

# Fennec Fox

## What do they look like?

They have batlike ears, which help keep the foxes cool. They also have long, thick hair that insulates them during cold nights and protects them from hot sun during the day.

Even the fox's feet are hairy, which helps them perform like snowshoes and protects them from extremely hot sand. The fox's feet are also effective shovels for digging underground dens.

The fennec fox is the smallest of all the world's foxes, but its large ears, measuring 6 inches (15 centimeters), appear to be on loan from a bigger relative.

## Where do they live?

Fennec foxes live in the sandy Sahara and elsewhere in North Africa.

They live in small communities, which usually have 10 foxes living in them.

## What do they eat?

They eat plants but also eat rodents, eggs, reptiles, and insects. Like most desert dwellers, the fennec fox has developed the ability to go for long periods without water.

### Type:

Mammal

### Diet:

Omnivore

### Size:

Head and body, 9.5 to 16 in tail 7 to 12.2 in

### Weight:

2.2 to 3.3 lbs



# Arctic Fox

The arctic fox is an incredibly hardy animal that can survive **frigid Arctic temperatures** as low as  $-58^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) in the **treeless lands** where it makes its home. It has **furry soles, short ears,** and a **short muzzle**—all-important adaptations to the chilly clime. Arctic **foxes live in burrows**, and in a blizzard they may tunnel into the snow to create shelter.

Arctic foxes have beautiful white (sometimes blue-gray) coats that act as very effective winter camouflage. The natural hues allow the animal to blend into the snow and ice. When the seasons change, the fox's coat turns as well, adopting a brown or gray appearance that provides cover among the summer tundra's rocks and plants.

These colorings help foxes to effectively hunt rodents, birds, and even fish. But in winter prey can be scarce on the ground. At such times, arctic foxes will follow the region's premier predator—a polar bear—to eat the leftover scraps from its kills. Foxes will also eat vegetables when they are available.

Like a cat's, this fox's thick tail aids its balance. But for an arctic fox the tail (or "brush") is especially useful as warm cover in cold weather.

Female arctic foxes give birth each spring to a large litter of up to 14 pups.

Mammal--**Lifespan**:: 3-6 years Weigh: 6-17 pounds

**Size**: Head and body, 18 to 26.75 in / Tail, up to 13.75 in

Weight:



The fennec fox is the smallest of all the world's foxes, but its large ears, measuring 6 inches (15 centimeters), appear to be on loan from a bigger relative.

Fennec foxes dwell in the sandy Sahara and elsewhere in North Africa. Their nocturnal habits help them deal with the searing heat of the desert environment, and some physical adaptations help as well.

Their distinctive, batlike ears radiate body heat and help keep the foxes cool. They also have long, thick hair that insulates them during cold nights and protects them from hot sun during the day. Even the fox's feet are hairy, which helps them perform like snowshoes and protects them from extremely hot sand. The fox's feet are also effective shovels for frequent digging—fennec foxes live in underground dens.

These foxes dwell in small communities, each inhabited by perhaps ten individuals. Like other canids, male fennecs mark their territory with urine and become aggressive competitors when mating season arrives each year.

Fennec foxes are opportunistic eaters. They forage for plants but also eat rodents, eggs, reptiles, and insects. Like most desert dwellers, the fennec fox has developed the ability to go for long periods without water.

These foxes are cream-colored with black-tipped tails. Their adorable appearance makes them favorites of the captive pet trade, and local peoples also hunt the fennec fox for its fur. Little is known about the status of wild fennec fox populations.

