



Arctic Fox

Vulpes lagopus



Echo

I was born May 20th, 2016. My ears are more flat than Luna's.

My twin sister Luna and I live here at the Racine Zoo. You can find us at our outdoor enclosure near Bear Ridge.

I am shy and cautious, but loves to lounge on top of our equipment

Luna

I was born May 20th, 2016. My ears are more pointed out than Echo's.

I am more spirited and spry, and I love to tussle and play with my brother. You can see us dart and wrestle with each other.

When we are both sleepy and it gets colder, we like to cuddle up together and use each other as pillows.



ARCTIC FOXES AT A GLANCE

- The winter coat is **white** for camouflage in snow. For summer, they shed their thick fur for a coat of **grayish-brown** short fur for camouflage with rocks
- The thick fur coat helps to keep them warm when temperatures can get down to **-58 degrees Fahrenheit**
- To adapt to the arctic conditions, they have shorter limbs, snouts, and ears to reduce **heat loss**
- In addition, they have a long tail as an extra layer of warmth and to balance
- They have **dense fur** covering their feet to keep their feet warm and help them stalk prey.
- In the wild, they will practically **eat anything alive or dead** including rodents, seal scraps, birds and insects. At the zoo, they eat mice, chicks, veggies, and specialized meatballs



Male & Female:
18-26.75 in
6.5-17 lbs.

up to 13.75 inch tail

Avg. life expectancy in native habitats: 3-6 years
Avg. life expectancy in human care: 14-16 years

WHERE ARE ARCTIC FOX NATIVE HABITATS LOCATED?

Arctic Foxes are found in the arctic tundra and coastal regions of the Arctic Circle encompassing Canada to Russia, Europe, Greenland, and Iceland. The Tundra is one of the coldest and driest places on Earth. In the winter, it is frozen and covered in ice and snow. In summer, the ground is soggy and wet.



Arctic Fox Behaviors

SLEEPING

Arctic foxes are crepuscular; they are active in the early morning before sunrise and after sunset during twilight.

We are resting throughout the day. To keep warm, we wrap our body in a ball using your tail as a pillow.



CACHING

When foxes eat their prey, if there is a surplus, they will dig a hole and put the rest of the food in it for later. They will have several different caches in an area.

We are putting our leftovers away for another time when we what another meal.



SMELLING

They can smell carcasses that are anywhere from 10-40 km (6-24 miles) away. Arctic foxes can smell and find lemmings under 46-77 cm of snow.

Our noses are sensitive and we like to smell when investigating things near us.



SHYNESS

Arctic Foxes are allusive and shy. Even they are predators, the like to stay far away from bigger animals until it's safe to investigate.

We might feel unsure about people looking at us and might try to hide to feel comfortable.

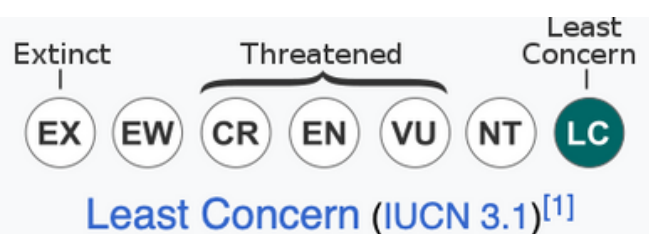


- Arctic foxes are monogamous, meaning they mate for life.
- They can have two litters during breeding season where both parents provide care for them in their dens. In addition, older brothers and sisters may help the youngest kits.
- Arctic foxes live in complex, underground dens that may house multiple generations of foxes. The dens might have several tunnels with different entrances and exits.
- When hunting, the fox must break through thick snow. To do this, the fox jumps up high and then dives headfirst into the snow.
- They have been observed to follow polar bears and scavenge on the remains of their kills.

Arctic Fox Conservation

As climate change is making the tundra consistently warmer, permafrost is melting making more muddy landscapes. Less flora will be able to grow and disappear, making it more difficult for animals to find food.

Arctic Foxes are currently listed as **least concern**. However, they suffer from lack of prey, though wild populations also suffer disease, interbreeding, and hunting for the fur trade.



How can we help?

We can help predators near us by never using alternative deterrents for pests instead of poison. Carnivores like Arctic Foxes often get sick from consuming poisoned prey and potentially die.

We can help fight against climate change by reducing our need for fossil fuels. You can carpool, bike, or walk to places instead of riding your car. You can turn off a light in a room when you are done to save electricity.