_\_\_\_\_

# Your letters and pictures



Karina H., Grade 4



Ashok K.,  
Grade 6



Bradford P.,  
Grade 3

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